

June 1, 2020

Dear Kinship, Foster and Congregate Caregivers,

Having had the opportunity to engage with leaders from around the country and hear about challenges they face, I am so thankful to have the support and commitment of individuals like yourselves. Your continued support of children, commitment to families and pursuit of permanency for these children is so much appreciated.

The Department has been sending communications on our preparations about returning to in-person child contacts and parenting time visitation. As we start transitioning back to in-person, I am very thankful for all the support you have provided. We understand that some individuals are concerned about the timing of resuming these visits and I want to acknowledge that concern. As a Department, our commitment is to fulfill the mission of engaging children and families to ensure safety, strengthen families and achieve permanency. In doing this, we are also committed to your safety while achieving the mission.

Resuming these interactions has been done with much forethought and coordination to prioritize safety, gradually increasing engagement, and focusing on strengthening families and supporting permanency. Although virtual services have aided in continued engagement and delivery of therapeutic services over the past 10 weeks, the work the Department does in support of children, families and caregivers requires a personal level of engagement that is not achievable virtually. Parents are anxious to see their children and check on their well-being during this historic time. This is a great opportunity to share activities from the [Shared Parenting Journals](#) to share experiences and create a connection between families to help build stability for children.

The Department is committed to the safety of children, families, caregivers and all the individuals who support these activities in our community. It is with that in mind that our guidance documents have been created. These documents are continually updated based on the most recent CDC and Public Health information. If there are questions on the Department's requirements, please visit our website and review the latest revisions.

In-Person Child Contacts

<https://dcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/CSO-2407-In-personVisitGuide-ChildContacts.pdf>

In-Person Parenting Time/Visitation

<https://dcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/CSO-2407A-In-personVisitGuideParentingTime-Visitation.pdf>

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Again, I want to thank you for your support before, during and after this public health crisis. This has been a challenging time and with focus on our mission of serving children and families, we have continued to fulfill that calling during this unprecedented time.

Mike Faust
Director