

Policy Clarifications Cash Assistance- All

PCA-19803-131

Submitted: 03/13/2020

Agency: CAOs

Subject: Support Requirement when Domestic Relations Office is closed due to COVID-19

Question:

How do we treat a cash applicant/recipient who is required to cooperate with support requirements when the Domestic Relations Office (DRO) is closed due to COVID 19 response?

Response by: Division of Family Assistance

Date: 03/23/2020

Upon authorization from the Governor in accordance with the Proclamation of Disaster Emergency issued on March 6, 2020, and by request of the DROs, the Secretary is exercising her authority under 23 Pa.C.S. § 4378(a) and 55 Pa. Code § 187.23(d)(2) to waive the mandatory physical appearance at the DRO before authorizing assistance during the COVID 19 disaster emergency. See CAH 131.31 (Waiver). In the event the county DRO is closed due to the disaster emergency, the CAO will consider the applicant/recipient to be cooperating with support requirements. Upon authorizing cash assistance, the CAO should enter the absent relative information into eCIS with the appropriate referral code. If an applicant is claiming good cause for any other reason other than the closure due to the disaster emergency, enter that information on the absent relative screen.

When a county DRO reopens, the CAO will need to redetermine cooperation for individuals affected by this waiver. Further instructions will be issued at that time.