Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts on Contracted Services to Families
Frequently Asked Provider Questions & Answers

Last updated 04.06.20

To more easily navigate this document, open the document with Adobe Acrobat and utilize the ‘Bookmarks’ tool in the left hand sidebar to click on the topic that your question pertains to.
The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic facing our state is an unprecedented situation creating stressors across all public and private systems. As our government agencies and public and private entities unite to create structure and develop answers to the many procedural questions during this time of uncertainty, the health of children, families, and workforce is paramount. FIN has received a number of inquiries from providers regarding the impact of the virus on visitation procedures and business routines. FIN is working closely with DCYF during this ever-evolving situation and will update providers with more thorough answers as decisions are communicated to us.

Please reference the following website for additional information:


---

**Family Time / Parent Child Visitation**

**SCREENING PROTOCOLS AND REPORTED/POSSIBLE EXPOSURES TO COVID-19**

**Q. Screening Protocols: Updated Guidance from DCYF has been received regarding screening prior to visitation. Screening documents for Family Time providers are available on FIN’s website on the Network Resources page.**

**A.** DCYF staff are strongly encouraged to conduct a simple assessment prior to making home visits or having visits into the offices. In the assessment, ask:

- If anyone in the household is currently sick;
- Has anyone in the household been in contact with anyone known to have COVID-19;
- Is anyone in the household have underlying health conditions?

Staff will then work with their supervisors to determine appropriateness of visits based on these responses, the current county health department recommendations, and case specific circumstances

**Q. What should I do if I learn that one of my staff/subcontractors has been in contact with someone during a visit who is reporting exposure to the COVID-19?**

**A.** In the situation where a Family Time or In-Home Service Provider staff’s person has exposure to a person with a presumptive positive (has been test and is awaiting results) or confirmed positive for COVID-19 please follow these steps.
Step 1: Recommend that staff person/visit supervisor self-quarantines.

Step 2: Compile a list of all families the visit supervisor and/or therapist has been in contact with since the potential exposure. Call the DCYF office’s Program Manager to let them know who these families are and they will take care of further communication to DCYF families.

Step 3: Agency or staff person should contact the local Health District (available through the Department of Health Website) and inform them of their direct exposure to the person who has a presumptive positive or confirmed positive for COVID-19. Do not break confidentiality of the clients rather use language that “as part of your job you encountered this person and have been informed that they have a presumptive positive or confirmed positive.” Take the advice of the local Health District.

Q. Are there any restrictions for providers requiring a temperature check on children prior to transportation to a visit and/or participation in a visit?

A. FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance.

Q. If we are screening staff, clients and visitors to our facilities for an elevated temperature what should the threshold be?

A. According to the CDC a person is considered to have a fever when he or she has a measured temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or greater, or feels warm to the touch, or gives a history of feeling feverish.

Q. Are there any restrictions for providers requiring a temperature check on children prior to transportation to a visit and/or participation in a visit?

A. We would refer you to the CDC website.

Q: We are worried about COVID-19 and have implemented some additional steps in our procedures. We are sterilizing rooms, removing toys, and have put rules in place around handwashing of all parties during visits to prevent any illness from coming in. Is there more that we should do?

A: The swift and thorough preventative measures already taken by providers has been a solid frontline response to the Covid-19 illness. Further information sanitation process can be found at the DOH website. FIN also recommends at a minimum conducting this simple three-question assessment of parents and caregivers prior to scheduled visits:
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts on Contracted Services to Families
Frequently Asked Provider Questions & Answers

Last updated 04.06.20

- Is anyone in the household currently sick?
- Has anyone in the household been in contact with anyone know to have COVID-19?
- Does anyone in the household have underlying health conditions?

Follow this link to a list of registered disinfectant products to be used against SARS-CoV-2, a coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Q: What is the protocol if we believe a child, parent, caregiver has had exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and/or is awaiting results? Who should I be notifying (staff, social workers, FIN, bio parents)? Should I cancel all visits or just some? Do we need to close down our facility?

