

Department of Human Services

During these challenging times, in-person visits remain important to children and their parents. These types of visits are essential to healthy child development and reducing trauma. Some in-person visits will restart and special steps must be taken to make sure that these visits are safe.

Parents, Siblings and Other Court Approved Visitors:

It is so important that you are able to visit during this time of uncertainty. Children do best when they can see family regularly, and we want to work with you to make visits as safe as possible. If you do not feel safe visiting in-person, virtual visits will remain available to you.

Resource Parents:

You play a critical role in supporting healthy connections between children and their parents. Remember that children will benefit when you understand and support normal emotional responses to visits. These visits are a great way to strengthen your relationship with the birth family.

Youth:

We know that this is a hard time. As much as we want your lives to be back to normal, there is still a serious threat from COVID-19. Please know that these visits are a time for family and family activities, not for friends or other activities.

Exceptions to Visits

Visits will remain virtual if:

- Any member to the visit can't meet the pre-screening conditions.
- Any member to the visit provides a doctor's note that visitation would not be safe.
- Any member to the visit will not follow these safety rules.
- The court orders visits to stay virtual.

Transportation

- Resource parents are responsible for providing the child's transportation for a visit.
- If there are problems with transportation, notify your case manager.

Questions? Concerns?

You can contact your case manager, lawyer, or the DHS Commissioners Action Response Office (C.A.R.O) at 215-683-6000

Guidance for Family Visits During Covid-19

Tips and Requirements

Pre-Screening:

Your case manager will pre-screen everybody who is planning to be at the visit. This will involve a few simple questions.

In-person visits will not occur if:

- Anyone has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Anyone has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Anyone is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, like a fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

Face Coverings:

- Face coverings are required for all participants at a visit, including children over the age of 2.
- If a child over the age of 2 can't or won't keep their face covering on, they must keep 6 feet of distance from non-household members.
- If you do not have a face covering, tell your case manager and they will help you get one.

Hand Washing:

- Frequent hand washing before and after visits is required.
- You must also wash hands during a visit after using the bathroom, eating, playing outside, touching any bodily fluids, or cleaning up.
- Soap and warm water are recommended, but you can also use hand sanitizer if necessary.

Activities and Food:

- Consider visiting outdoors when it is possible.
- Parents and children should stay distant from other people who are not part of the visit.
- Parents and children are allowed to be close and give hugs during a visit as long as masks are worn.
- Parents are allowed to bring food and toys to visits. Toys must be sanitized before and after.
- Where possible, try to stay 6 feet away while eating.

