

March 20, 2020

Good Afternoon,

Governor Pritzker issued an executive order requiring all Illinoisans to stay in their homes to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. The order prohibits things like visiting the homes of friends and holding gatherings of any size and closes all nonessential establishments, including most retail, recreation and entertainment businesses.

This order *DOES NOT* prohibit essential activities like going to the grocery store, receiving medical care, or taking your pet for a walk.

The courageous work you do as child welfare professionals, keeping children safe and supporting families in crisis, is essential. This executive order exempts all child protection and child welfare staff, both at DCFS and in the private sector. The businesses that provide essential service to the child welfare sector are also exempt. All services necessary for DCFS to provide for or support the health, safety and welfare of children and families in Illinois will continue to operate.

Let me be clear, the work you do and services you provide are essential.

Each day, all of us are asked to make difficult decisions in the face of this outbreak. *Thank you* for your extraordinary ongoing commitment to protect and support the vulnerable children and families of Illinois. We can't do this work without you.

I am deeply honored to serve as the Director of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services DCFS during this crisis.

Thank you for all your efforts!



Marc D. Smith
Acting Director
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services