



# Request for Proposals

## Coached Supervised Visitation and Visitation Space

**RFP Posting:** February 10, 2016

**Deadline for Questions:** March 21, 2016

**Submission Deadline:** March 28, 2016

**Estimated Award Decision/Notification:** May, 2016

Allegheny County Department of Human Services  
One Smithfield Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

# **Contents**

The Purpose

Section 1: Key Information

Section 2: Background

Section 3: Our Requirements

Section 4: The Selection Process

Section 5: Contract Information

Appendix A

## **The Purpose**

### **What we need**

*Allegheny County, on behalf of its Department of Human Services' (DHS) child welfare office (the Office of Children, Youth and Families, or CYF), is seeking Proposals from two or more qualified Proposers to supervise parent visits for children who have been removed from the care of their family of origin and are in child welfare out-of-home placement. During the visit, Proposers are expected to engage with the parent(s), using a specified visitation coaching model. The goal is to improve parents' ability to meet their child's developmental and safety needs and thus strengthen family relationships. Henceforth, this service will be referred to as "Coached Supervised Visitation." Proposers are also expected to ensure that the visit takes place in a comfortable, home-like setting (e.g., the family's home or the home of a family member or friend) and to provide such a setting when one is not available to the family. DHS estimates that approximately 195 individual children or sibling groups and parents will require coached visits ranging from 2 to 8 times per month per year. Coached Supervised Visitation will be program funded at a total amount not to exceed \$1,321,000 for a period of one year with the County option to renew.*

### **What we don't want**

*DHS does not want untrained visitation coaches who passively observe or monitor the visit, do not emphasize parent's strengths, or do not build on the parent's current ability to meet their child's developmental and safety needs.*

*DHS is not interested in visits that occur in institutional settings and/or are devoid of family-friendly furniture, décor, games and toys.*

### **What's important to us**

*DHS is seeking Proposers with the capacity to provide Coached Supervised Visitation pursuant to the visitation coaching model developed by Marty Beyer Ph.D., or a comparable model.*

*DHS wants visits to occur in a space that is private, secure, home-like and conducive to a positive, comfortable visit.*

*DHS is seeking Proposers who will work collaboratively with CYF.*

### **Who we are**

*DHS, on behalf of Allegheny County, is the issuing office for this RFP.*

*DHS is the largest department of Allegheny County government and provides publicly-funded services to more than 200,000 people annually, in areas including child welfare, behavioral health, aging, intellectual disability, homelessness and community services.*

*More information about DHS is available at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/human-services/index.aspx>*

# Section 1: Key Information

## 1.1 General Information

This RFP is an invitation to individuals, non-profit organizations, and for-profit organizations or businesses (Proposers) with the ability to meet the needs and quality standards outlined in this RFP to submit a Proposal to perform the services as described in *Section 3.2 of this RFP: What we are buying and why.*

## 1.2 Definitions

The following words are used in this RFP and are capitalized to indicate their special meaning:

1. Agreement: A contract negotiated between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer to provide the Contract Services
2. Conferencing and Teaming: The DHS standard of practice that engages individuals, families, supports and professionals in assessing strengths and needs and developing a plan for keeping children, young people and adults safe and healthy while continually integrating individual and family actions with professional services
3. Contract Services: The specific services which the Successful Proposer agrees to provide to the County in response to this RFP as more particularly described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement
4. CYF: The [Allegheny County Department of Human Services] Office of Children, Youth and Families, the County's child welfare office. CYF is responsible for protecting children from abuse and neglect, preserving families (whenever possible) and providing permanent, safe homes for children either by assuring safety within the child's own family or by finding an adoptive home or another permanent setting for those children who cannot be reunified with their family. CYF provides a wide range of preventive, protective, supportive and direct services through caseworkers, case aides and other support staff, as well as a network of contracted agencies.
5. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
6. FAST: Family Advocacy and Support Tool
7. KIDS: Key Information and Demographic System —the electronic case record for clients of CYF
8. Proposal: The response submitted to this RFP
9. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP.
10. Successful Proposal: the Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services

## 1.3 Timeline

- a. Proposals must be submitted by March 28, 2016 at 3:00 PM EST.
- b. Deadline for Proposers to submit questions: March 21, 2016
- c. Estimated date that Proposers will be notified of their selection status: May, 2016.

