



**FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTERS OF OHIO, INC.**  
**4354 MONROE STREET**  
**TOLEDO, OHIO 43606**  
**(419) 442-7145**

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## **Family Guidance Centers of Ohio – COVID-19 Response**

FGC of Ohio has always taken the responsibility to protect the well-being of our patients and staff, and today is no different. We understand that for the individuals we provide services for, this can be exceptionally challenging time. While our facility in Toledo remains open, we have established safeguards to help stop further spread of the COVID-19 virus.

For now, all in person groups are cancelled until further notice, **however, we will continue to provide critical counseling and recovery support services by implementing telehealth services.** Our staff has been personally reaching out to individual patients with information regarding changes to ensure that no one goes without the help they need.

We, along with local, state and national public health officials, are closely monitoring the COVID-19 outbreak. Our dedicated team has put together several emergency plans that serve in the best interest of our patients and in the communities we are providing these services.

Each day, we continue to monitor guidelines from the State of Ohio and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and we will continue to adapt our best practices as needed in this quickly changing situation.

FGC of Ohio has also developed additional procedures to minimize and respond to the impact of COVID-19. These procedures include:

- Controlling Infection
- Staff Management
- Population Health Management
- Reporting within FGC of Ohio and to Public Health Authorities

These procedures are available upon request but include some of the following information:

1. All patients entering the facility will be screened using the COVID-19 Screening questions for Outpatient Facilities.
- ♦ 2. Telehealth sessions for counseling, case management and recovery support services have been implemented.
- ♦ 3. New patients will undergo a clinical assessment via telehealth, but will meet with our physician in person, prior to methadone induction.

## **Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program**

FGC of Ohio's MAT Program is prepared to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and has developed an Exception Take Home Bottle Plan for those patients participating in the medication assisted treatment program.

Communication outreach to patients will be done through phone calls, emails, and signage onsite to alert patients that they may contact FGC of Ohio before coming onsite, so the exception take-home approval can be prepared in advance for dispensing. Large scale take-homes doses for certain patients will be submitted via a blanket exception request to the federal government.

Patients receiving take homes through this exception process will be engaged in 1-2 telehealth sessions per week with FGC of Ohio staff (e.g., through a mobile or landline device, not necessarily one that is video capable) noting that a respiratory viral illness, with or without confirmation via COVID-19 viral testing, presents an immediate risk to the rest of the population.

Patients exhibiting symptoms of a respiratory infection and cough and fever will be isolated and evaluated by a medical provider who will make a determination as to the safe number of take-home doses, taking into consideration the patient's stability in treatment and ability to safely store and protect medication.

FGC of Ohio patients with significant medical comorbidities, particularly those patients over the age of 60, such as co-morbid chronic and severe pulmonary, cardiac, renal or liver disease, or immunosuppression, will be eligible for take-homes up to 7 to 14 days, at the discretion of our medical prescriber.

All patients must have a lockable take-home container and will be provided with written instructions on protecting their medication from theft and exposure to children or animals. FGC of Ohio staff will ensure that patient's current lock box is of sufficient size to hold the additional take-homes. The clinic will remain open during regular business hours to field calls from patients who are receiving take homes. The efficacy and safety of this take-home strategy will be continually assessed.

### **FGC of Ohio's Population Health Management:**

In addition, the following population health guidelines are in place at FGC of Ohio to minimize and to respond to COVID-19:

As previously stated, all patients calling to schedule an appointment will be screened. When COVID-19 is suspected, patients will be advised not to come to the facility but will be instructed to contact their local County Department of Health. Patients reporting experiencing shortness of breath will be instructed to call 911.

All patients arriving will be provided hand sanitizer and asked that they clean their hands and practice social distancing. If available, those patients exhibiting respiratory illness are given a mask to wear (if available) and all will have their temperature taken.

In addition, all FGC of Ohio staff will be screened each day they report to work and will be instructed accordingly if it is determined that they present symptoms of COVID-19.