



**Social Development
and Housing**

**Développement social
et Logement**



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March 20, 2020

Good Afternoon,

On March 16, 2020, PEI's Chief Health Office declared a public health emergency for COVID-19. The announcement highlighted a focus on depopulating government buildings and services across all levels of government and health.

As you're aware this has also impacted schools, Early Learning Centres, sporting associations and most other services closing or decreasing access significantly. The necessity for social distancing and isolation will mean increased financial, emotional and physical health strain on care givers across this province. This also creates a situation where a large proportion of the Child Protection reporters (people who witness and report suspected abuse issues) are no longer having access and interactions with large numbers of children as we normally would. This will mean a decrease in the overall reports but potentially not reflecting the realities of children who may be at risk of harm.

As your agencies and authorities implement their contingency plans, we would ask that you make our numbers and contact information available to staff, and I would like to remind you and your staff of the requirements for mandatory reporting of any known or suspected issues of child abuse (emotional, physical, mental).

Please share this information with family and friends to call [1\(877\) 341-3101](tel:18773413101) during business hours 8:30-5:00 pm and [1\(800\) 341-6868](tel:18003416868) after hours and on weekends.

Child and Family Services staff will continue to provide child protection, and Residential Services across PEI, and some areas of our work may experience delays.

We appreciate your support in sharing this important message to help protect children in our province.

Sincerely,

Sean Morrison
Director
Child and Family Services