## 1.4 How to Contact DHS

- a. All inquiries and questions concerning this RFP must be submitted via email to [DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us)
- b. All information about the RFP, including answers to questions, changes and clarifications, will be posted at [http://www.allegHENYcounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-\(RFP/RFQ/RFI\).aspx](http://www.allegHENYcounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-(RFP/RFQ/RFI).aspx)
- c. Please be sure to check this website regularly for answers to questions, additional information, or changes to the RFP or the RFP process.

## 1.5 Submitting Your Proposal

- a. This RFP provides detailed information about Proposal and Proposer requirements, the evaluation process and how to develop your Proposal.
- b. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal, which includes the following, available on our website at [http://www.allegHENYcounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-\(RFP/RFQ/RFI\).aspx](http://www.allegHENYcounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-(RFP/RFQ/RFI).aspx).
  - Response Form
  - MWDBE Participation Statement form
  - W9
  - Vendor Creation Form
- c. Please do not send any attachments other than those listed above and on the Response Form.
- d. Please take time to review and understand the RFP, specifically:
  1. The requirements (see *Section 3: Our Requirements*)
  2. The evaluation process (see *Section 4: The Evaluation Process*)
- e. Make sure to complete each section of the Response Form and to stay within the word counts specified in the Response Form.
- f. **Proposals must be submitted electronically to [DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us) no later than 3:00 P.M. on March 28, 2016 to be considered for review.**
- g. Please make sure to get your Proposal in before the deadline! If your Proposal is late, it will not be considered.
- h. You will receive an email when your Proposal is received.
  1. If you do not receive this notification within 48 hours of submitting your Proposal, please contact us at [DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us](mailto:DHSProposals@allegHENYcounty.us)

## 1.6 Other Information

- a. This RFP is subject to all of the Terms and Conditions specified in *Section 4: Contract Information*.
- b. Proposers are responsible for all costs related to the preparation and submission of their Proposal.
- c. Proposals become the property of the County and may become part of any subsequent Agreement between the Proposer and the County.
- d. The Successful Proposal will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive.
- e. The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to enter into an Agreement with any Proposers.

## Section 2: Background

### 2.1 About Visitation in Child Welfare

The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 provides that one of the primary goals in the child welfare system is permanency. For children removed from their home, CYF strives to find safe, permanent homes as quickly as possible. In most circumstances, children can be reunited with their families, but in some cases children find homes with relatives or adoptive families.

Research has shown that frequent visits between a parent and child are associated with the achievement of permanency. Frequently-visited children have been found to be more likely to be reunified with their families and to remain in care fewer months. In addition, frequent visiting has been found to contribute to psychosocial benefits for children in placement. Finally, several counties in Pennsylvania have experienced financial benefits from policy changes that have increased appropriate visitation.

Quality visitation provides an opportunity to strengthen and/or amend family bonding and is therefore a vital component of DHS's strategy to keep families intact and facilitate reunification whenever possible. For these reasons, visitation is one of the most critical reunification services CYF provides for families.

### 2.2 About DHS CYF's Current Visitation Service

DHS's current visitation service provides for four levels of visitation, depending on the needs of the family: 1) unsupervised visits; 2) overnight visits; 3) moderate supervision of visits; or 4) strictly supervised/highly structured visits. Visits are supervised by both DHS case aides and a network of contract provider agencies that are responsible for transporting children to visits and ensuring that the child is safe during the visit. For more detail about each level of visitation, please see Appendix A.

