

## Executive Order 2020-21 and The Detroit CoC

Many of you are likely aware that Governor Whitmer issued an Executive Order this morning to “Suspend all activities that are not necessary to sustain or protect life.”

**We wanted to write and let you know that homeless services are exempt under the suspension.** The exact language details the exemption as: *“to work or volunteer for businesses or operations (including both religious and secular nonprofit organizations) that provide food, shelter, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals, individuals who need assistance as a result of this emergency, and people with disabilities”* (Executive Order No. 2020-21, Section 7.a.11)

**This exemption means that you are able to carry on serving clients without violating the Executive Order.** Homeless services are considered an “essential function”. Without your assistance, the homeless population would be made critically vulnerable to the spreading pandemic. **This is why we strongly urge that, to the extent possible, you do not cease operations.** We do, of course, recognize that there may be changes to your staffing and function that occur as a result of the executive order and COVID-19 in general. Each agency will need to decide what activities and staff are essential to keep operating -- ensuring that both staff and clients are kept as safe as possible, with clients’ needs continuing to be met. This also means that, if you are able, we strongly encourage you to continue accepting referrals to your programs and serving new clients through these tumultuous times. As we are sure you well know, clients’ safety substantially increases as their stability increases. This rings even more true in these uncertain times.

For shelter staff who continue to work, MCAH and MSHDA released the following guidance (with some of our specific notes/local resources added in):

- Staff are allowed to travel to and from their homes to the shelter.
- Staff are allowed to stay at their home when they are not working their shift.
- We are discouraging clients from leaving the shelter because of this order. **Please communicate this executive order and the strong encouragement to remain put to all shelter clients.**
- Please continue to follow the protocols already established pertaining to client engagement, entry into shelter, isolating clients exhibiting symptoms, etc. **You can access the guidance for Detroit by [clicking here.](#)**
- Continue regular communication with your public health department and emergency management teams. **Detroit’s Health Dept. can be contacted 24/7 at 313-876-4000.**
- Continue to call your local health department, healthcare provider or hospital for guidance if staff or clients develop COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath).
- Coordinate locally with your homeless response system partners on capacity needs for emergency shelter. **You can submit your requests for assistance by [clicking here.](#)**
- Continue updating your TSA regional manager on your shelter’s status and needs (for ESP funded projects) as well as the City of Detroit for ESG funded projects. Contact both entities if you are funded by both.

We know that this is not an easy time for you, your agency, or the clients you serve. First, please know that **we are so very grateful for the work you are doing**. And we are so thankful for your determination, perseverance, and adaptability in this time. Second, please know that you can reach out to us at HAND at any point if you have any questions or need any assistance. We are happy to think through what ways you may need to modify your staffing or procedure and/or to answer any questions you have. We are here to problem solve with you, bounce ideas around, think through potential resources, or just to be a listening ear if you need to vent. Please know that we are here. **Let us know what you need, and we will do what we can to help.**

Don’t forget to continue to check our website regularly for updates.

<https://www.handetroit.org/covid19>.

You can access resources to help you plan by [clicking here](#). You can submit a question for our FAQ by [clicking here](#). You can also reach out to any HAND team member directly by phone or email.

**Please remember that we are here and we’re ready to help. You are not alone. You are so very valuable. Reach out if you need anything at all.**