



Foster Care Visitation Guidelines

Visitation between parents and their children ensures a positive family bond is maintained. Research shows facilitating and supporting family visitation is a lead indicator for achieving reunification, and our goal is to provide quality visitation for you and your family. We want to work collaboratively with you to help you and your family be successful. Below, you will find what you can anticipate from us and what we ask of you during visitation with your family.

Here's what you can expect from CYFS staff regarding visitation with your children:

1. We will treat you and your family with dignity, compassion and respect at all times.
2. We will promote family friendly environments for your visitation.
3. We agree to help you overcome any barriers prohibiting you from attending and participating in visitation, including assisting with transportation to and from visitation.
4. We will be present to assist you with parenting skills and provide supervision for your visit, when needed.
5. We will provide resources on visitation activities to help you build parenting skills and strengthen your parenting.
6. We will suggest positive ways for you to interact with your children, discipline your children, and parent your children, if needed.
7. We may redirect your children towards positive behavior and interactions, should the need arise, during visitation.
8. We will discuss with you any safety or risk concerns observed during your visitation, intervening when needed, to meet the needs of both you and your children. This is to ensure those safety or risk concerns do not pose a threat to you or your family during visitation.
9. We will keep your children safe during visitation and are willing to potentially end the visit early if safety or risk issues arise.
10. We will provide rescheduled visitation in the event your child is sick, there is a foster parent conflict, or a worker conflict. We will work to avoid having to reschedule your family's visitation.
11. We will document observations from visitation in our effort to help you achieve reunification. We will document interactions, discipline methods and family activities during visitation. Additionally, we will document your ability to cooperate with our staff, your composure and direction you provide to your children on how you interact with foster parents and agency staff. We agree to be transparent and offer you feedback after every visit for your benefit, outside the presence of your children.

12. Workers will discuss progress in visitation with their supervisors on a monthly basis. They will determine the need for changes in visitation. Workers will also provide you reasons for changes to visitation.

13. We value your input on visitation, request your active participation in the process and will work to best meet your family's needs.

In order to help your children have a sense of security and safety in attending visitation, we would ask you abide by the following guidelines listed below. These are implemented to ensure your visitation has the most positive impact for you and your children.

Here is what CYFS staff asks of you during visitation:

1. You will collaborate with your worker to determine the best time and location for your family's visitation. Your request for a time and location will be accommodated as much as possible with consideration to availability of staff, safety being evaluated and review of court discretion.
We will do our best to schedule visitation at a time and location most conducive to your family's needs.
2. You will make every diligent effort to consistently attend visitation for your children and be on time for visits.
Children greatly look forward to visitation with their parents and when a parent does not show for visitation, this can be very hard on them.
3. You will communicate with us, as soon as possible, when you are unable to attend your visit, need to reschedule or if you are going to be late. If you need to reschedule, we will work with you and attempt to schedule a visit within the same week. If not attending visits becomes a pattern, we will ask you to call and confirm your participation prior to your scheduled visits.
Repeated cancelled or missed visits affects your children and their schedules. We want to work with you to get something rescheduled so your family can visit.
4. You will communicate with your worker to arrange a makeup visit should your child be ill or there is a conflict with keeping the regularly scheduled visit.
We want to do everything we can to keep your regular visit times as we know you and your children look forward to time together.
5. You will treat staff and foster parents with dignity, compassion and respect at all times. Yelling, verbal abuse or threats of violence will not be tolerated. This includes times when we may suggest things for you to do to that you may disagree with. Also, times when we may intervene during visitation with direction on how to handle a situation.
We are all on the same team, working for the same goal. We want to work together towards this goal.

6. You will communicate your needs to us, including any barriers preventing you from attending visitation.

We can best serve you when we know what your needs are. Help us help you!

7. You will use appropriate discipline techniques with your children during visitation. Appropriate techniques include time outs or consequences for behaviors. Inappropriate techniques include use of physical punishment (spanking or hitting) and verbal abuse (speaking negatively to the child).

We would like you to model appropriate discipline techniques during visitation to promote a healthy environment for you and your family. This also provides us an opportunity to model what these techniques are to you if you need assistance.

8. You will discuss appropriate topics with your children during your visit. Discussion topics that are appropriate include school, how your child is doing, communicating affection to your child, etc.

We encourage you to focus on learning about what is new with your child.

Discussion topics that are not appropriate include negative comments about your children, foster parents or staff. We ask that you refrain from discussing with your children when they will come home. To assist in your ability to be present during visits, we ask that you refrain from using your cell phone and taking smoke breaks.

While we know you want to provide hope to your children about returning home, we ask that you don't discuss this during visitation, in an effort to reduce any unnecessary confusion and disappointment.

9. You will obtain approval from your worker, prior to your visit, to bring additional people, gifts or letters to your visit.

We encourage your family to maintain connections with friends and family. We also encourage you to provide gifts and letters to your children to remind them of how much you love them. We request that information about extra visitors at visits be shared with your worker prior to the visit (i.e. 24 hours) to ensure everyone's safety.

10. You will not attend visits under the influence of any drugs or alcohol. If you are, or visibly appear to be, under the influence of drugs or alcohol the visit will be immediately terminated.

We want to ensure that your children will feel safe.

11. You will communicate with us if you will be late for a visit. If there is no communication with you within the first 15 minutes of the start time of your visit, a phone call will be made to your last known number in an attempt to find out if you are running late or having a problem getting to your visit. If you are unable to be reached after this phone call, the visit will be cancelled.

Please communicate with us so we can work to ensure that your visit occurs as regularly scheduled.

By signing this form, you agree that you have received a copy of the parent/child visitation guidelines and that you will follow them during all visits with your child(ren).

Parent _____

Date _____

Parent _____
Date _____

Family Worker _____ Date _____

Supervisor

Date

Family Support Worker Date