A: Please follow the Unusual Incident Report (UIR) procedure so the social worker is informed. We have escalated these questions to DCYF and are awaiting guidance. Please follow recommendations from your respective County Health Departments in relation to continuity of operations and potential closure, in accordance with their existing governance structures.

TRANSPORT-ONLY VISITS

Q. What is the expectation on transport-only visits?

A. As with other visits during this time, in-person contact is discouraged in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This applies to unsupervised visits, as well, and Family Time providers should coordinate these visits by videoconference but not supervise or monitor the visits.

REFERRAL PROCESSES AND CANCELLATIONS

Q. Does a new referral need to be submitted to move visits to electronic?

A. No new referral will be needed to shift visits to remote/virtual visits.

Q. What about referrals that have been pulled by the social worker already?

Last updated 04.06.2020
A. For referrals that were cancelled and turned over to the foster parent/care giver to facilitate contact between the parent and child, FIN will follow up with DCYF and determine a process.

Q. Foster parents are communicating to providers that they are unsure if they should send children to visits. With all the closures they would like guidance from DCYF social workers on the status of visits.

A. DCYF provided guidance regarding the status of in-person visitation. As of 3/26/2020 in-person visitation is suspended and all providers should move to remote visitation alternatives.

Q. Does a new referral need to be submitted to move visits to electronic?

A. No new referral will be needed to shift visits to remote/virtual visits.

Q. What about referrals that have been pulled by the social worker already?

A. For referrals that were cancelled and turned over to the foster parent/care giver to facilitate contact between the parent and child, FIN will follow up with DCYF and determine a process.

Q: Confusion has arisen around cancellations from parents who contract Covid-19 and are unable to complete a scheduled visitation with a child. Currently, many providers have been communicating to children, staff and parents that visitations cancelled due to illness will be made up. Is it true that if parents choose the Cancel >24 hours in Sprout, providers won’t get paid for staff time? Likewise, if providers choose Cancel < 24 hours in Sprout it will count as a miss against the parent?

A: FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and is awaiting guidance. We will provide you any information as soon it is received.

Q: Are providers permitted to cancel or stop a visit if parents show signs of illness? Should providers require documentation from medical providers verifying the health of sick parents before conducting their next visit?

A: Follow your agencies infectious disease policy regarding stopping visits for illness. Completing the Unusual Incident Report (UIR) procedure so social workers are informed.
IN-PERSON VISITS AND EXCEPTIONS

Q. Is the expectation that in person visits need to end today or April 1?
A. Effective today, 3/26/2020, in-person visits should cease.

Q. What about referrals that have been pulled by the social worker already?
A. For referrals that were cancelled and turned over to the foster parent/care giver to facilitate contact between the parent and child, FIN will follow up with DCYF and determine a process.

Q. What if a Social Worker asks the provider to make an exception and do in-person visit?
A. According to the Family Time and Sibling and Relative Visit Interim Policy Effective March 26, 2020 DCYF will suspend in-person face-to-face parent-child and sibling visits until the COVID-19 emergency concludes, and when possible will substitute in-person visits with remote visits, as provided below.

Q. Foster parents are communicating to providers that they are unsure if they should send children to visits. With all the closures they would like guidance from DCYF social workers on the status of visits.
A. FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance.

Q. We are concerned about allowing our visit supervisors to participate in visits in the home. Providers can control sanitation in our own visitation centers but have no control over these practices in an individual's home. We would like to have the authority to move the visit location in these cases.
A. DCYF provided guidance regarding the status of in-person visitation. As of 3/26/2020 in-person visitation is suspended and all providers should move to remote visitation alternatives.

Q. A large part of our visits are done in the community. As we see these public places closing are we able to change the visit location to accommodate the needs of the families?
A. DCYF provided guidance regarding the status of in-person visitation. As of 3/26/2020 in-person visitation is suspended and all providers should move to remote visitation alternatives.

Q. With the Governors recommendation to keep groups of people to less than 10 should we allow more than 10 people in our visitation facility? We have 6 rooms and families will be separated during visits.
A. DCYF provided guidance regarding the status of in-person visitation. As of 3/26/2020 in-person visitation is suspended and all providers should move to remote visitation alternatives.
A. DCYF provided guidance regarding the status of in-person visitation. As of 3/26/2020 in-person visitation is suspended and all providers should move to remote visitation alternatives.

