



PSA

Date: June 11, 2020
To: All Media
From: Stephanie Krell, PIO Unified Command
Subject: **Child Welfare and COVID-19**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has expanded resources during the COVID-19 pandemic. There have been myths circulating about children being placed into foster care when a parent or guardian has contracted COVID-19, which is simply untrue.

DHS Child Welfare does not identify a parent or guardian's medical condition as a safety threat or sole reason for removal. If a parent/guardian becomes too ill to care for their children, DHS has the ability to make a **temporary** plan for the children on a **voluntary** basis.

DHS will work with the parent/guardian to explore all options to include family, friends and community resources. If all options have been exhausted, DHS could place children in foster care. This placement would be **temporary** and **voluntary** and would not affect the parent's custodial rights nor would it involve the child dependency legal system.

Sunny Petit, press secretary for the Oregon DHS said, "We do not want anyone to avoid getting treatment or tested because of a fear that their children would be taken away."

To learn more about Oregon Child Welfare COVID-19 Resources, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/CHILDREN/Pages/COVID-19.aspx> or contact our local branch at 541-298-5136.

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