

Monthly Family & Stakeholder Newsletter

February 25, 2021

Governor Gordon Begins Preparations for Implementation of Federal Rental Assistance Program

Governor Mark Gordon issued an Executive Order to allow the Wyoming Department of Family Services to begin its preparations to administer the federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program. This allows the State to prepare its distribution plan for this program while providing the opportunity to work with the Legislature on details before launching the program.

“The need for this program cannot be understated, but it requires significant work to run it effectively and that’s what begins now,” Governor Mark Gordon said. “Wyoming’s network of nonprofit and community service organizations continue to report statistics demonstrating Wyomingites’ need for relief during this global pandemic and historic recession. I look forward to working with legislators to launch this program.”

The federal government has provided the State with \$200 million in funding to cover rent and utility costs for Wyomingites struggling financially due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wyoming 2-1-1 is reporting a 280% increase in calls for rental assistance in 2020. Similarly, a county relief agency reported providing financial assistance to 349 area families unable to cover rent in the final quarter of 2020, even though 77% of such households were at least partially employed. At the same time, many Wyoming landlords are left with unpaid back rent, and in some cases, utility bills left unpaid by struggling tenants. This program covers that back rent for landlords and reimburses utility companies the unpaid bills, which can benefit all ratepayers.

The Department of Family Services intends to work alongside a coalition of state entities and community stakeholders to ensure that every eligible Wyomingite knows about and has access to the program. Specifically, the Department of Workforce Services will play an integral role in both the current planning stage and the program’s implementation.

The Governor looks forward to working with the Wyoming Legislature when they reconvene in March to take the final steps to implement this program. Applications for relief are not available at this time. Once an application process is in place, the Department of Family Services, the Department of Workforce Services, and stakeholders will publicize that process. In the meantime, comments about how the program should operate may be emailed to RentalAssistance@wyo.gov.

Read the [Executive Order](#).

CME Facts and Figures Posted

The Wyoming Department of Health has posted a [CME Facts and Figures document](#) on the Medicaid website.

These facts and figures are for you when advocating for and educating about the program. Each of the statements can be used as a stand-alone point and the document is a collection of those individual points versus a white paper.

Return to In-person service coming soon!!

We are so excited to announce that soon, families will be able to return to in-person service delivery for youth enrolled in High Fidelity Wraparound! The federal authority guidelines in Appendix K outlined telehealth services only for High Fidelity Wraparound per the request of the State of Wyoming is expiring on February 28, 2021. This means starting March 1, 2021, providers and families will have the choice to conduct High Fidelity Wraparound either in person or via telehealth or a combination of both.

Families are encouraged to follow all of the guidelines distributed by the [Centers for Disease Control](#) and your local county public health departments regarding personal protective equipment and vaccinations.

Reminder to Renew Medicaid

Please remember to renew your Medicaid. The extensions that were granted under the health orders are ending. If you lose your Medicaid, your services will be impacted.

We're accepting youth referrals

Do you know a young person age 4 to 20 who would benefit from additional support? Would it make a difference if they could be more successful at home, school and in their community?

Wyoming's High Fidelity Wraparound program can help if:

- A free program makes sense for the youth and their family.
- Additional mental health or behavior support is needed.
- Youth who currently are, or could be, Medicaid eligible.
- Youth is at risk for being placed out of their home in hospital or detention.

Youth and their care givers would benefit from having a team of support. Learn more by completing our [Referral Form](#) or visiting our [website](#).

Our program is growing

If you have ever wanted to help youth with complex mental health or behavioral health concerns, you can become a provider by visiting our [Become a Provider](#) page. We are always looking for more experienced and caring people to join forces with us to meet the needs of youth across Wyoming. Do you know anyone who would be great at this? Refer them to work with us.