



## Memorandum

**Date:** June 2, 2020

**To:** Agencies Applying for First 5 California Home Visiting Coordination Funding

**From:** Debra Silverman, PhD, Education Administrator I

**Subject:** Home Visiting Coordination Funding Update

Five months after the Commission authorized funding for Home Visiting Coordination (HVC) in October 2019, the landscape in California suddenly shifted. Families' needs were exacerbated by COVID-19-related health/mental health issues, loss of child care and employment, and significant economic and social strains.

Home visiting is considered by experts as a primary way for families to successfully emerge from the COVID-19 crisis with the supports they need to thrive. Families are hesitant to use place-based services given the concern for social distancing, which will likely remain long after the shelter-in-place orders are lifted. The effects of COVID-19 on loss of employment and child care also will impact families into the foreseeable future. Further, as California emerges from the COVID-19 crisis, it is certain more families will qualify for services. Coordinated home visiting—virtual and/or home-based—can be a lifeline for many children and families, especially during crisis and through crisis recovery, because when home visiting is embedded in early childhood and family support systems, families receive the services they need to recover and thrive.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating effects on Federal, State, and local budgets, the Department of Finance issued a Budget Letter ([BL 20-11](#), available at [http://www.dof.ca.gov/budget/Budget\\_Letters/](http://www.dof.ca.gov/budget/Budget_Letters/)), outlining measures all agencies and departments under the direct executive authority of the governor must take immediately, regardless of funding source. Per BL 20-11, First 5 California (F5CA) will take immediate action to reduce its expenditures and require funding for any new or amended contracts to directly relate to COVID-19 expenditures throughout the state.

To comply with the Budget Letter, F5CA is recasting the purpose of the home visiting coordination funding in counties' Local Assistance Agreements (LAA) through the lens of recovery from the pandemic:

*The Fiscal Lead Agency will facilitate activities that improve cross-program service coordination and integration into a system of supports that enables families to be served during their greatest need, with the most appropriate program and services **to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.***

In addition, Fiscal Lead Agencies applying for the HVC funds are asked to confirm in writing that the awards will be used for the specific purpose of addressing COVID-19. Upon submittal of each county's application, the Fiscal Lead Agency will be sent via email a certification form indicating their compliance with the Budget Letter, which must be completed prior to execution of the LAA.

F5CA does not believe this focus on COVID-19 recovery substantively changes the work set forth in the Request for Application released May 15, 2020, but rather provides a lens and immediate focal point for partners to begin or deepen their home visiting coordination and systems integration work. For example, counties will be expected to reflect in the local Action Plan (due December 31, 2020), that HVC efforts are necessary to help families recover from the impacts of COVID-19, and systems strengthening, integration, and rebuilding is vital to ensuring children and families receive the services critical to their recovery.

If you have questions about this memo, please [contact](mailto:HVC@first5.ca.gov) HVC@first5.ca.gov. This memo also will be posted on the First 5 California Home Visiting [webpage](http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/partners/investments.html) at <http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/partners/investments.html>.