

**Guidance regarding visits for parents/relatives and children/young adults in the care of DHS including cases that share concurrent jurisdiction with Oregon's Nine Tribes or U.S. Federally Recognized Tribes as of 5.1.20 – 5.15.20**

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**For all visitation and family contact:** Please modify plans to allow for frequent phone and virtual contact between families of origin and children; as well as siblings who are not together. These are unprecedented times. Our families and children who are separated from each other may need extra support and assurances that everyone is OK. Hearing each other's voices and/or seeing each other virtually will help maintain and build attachment. Children of all ages (even babies) can absolutely benefit from increased virtual contact. Parents will also greatly benefit. Please also encourage providers and parents to email pictures and recorded videos and explore other creative ideas to stay connected. We know that parents are more motivated to stay engaged in their case plan and children do better when they are having frequent contact. Here is a link for tips on virtual visiting:  
<https://www.nccdglobal.org/blog/successful-video-visits-young-children>

**Visits in DHS offices:** As of 5/1/20, we are continuing the suspension of face-to-face visitation for all parents and children/young adults in DHS offices. We will reassess this suspension no later than 5/15/20.

**Visits in the community:** Visits in the community may continue to be held on a case by case basis for parents and children/young adults who were visiting in the community prior to the Governor's order and for cases where the level of supervision needed can be managed in the community, with the following considerations:

- Foster parents, parents, the Tribe, and caseworkers agree there are no health-related concerns around visits. Please engage everyone in a discussion about the importance of visitation for parents and children.
- If there are questions about the visits occurring, Program Managers, and the Tribe when applicable, will review visits on a case-by-case basis and make the final decision whether the visit should occur.
- **When considering changing face-to-face visits for a tribal child, please update and collaborate with the tribe as soon as possible. It is important to maintain collaboration with tribal partners on methods to maintain contact outside of face-to face-contact, i.e. Skype, phone calls, etc.** If the tribal representative is not available or unable to provide tribal perspective, reach out to Active Efforts Specialists or the Tribal Affairs Unit for guidance.

When appropriate, community visits can be supervised by DHS staff (as available) as well as foster parents or safety service providers. Recognizing the importance of attachment and nurturing during these visits, social distancing will not be required between parent and child, but it is important to be mindful of the physical contact that is made in order to reduce the transmission of germs when possible. Transportation to and from visits should be done with as much physical distancing as possible, and appropriate hygiene precautions.

**For all visitation between parents and children/young adults, please take the following precautionary measures:**

- Prior to visits, the worker, SSA, and or other visit supervisor, if one is required, will connect with the foster family and visiting family to ensure that quarantining and social distancing guidelines have been followed, no one is experiencing illness, nor have they been in contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Consider on a case-by-case basis if anyone in the foster family or family's household has underlying health vulnerabilities and have staff consult with their supervisor should any health concerns exist (e.g. Child with symptoms visiting a parent who lives with an elderly grandparent). If there is a question about a visit occurring, Program Managers will make the decision if the visit should occur.
- Please take the following precautions:
  - Wipe down car seats and other surfaces with disinfectant before and after each visit. (light switches, doorknobs, tables, chairs etc.)
  - Wash hands before and after visits. Have children change their clothes upon returning to placement.
  - Please adhere to policies that mirror CDC social distancing. Look for more information here:
    - <https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le2268.pdf>
    - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

**Documentation of visits:**

The visitation plan should be clearly outlined on the CF831 Visit and Contact Form to include the virtual visitation and should include in-person visitation, when it is occurring indicating the update is due to COVID-19.

Please document all parent/child contact as you normally would in OR-Kids.

When assessing the level of visitation or modifying an existing visitation plan, the worker should whenever possible, include the parties and/or attorneys to the juvenile dependency case.

If a PM determines visitation is not feasible and visitation is not occurring, the worker should consult with the AAG assigned to the case and notify the parties to the juvenile dependency case. The worker should also work with their AAG to notify the court if required by a local Presiding Judge Order and/or pursuant to other local court requirements.