

May 7, 2020

Dear In-Home Preservation & Reunification Service Providers,

Thank you for your partnership with the agency during this time. After receiving feedback from providers through weekly calls, emails & the COVID-19 survey, DCS is clarifying direction on face-to-face child contacts provided by In-Home service providers.

Per the attached directive, face-to-face child contacts shall be conducted in the home after 5/15/2020. The contract scope of work (section 3.2.5) states that children in the home must be seen by the Contractor at a minimum of one (1) time per week.

**From 5/16 to 5/29, DCS will allow that one visit per week must be conducted face-to-face in the home as long as all children are seen, all other weekly visits may be conducted virtually. This decision applies to all in home services (Intensive, Moderate and Reunification) regardless if children are safe or unsafe and is time limited and will end after 5/29/2020.**

Please be aware that some families will need more than one weekly in-person and this decision should consider factors such as the parents' cognitive functioning, social isolation, and other factors that would make in-person contact more effective; as well as the specific behavioral changes being addressed. Provider agency staff should be staffing with DCS to determine if more than 1 visit in-person is needed each week.

**Past 5/29/2020, all child contacts & parenting time (In-Home, Parent Aide & Supervised Visitation services) shall be conducted in-person, face-to-face.** The Department is still evaluating feedback from providers and the learning we have gathered during this time. If virtual services can be incorporated into our services permanently, we will notify providers through a contract amendment. Efforts to review this are underway but there is no committed timeline for that decision at this time.

We hope this clarification will help offer a smoother transition to face-to-face child contacts for both In-Home providers and families.

Thank you,

Mike Faust  
Director