Q. We are concerned about the health and safety of infants and all children who may be medically fragile amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Does the department have any guidance on if we should continue visits in these cases?

A. DCYF provided guidance regarding the status of in-person visitation. As of 3/26/2020 in-person visitation is suspended and all providers should move to remote visitation alternatives.

Q. Foster parents are communicating to providers that they are unsure if they should send children to visits. With all the closures they would like guidance from DCYF social workers on the status of visits.

A. FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance.

---

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WITH ZOOM**

**Q. How can phone numbers be hidden in Zoom?**

A. Yes this is possible. Please reach out to our technical assistance for further information at 1-833-FINTEC9 or techsupport@familyimpactnetwork.org.

---

**ELECTRONIC/VIRTUAL VISITS INCLUDING MISSED VISITS/NO-SHOWS**

**Q. A provider received approval from a social worker to conduct visits via phone, however this is not allowed contractually at this time. Is this allowable?**

A. DCYF provided guidance regarding the status of in-person visitation. As of 3/26/2020 in-person visitation is suspended and all providers should move to remote visitation alternatives. If participants in visitation do not have access to technology needed for video visitation visits via phone could be an alternative.

**Q. Is the expectation that provides contact social workers about moving visits electronically?**
A. The Governor’s directive orders visits to move to remote/video visits so there is no need to get this confirmation from social workers. However, communication with social workers will be very important during this interim process.

Q. What about current electronic visits? Do we keep doing those? Have current referral where child is in Utah and parent is in Walla Walla and parent has been coming to visitation center to access virtual visit.

A. In this situation the visit needs to be set up through a video conference process, with all parties in separate locations. If the parent has access barriers please work with the social worker to inform of this barrier.

Q. Will re-referral need to be requested if parent misses 3 electronic visits?

A. This will be answered in two parts

(1) DCYF is allowing flexibility as to three missed visits or calls. Due to technical support for the providers, caregivers and parents it is going to take some time to get situated in remote visitation. Providers should allow more than three missed calls, and the caseworker and team should evaluate on a case-by-case basis.

(2) If the provider has clear indication that the parents are not responding, then it is required that the visit referral be resolved in Sprout. If parents re-engage, then the case worker will have to resubmit the visit referral.

Q. How do we document attempts to set up visits or no shows?

A. No-shows can be counted by the number of phone attempts. Document in Sprout with respect to missed visit due to technical failure it will not be counted against the parent or provider.

Q. Does a new referral need to be submitted to move visits to electronic?

A. No new referral will be needed to shift visits to remote/virtual visits.

Q. A provider received approval from a social worker to conduct visits via phone, however this is not allowed contractually at this time. Is this allowable?

A. FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance.
SUSPENDED VISITS

Q. When can a visit supervisor suspend a visit and what is the reporting process if this happens?

A. According to DCYF’s Family Time and Sibling and Relative Visits Interim Policy Family Time video conferencing could be suspended if the following exists:

- Encourages child to be unsafe
- Does not meet the basic emotional needs of the child.
- Is not giving the child their full attention or not aware of child well-being
- Allows unauthorized visitors.
- Speaks negatively about the caregiver or other parties.

If this occurs Contact the provider and case worker for documentation as to why video conferencing was suspended.

Q. Are we positive all social workers received communication about visits being suspended? Angela said she knows some social workers who aren’t aware.

A. We did confirm that communication was sent internal, via email, to DCYF social workers.

TRACKING AND RECORDING VISITS IN SPROUT

Q. Will there be a change in Sprout in order to have a format to better record notes for electronic visits?

A. No-shows can be counted by the number of phone attempts. Document in Sprout with respect to missed visit due to technical failure it will not be counted against the parent or provider.

Q. Is there a way to change Sprout to be able to track when visits are being cancelled due to COVID-19?

A. FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance.
Q. How do we document attempts to set up visits or no shows?

