



CORONAVIRUS GUIDANCE

Child Custody

TO: Secretary Laura Howard
Deputy Secretary Tanya Keys

FROM: Acting General Counsel – Corliss Scroggins Lawson

DATE: March 30, 2020

SUBJECT: Guidance for Responding to Split Custody Concerns relating to COVID-19

Parents of minor children have questions about what they can do if they are concerned about their child possibly being exposed to COVID-19 because of the other parent’s alleged failure to take proper precautions. DCF cannot provide legal advice to any individual. Further, for those parents who are under a court order, only the court can grant relief from parenting arrangements and schedules set by the court. For this reason, the parent must contact an attorney to seek relief from such court-ordered arrangements should the parent determine that an emergency order is needed to protect the child from a “risk of irreparable harm,” which is a very high standard. The best advice is for the parent to try to engage the other parent in a detailed discussion of the concern to see if they can come to a solution that both parents believe is best under the circumstances and reduce it to writing.