**GENERAL TIPS FOR VR AGENCIES IN RESPONDING TO COVID 19**

1. **Shut down or open? That is the question**
   1. Temporary reduction to in-person services at your offices
   2. For those left to work at the office, reconfigure space to promote social distancing
   3. Use telework for all that can
   4. Provide services and supports via phone, electronically, or via other methods
      1. Plans for electronic signatures or documentation of agreement in case notes
         1. MN Blind Example-Signature instructions can be found in the bullet below this document on the website.
   5. Wait list considerations--ie. Suspend release from the waiting list until further notice
   6. Don’t forget your vendors-engage them to maintain services while maintaining safety.
2. **Website-** Dedicate space on your website to address COVID-19 questions. You can have a message from the director, links to FAQs, other resources like unemployment insurance links if laid off, and an email box to direct questions to.
   1. [California DOR Website Example](https://www.dor.ca.gov/Home/COVID19DirectorMsg)
   2. [Arizona example](https://des.az.gov/services/coronavirus)
   3. FAQ ideas for possible questions to answer-this in not exhaustive - Address the following:

**Consumers**

* Closure of offices-explain what is and is not open and how to reach someone
* How will intakes work?
* How should consumers expect services will proceed?
* What should consumers do if they are feeling ill?

**Providers/Vendors**

* Can they be reimbursed for providing services via alternative methods such as phone or videoconferencing?
* Are there alternate plans for the submission of invoices and making payments?
* How should providers notify you if they are closing offices and who handles communications with customers?
* Are you going to pay them for services not provided? In accordance with federal regulations (2 CFR 200), you can only reimburse a service provider for services rendered.

1. **Webinars/Calls with Stakeholders-**Hold a webinar or conference calls with important stakeholders such as providers. Be prepared to answer questions regarding remote provision of service, what is allowable, if anything has changed with the invoicing and payment of services, etc. Record the call and place the transcript on your COVID-19 webpage.
2. **Develop Structure and Instructions for Staff**-Determine a method for communication and ways for staff to stay in contact and connected. Some online teaming resources include [Google Meet](https://gsuite.google.com/products/meet/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=na-US-all-en-dr-bkws-all-all-trial-e-dr-1008072&utm_content=text-ad-none-any-DEV_c-CRE_425523716809-ADGP_Hybrid%20%7C%20AW%20SEM%20%7C%20BKWS%20~%20EXA%20%2F%2F%20Hangouts%20Meet-KWID_43700052385188770-kwd-299356619278&utm_term=KW_google%20meet-ST_google%20meet&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIzaDa-7Kx6AIVEdVkCh2NogeeEAAYASAAEgKaxvD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds), [Microsoft Teams](https://products.office.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software) or [Slack](https://slack.com/lp/three?utm_medium=ppc&utm_source=google&utm_campaign=d_ppc_google_us_en_brand-hv-exp-messaging&utm_term=%2Bslack&campaign=88216180-CEBA-40C3-8F92-4AC1F052DAB4&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIut-EwLOx6AIVDP5kCh1unwNUEAAYASAAEgKBYPD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds).
   1. New Jersey Blind-Telework PowerPoint can be found in Resources Related to Teleworking
3. **Technology Tips**

This is a list of tricks, tips, and workarounds for some known technology issues that have been sent in from state agencies.

* **Creating Google phone numbers to mask your personal phone number** Here are the instructions for setting up Google Phone Numbers for staff that do not have a state cell phone.
  + Sign up for Voice and get your number:

1.On your computer, go to voice.google.com.

2.Sign in to your Google Account.

3.After reviewing the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy, tap Continue.

4.Search by city or area code for a number. Voice doesn't offer 1-800 numbers. •If there aren't any numbers available in the area you want, try somewhere nearby.

5.Next to the number you want, click Select. Follow the instructions.

After setting up Voice, you can link another phone number. Learn more about setting up phones.

* **Hotspot on iphone not working (unless you have an unlimited data plan, this will cost)**

1. Go to your Wireless Network connection on your laptop and point and click on the setting
2. Disconnect from any wireless network that you are currently on
3. Take your iphone charging USB and plug into the phone and into your laptop
4. Then see if the wireless network center will recognize your iphone hotspot – you may have to “refresh” network or WIFI network center to see the hotspot
5. Enter the WIFI security code to access your hotspot from your laptop (this is listed in Settings, Personal Hotspot, WIFI Password)
6. Keep the iphone plugged in to the laptop the entire time that you need to use the hotspot

**IMPORTANT TIP:**  You may need to toggle off your Hotspot and turn it back on again – EVERY time you want to connect to it.  The hotspot will time out so that it is not always on and accessing data.  In order to do this, go into Settings, Personal Hotspot, and where you see the little on/off button, if its green, slide it to off (grayed out) then slide it back to on (green).

* **Adobe Scan mobile app** works on your mobile device, scans documents into PDFs, and automatically recognizes text. [Adobe Mobile Scanner](https://acrobat.adobe.com/us/en/mobile/scanner-app.html)
* **CamScanner**-scanning tool that converts pictures to PDF. This could be used when a consumer scans their employment plan. It will convert to a PDF and they can send it to another smartphone (counselor). <https://www.camscanner.com/>
* **Signing Documents using Adobe Reader** 
  + There is a tip sheet in a bullet below this document on the webpage