A. No-shows can be counted by the number of phone attempts. Document in Sprout with respect to missed visit due to technical failure it will not be counted against the parent or provider.

EMPLOYEE PAY

Q. What is the expectation around what their employees should be paid? For example – how does it work if they’re just supervising 30-minute video visits and then there’s no transport or anything?

A. DCYF will be moving to a retainer payment for the months when the waiver of in person visits are in place. This retainer payment will be based upon an average of the six months of payments made to your organization from July 2019 to January 2020. We are willing to make some adjustments to the amount on a provider by provider basis.

For March, providers may either bill as usual or receive the retainer payment. DCYF will be reaching out to each provider to communicate the calculated retainer payment and to determine the provider’s plan for March billing.

In exchange for this retainer payment you will be available to facilitate electronic visits and maintain your staff or subcontractors to the extent the retainer payment allows.

If a provider is able to take additional referrals that results in costs that exceed the retainer for April, we can discuss that on a provider by provider basis when we have referral and acceptance data.

CONTRACT AMENDMENTS

Q. Will they receive contract amendments or are we just “winging it” with what can or can’t be done?
A. DCYF is not planning on contract amendments at this time. We will instead be waiving requirements in your contracts. Program staff are identifying all provisions of the contracts that need to be waived. FIN will be working with providers on the process to waive requirements once the process has been finalized with DCYF.

---

**INSURANCE NEEDS**

**Q. Do we need auto insurance coverage because transportation is not needed at this time?**

A. Yes, this is still a requirement at this time. For providers who have a fleet of vehicles we suggest you reach out to your insurance broker and inquire about a reduced use and/or storage rate.

---

**PHONES/TECHNOLOGY FOR PARENTS**

**Q. Do we know when parents will get phones/technology?**

A. For those families without equipment, Family Time Providers (or a case worker in those instances where a family time provider is not assigned) will refer to Concrete Goods Providers. Depending on what equipment is needed, it may take several days to get the equipment to the family members, but providers will do their best to get necessary equipment as quickly as possible.

---

**MAKE-UP VISITATION TIME**

**Q. Will the providers be responsible to offer make up time after in person visitation can begin again? For example, if they’re offering three 30-minute video visits in contrast to the court order of three 3-hour in person visits per week?**

A: The case manager, supervisor, provider and the parents will develop a makeup plan if one is needed.
FOSTER PARENT/CAREGIVER CONFIDENTIALITY CONCERNS

Q. Have had foster parents share that they aren't comfortable with the bio parents possibly knowing their info – how are the providers supposed to navigate this?

A: We have provided the following link to the foster parent and caregivers with ideas for them to help protect their privacy and confidentiality while assisting with video conferencing.


FOSTER PARENT FACILITATED VISITS

Q: Are foster parents required to facilitate the remote visits?

A: Where foster parents were facilitating visits prior to COVID-19, those arrangements should continue. In most other cases, Family Time providers will coordinate and facilitate visits, and foster parents may need to help coordinate technology for a child(ren) in their home.

Q: What about visits that are already set up and facilitated by foster parents, will these continue or transfer to Family Time providers?

A: If visitation was arranged by the case worker with the foster parent then it will remain the same. If the foster parent is not able or willing to provide video conferencing, then the case worker will be required to submit a visit referral via Sprout to have a provider assigned. Emergent interim policy is attached: https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Family%20Time%20Interim%20Policy%20memo%20FINAL%20(003).pdf
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts on Contracted Services to Families
Frequently Asked Provider Questions & Answers

Last updated 04.06.20

UNSUPERVISED VISITS

Q. For current unsupervised visits should providers facilitate the connection between the visit participants?

A. We will follow up with DCYF on this question.

VISITATION FACILITY SANITATION REIMBURSEMENT

Q: We are taking additional measures to sanitize visitation facilities and wondered if costs associated with this additional sanitation could be reimbursed.

A: FIN is offering providers a $500 grant to cover costs for additional sanitation through 5/31/2020. If you need additional information about this grant opportunity, please reach out to sheila@familyimpactnetwork.org.

