

Erie County Department of Social Services receives COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund grant from Redlich Horowitz Foundation

Redlich Horowitz Foundation established fund to assist with COVID-19-related child welfare challenges

The Erie County Department of Social Services on Monday announced the receipt of a COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund grant from the Redlich Horowitz Foundation. The department will use the award to support the provision of services to child welfare-involved families while protecting staff and clients from the transmission of COVID-19.

This \$40,000 grant will allow ECSS to innovate in assessing safety and well-being, contacting families so that permanency is not delayed, and ensuring foster youth continue their education without interruption.

ECSS will use the grant funds

to purchase the technology necessary to create a technology bank of laptops and tablet computers. Staff will be able to use these technological supports during the COVID-19 emergency to:

- Facilitate virtual home visits to assess the safety and well-being of families,
- Facilitate virtual sibling visits,
- Facilitate virtual parent-child supervised visitation,
- Provide virtual training for foster/kinship parents to expedite home certification,
- Facilitate support groups for birth, foster/kinship parents, and for older youth in foster care,
- Assist youth or clients in need

of technology for telehealth services and other clinical services, and

•Assist youth in need of technology for educational purposes such as structured learning, continuity of learning, or virtual learning.

"The funds from the COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund grant will allow ECSS to ensure the safety of Erie County children while also protecting the health and safety of our essential staff," said Marie Cannon, Social Services commissioner. "Redlich Horowitz Foundation has been a partner of ECSS for many years. We value their partnership and continued

support for the families of Erie County.

"This crisis has been especially difficult for children in the child welfare system," added Catie Gavin, Social Services first deputy commissioner for family wellness. "Thanks to the generosity of the Redlich Horowitz Foundation, these children will be better able to be connected to their families, friends and community supports."

Founded in 1986, the Redlich Horowitz Foundation works to accelerate transformation in New York's child welfare system to keep children, youth and families supported and thriving.

The Redlich Horowitz COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund was established to award funds to organizations seeking to purchase software, hardware and cellular service to give telecommunication capacity to youth, families of origin and foster families to support family-based placements, family connection, reunification and permanency in a time of physical distancing.

For more information on the Department of Social Services, visit <http://www2.erie.gov/socialservices/>, or on the Redlich Horowitz Foundation, visit <http://www.rhfdn.org>.

Kaleida Health labs expand testing again

Kaleida Health on Thursday announced it has once again expanded its laboratory testing capability for COVID-19, adding a third clinic, this time on the east side of Buffalo, which has seen significant growth in the number of positive coronavirus cases.

"This is a great example of people working together and collaborating to help the community when it is in need," said Jody Lomeo, president and CEO of Kaleida Health. "We know that there is a high prevalence of COVID-19 in areas like the east side of Buffalo. So, it is incumbent upon us – the health system, our government and the community – to come to-

gether and help find a solution. I thank the Health Disparities Task Force, County Executive Poloncarz, Mayor Brown and our partners in government for their partnership on this important initiative."

The additional testing site, LeRoy Coles Library on East Delevan Avenue, will open Friday. The site is located in ZIP code 14215, which currently has the highest number of confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in Erie County. It is being opened in conjunction with the African American Health Disparities Task Force, County Executive Mark Poloncarz, Erie County Department of Health,

Erie County Legislature Chairwoman April Baskin, Mayor Byron Brown, City of Buffalo and the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library.

All individuals must have an appointment to receive a test, as the clinic cannot accommodate unscheduled testing. Individuals can schedule a test by calling 716-859-3222. They should have a prescription from their primary care provider to get tested if possible.

Test results can be returned in about 48-72 hours through the ordering health care provider.

If individuals do not have a health care provider in which to obtain a prescription for testing,

they can still follow this process, but their results will be communicated via the Erie County Department of Health. At that time, information about primary care physicians in the area who are currently accepting new patients will be shared with these individuals.

The Coles Library site will initially be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Kaleida Health will consider adding more hours and/or more nurses as testing demand escalates.

Those that are in need of a COVID-19 test (symptomatic with fever greater than 100 degree,

cough, shortness of breath), can call Kaleida Health's hotline number to review their symptoms and be scheduled for a test over the phone.

The Kaleida Health Laboratories team has analyzed over 4,700 COVID-19 tests year to date.

In mid-March, dozens of tests a day were analyzed, but now the labs have the capacity to process nearly 500 tests a day.

This is the fifth expansion for Kaleida Health and its labs.

For testing questions, the Kaleida Health coronavirus hotline remains open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily at 859-3222, or visit www.kaleidahealth.org.

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