



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
**SOCIAL SERVICES**

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.



March 27, 2020

Dear Resource and Foster Parents,

Benita McLarin, FACHE  
DIRECTOR

As California follows COVID-19 shelter-in-place and social distancing recommendations, we are all experiencing changes to the way we live and work. In the past few weeks, things have moved very quickly, and this pandemic is affecting all our communities, families, and our way of life.

Kari Beuerman  
HHS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
SOCIAL SERVICES

We at Marin County Children and Families want to first thank you for the remarkable care you provide for children year-round and through thick and thin-but especially in times of crisis and stress such as this. Our visitation staff have been especially grateful for your above-and-beyond active involvement in hosting video visits for children and families. Maintaining any amount of normalcy for our children is crucial but we recognize that this translates to an added burden on you and your family. We are so appreciative of how you all have stepped up in this and many other ways.

Bree Marchman  
DIVISION DIRECTOR

Please continue reading for important updates and announcements.

Children and Family Services  
3250 Kerner Boulevard  
San Rafael, CA 94901  
415 473 2200 T  
415 473 7162 F  
CA Relay Dial 711  
[marinhhs.org/children-family-services](http://marinhhs.org/children-family-services)

**Our office is closed, yet social workers are telecommuting, and working from other locations.** Social workers are available by cell phone and video contact. We also have staff answering our main phone line, and although they are not able to transfer you to a worker, your message is emailed directly for a call back. We are using many forms of communication, including text messages, telephone, and video visits.

**The need for in-person monthly contact home visits is being assessed on a case by case basis.** The majority of these visits will occur by video conferencing. However, in some cases your social worker may request an in-person contact if it is necessary to support safety and stability for a child in your home. Please know that if this occurs, we are taking all precautions recommended by Public Health officials. We are using recommended methods for keeping clean, keeping social distance, and wearing masks and gloves for in person meetings. We are also open to meeting outdoors or in a location other than your home. You and your social worker can discuss the best plan for making an in-person visit safe for everyone involved.

**In-person parent/child visits have been suspended temporarily.** On March 18, 2020, Judge Beverly Wood made a standing order to

temporarily suspend in-person parent/child visits until further order of the Court. Subsequently, California Department of Social Services released guidance that in-person visits should be assessed on a case by case basis and efforts to maintain visits, especially for children 0-3 and those close to reunification should be made. Marin County CFS is currently working to make assessments about the best course of action moving forward with specific visits in the event that the Court Orders are modified. Your social worker or visit supervisor will be in contact with you to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about resuming in-person visits for the children in your care.

**Sheltering at home is the best known way to minimize the spread of this illness.** We realize this time can be very unsettling and stressful while you adjust to the shelter-in-home orders. However, we strongly encourage you to follow Public Health direction and stay home as much as possible. During this time, it is not advisable to have children and youth visiting friends' homes or to have friends visit in your home.

**We are here to support you.** Joe Devine remains a great resource for all your practical needs. Please contact him at (415) 521-6447 if you have a particular need that we may be able to support. Lesia Knudsen is also available for parenting coaching and support. She can be reached at 415-295-5534. We are working on developing a resources page for you on our website [www.fosterourfuturemarin.org](http://www.fosterourfuturemarin.org). More to come on this!

**While it may feel as if the world is holding it's breath at this time, the sobering fact remains that children will continue to be in need of homes due to abuse or neglect.** Your RFA or Licensing Worker may be reaching out to you to discuss your availability during this time of crisis. This will include a discussion about your comfort level in caring for children who are or may be positive for COVID-19. While we fully support individual families' decisions regarding this matter, we hope that, given the proper support from the Department, a few of our families will be able to step up for the most vulnerable children in our community, as we know that it is an eventuality that this need will arise.

We know this is a lot of information to take in. To support good communication, we will be offering a virtual town hall on Monday, March 29, 2020 at 10:30am. Please look for an invite soon!

Best,



Children and Family Services  
Marin County