

Home Visiting Is Essential!

Campaign to Local Funders & Decision Makers During COVID-19

Background: We all have a role to play in ensuring that home visiting will be considered an essential service for families during state budget tightening. Use your voice in meetings, in emails, and on social channels to convey accurate and helpful information using the guidance below.

Campaign goal: All existing funders of home visiting will maintain existing home visiting investments, so that families will continue to receive services, and we can retain jobs for home visiting professionals across the nation.

Campaign tagline: Home Visiting is Essential!

Whom to involve: Supervisors, agency or department directors, executive directors, communications staff, development team, advisory committee members, organizational boards of directors (ask your boss), home visitors, and state home visiting coalitions.

Timeline: ASAP

Main campaign hashtag: #HomeVisitingIsEssential

Message targets: State and local legislators, school boards, and philanthropic funders.

Take Action Now!

Below are sample email campaigns, social media messages, graphics, talking points, and other tools to help you get started.



1. Email

- State/Local Leaders: Use the sample letter below to reach out to your state legislators and local leaders about state home visiting funding. Alternatively, you could use your program model's website and use their action page campaigns. If your program operates in a school district, tailor the letter for your school board.
- Locate your state legislator's email address by clicking [here](#).
- Locate your school board member's email address by clicking [here](#).

Sample email

Dear Honorable **[insert title, e.g., Senator/Representative/School Board Member]**:

It is more important than ever that home visiting funded by **[name funding stream here]** is there to meet the needs of the families in our **[community/school district/state]**. Prior to the current health crisis, home visitors were already a critical link in supporting families who are facing a variety of challenges. Now, with public health at risk and the social safety net stretched even further, home visitors need flexibility and additional resources.

Home visiting providers, such as **[enter program name]**, are already pivoting to accommodate new ways of reaching families, including expanding telehealth and virtual home visits. Our state must have the certainty that these visits are covered by the existing funding streams.

[Optional: Enter personal story here]

As you consider emergency legislation to meet the needs of families and communities, I urge you to please:

- > Prioritize and sustain existing home visiting services and funding streams to reach families in need. These funds can be used for training home visitors as well as providing tangible necessities that may be out of reach for families (technology, formula, diapers, etc.).
- > Help ensure that virtual visits will be taken into account as qualifying home visits throughout the length of the declared crisis.

Thank you for your attention to these critical needs as you continue to develop policy responses to support families during COVID-19.

Sincerely,

[Sign your name, title and organization]

2. Tweet

Look up your state legislators' Twitter handles on Google, and be sure to tag your decision makers and include a photo or graphic with EVERY post. Consider creative ways to highlight virtual home visiting through photos and video posts. Provided below are sample graphics and messaging you can use in your Tweets.

Sample tweets

- > Through #HomeVisiting, **[tag your agency handle]** plays a powerful role in supporting parents through crisis. We're reaching families through technology to meet family needs during social distancing. Please support funding to sustain services. #HomeVisitingIsEssential **[Tag your decision-maker/legislator/funder]**
- > We are doing our part to prevent the spread of #coronavirus by supporting families through virtual home visits. #HomeVisitingIsEssential **[Tag your decision-maker/legislator/funder]**
- > **@ [tag your agency handle]**
#HomeVisiting is among the nation's most trusted programs helping families navigating the #COVID19 crisis. #HomeVisitingIsEssential **[Tag your decision maker/legislator/funder]**
- > Please prioritize the continuity of services such as **@ [tag your agency handle]** #HomeVisiting, child care, nutrition programs, maternal care, and health services during COVID-19. #HomeVisitingIsEssential **[Tag your decision-maker/legislator/funder]**
- > Virtual home visiting is a lifeline for families during #COVID19. Please ensure existing funds are sustained for #HomeVisiting so we can continue reaching families during the crisis. #HomeVisitingIsEssential **[Tag your decision-maker/legislator/funder]**



Graphics

Use any of the graphics below for the "Home Visiting Is Essential" campaign, or create your own to fit the needs of your community. We also encourage you to collaborate with your agency leadership and communications team to develop and share real photos and stories, or to overlay your own agency logo.

[Native American](#) | [Black/African American](#) | [Caucasian](#) | [Multi-Racial](#)

3. Call

Use the following talking points to support communication by phone with decision makers and your funders. Use the Legislator Lookup by clicking [here](#).

Sample taking points

- When we stopped visiting families in person due to COVID-19, we pivoted immediately to providing video and telehealth virtual visits to serve families without interruption. Our home visitors are still at work doing visits and screenings. Home visiting programs are rising to the occasion and engaging their communities by providing virtual home visiting, putting together “drop-off” family kits with diapers and activities for families—with appropriate social distancing. If anything, home visitors are working harder than ever!
- Home visiting has bipartisan support and plays a leading role engaging our most under-resourced families. This is even more important during the uncertainties of this pandemic.
- Now, more than ever, home visiting is an essential service for families. Social isolation and families living in cramped conditions can lead to increases in domestic violence and child maltreatment. Home visitors can help mitigate these situations by maintaining contact with families and providing support.
- During this economic uncertainty, families receiving home visiting services are experiencing the devastating impacts of loss of income, balancing work without childcare, and difficulty finding food and other necessities – simply trying to survive the months to come. For many, home visitors provide much-needed connections to community resources.
- Additionally, as you consider emergency legislation to meet the needs of families and communities, I urge you to please prioritize home visiting services and provide flexibility and funding for training home visitors, as well as for providing essentials that may be out of reach for families (technology, formula, diapers, etc.).
- Help ensure that virtual visits will be taken into account as qualifying home visits throughout the length of the declared crisis.
- Thank you for your attention to these critical needs as you continue to develop policy responses to support families during the COVID-19 health crisis.