An inquiry has been made to DCYF regarding any expected state agency reimbursement for these types of extra expenses. FIN will keep providers informed of any information received regarding state expense reimbursement related to the COVID-19 crisis.

FINANCIAL IMPACT ON ORGANIZATION DUE TO CANCELLED VISITS

Q: We are having to cancel visits because of illness. Since we are only paid when we perform a visit, this will have a long-term financial impact on our business and our staff. Have you heard anything about possible adjustments to the payment structure?

A: We have elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance. We will provide you any information as soon as it is received. Useful information is available on the Employment Security Department (ESD) website regarding supports to businesses, including a helpful quick reference guide.

SCHOOL CLOSURE IMPACTS ON VISITATION

Last updated 04.06.2020
Q: How will school closures impact visitation? While this opens up availability for scheduling visits, there is a chance that all visits would be cancelled, or families may expect to stay home even though their visitation is court ordered. Parents don’t want to cancel, but if they do because of social distancing that means visits would be off the table, too. Do you have any information on this?

A: We understand the impact the school closures will have on your work and the families you are serving. This is a very fluid situation and we are working with DCYF to determine next steps. We will keep you informed as information and guidance is provided to us.

---

In-Home Services

Q. I provide in-home services at a local residential facility. I was just informed that there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 at this facility. Some of our therapists have visited clients there in the past week. Do you have any guidance about whether or not those therapists should continue to have face-to-face visits with DCYF clients?

A. FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance. Useful information regarding exposure can be found on the DOH website and your local Health District.

Q. I just got a call from a Visit Supervisor (VS) saying that we (in-home contractor) are not allowed to attend visits unless we are crucial to the case. I was asked by the VS to not attend visits since I don’t meet any of those categories." The in-home service provider said that the VS told her there was a "massive email sent this morning." I have not received any email from DCYF stating that therapists cannot attend visits. Has there been communication that I did not have access to?

A. FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance.

Q. I provide in-home services at a local residential facility. I was just informed that there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 at this facility. Some of our therapists have visited clients there in the past week. Do you have any guidance about whether or not those therapists should continue to have face-to-face visits with DCYF clients?

A. FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance. Useful information regarding exposure can be found on the DOH website and your local Health District.
Q: What input / guidance does FIN have regarding the CIHS contractual requirement of weekly face-to-face contact with families as it relates to the virus and discussion about reducing spread of infection via social distancing? Specifically, if providers are working with a family where someone is currently ill with or has been exposed to Covid-19, or encounters a family worried about exposing themselves to the virus through a visitation, is it acceptable to do conduct a tele-therapy session utilizing Facetime or Skype and still maintain contractual compliance?

A: FIN is discussing these issues with DCYF officials. Meetings are currently taking place within DCYF including regional program managers, CIHS leads, EBP developers and executive leadership to address this issue. FIN will provide appropriate guidance as soon as information is made available.

Q. Have other providers implemented additional screen for illness as a result of the Coronavirus?

A. We have heard that others are adjusting screening processes. We would suggest that if you haven’t already done this to conduct this simple assessment of parents and caregivers prior to scheduled appointments. In the assessment, ask:

- Is anyone in the household is currently sick?
- Has anyone in the household been in contact with anyone know to have COVID-19?
- Does anyone in the household have underlying health conditions?

Q. If In-Home Visitation is needed how should providers screen for illness?

A. Screening Protocols:

Updated Guidance from DCYF has been received regarding screening prior to in-person visitation. Screening documents for Family Time providers are available on FIN’s website on the Network Resources page.

DCYF staff are strongly encouraged to conduct a simple assessment prior to making home visits or having visits into the offices. In the assessment, ask:

- If anyone in the household is currently sick;
- Has anyone in the household been in contact with anyone known to have COVID-19;
- Is anyone in the household have underlying health conditions?
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts on Contracted Services to Families
Frequently Asked Provider Questions & Answers

Last updated 04.06.20

Staff will then work with their supervisors to determine appropriateness of visits based on these responses, the current county health department recommendations, and case specific circumstances