**Through this RFP, DHS is soliciting Proposals to provide Supervised Visitation Coaching for families requiring the 4<sup>th</sup> and highest level of visitation - supervised/highly structured visits.**

## Section 3: Our Requirements

### 3.1 What we are buying and why

Through this RFP, DHS is seeking to improve the quality of supervised/highly structured visits by selecting a provider(s) that will provide Supervised Visitation Coaching that follows a specific coaching model, such as the model developed by Marty Beyer<sup>1</sup> or a comparable model, and ensure that visits take place in a safe and comfortable location for the family.

DHS's current visitation service (as referenced in Section 2.2) is lacking in two significant ways. First, DHS case aides supervise a large number of visits. Case aides' main responsibility is to transport children in care, and they are not trained to provide the kind of support and guidance that many families need in

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.martybeyer.com/content/visit-coaching>

order to develop or redevelop the kind of relationships that can expedite reunification/permanency. Further, case aides are not tasked with using visits as an opportunity to build parenting skills. They are asked to provide protection in the form of supervision, but not to address the abuse or neglect that brought the child into care. By issuing this RFP and seeking Coached Supervised Visitation for families requiring the highest level of supervision, CYF intends to replace the role of the case aide with a trained supervision coach who can provide individual coaching designed to help parents improve their responsiveness to their child's needs and, hopefully, improve the family relationships.

Second, visits do not consistently take place in a location that is comfortable and home-like and that promotes positive parent-child interaction. DHS data show that fifty-six percent (56%) of all supervised visits in Fiscal Year 2014/15 took place in a provider agency's office or a CYF regional office and twenty-four percent (24%) took place in the home or foster home. Supervised visits also often occur during the work day, a practice that poses a challenge for working parents. Successful Proposers will be asked to provide a safe, comfortable location for a visit when one is not naturally available to the family at times that are convenient for families, particularly evenings and weekends.

#### **A. Target Population**

Coached Supervised Visitation is intended only for those families whose safety and risk assessment indicates that they need the highest level of visitation, which requires a strictly supervised, highly-structured visit and coaching to improve the parents' ability to meet their child's developmental and safety needs. DHS estimates that approximately 195 individual children or sibling groups and parents will require Coached Supervised Visitation ranging from 2-8 times per month, with the majority of visits taking place between individual children and parents.

#### **B. Referral and Assessment Process**

Referrals for Coached Supervised Visitation are made by the Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania – Family Division or through a recommendation by the child's CYF caseworker. For the latter, when a child is removed from the home, their CYF caseworker brings together the family and the family's Team (the network of supports identified by the family, which may include service providers, friends and extended family members) for the purpose of reviewing the circumstances of the removal, CYF's safety and risk assessment, and the Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST). This review is used to determine whether visitation should occur and, if so, the most appropriate level of visitation. The Team, led by the family and caseworker, strives to assign the least restrictive level of supervision required to ensure the safety and well-being of the child and promote safe and positive family interactions.

If it is determined that Coached Supervised Visitation is appropriate, either by the Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania – Family Division or by the child's Team and CYF caseworker, the CYF caseworker enters a referral for Coached Supervised Visitation into DHS's Key Information and Demographic System (KIDS), the electronic case record for CYF clients. The Successful Proposer will receive the referral through KIDS. The referral states the time, date and location of the visit, as well as whether the Successful Proposer needs to provide a location for the visit or if the visit will take place in the family's home.

Successful Proposer(s) must schedule visitations promptly in accordance with court orders and/ or CYF referrals, and must therefore have ample capacity to address referrals at the times and locations designated by CYF, with a solid plan to ensure that all visits occur as scheduled without disruption.

## **C. Visitation Coaches**

### ***Training***

All visitation coaches must be trained in a specified coaching model, such as the model developed by Marty Beyer or a comparable model (including the Proposers own model, if they have one). If Proposers chose to follow Marty Beyer's model for visitation, DHS will support training costs. For more information about this training model see: <http://www.martybeyer.com/content/visit-coaching>

Regardless of the coaching model a Proposer chooses to follow, the visitation coach must be knowledgeable about children's needs, the developmental benefits of play, family dynamics, attachment, parenting skills, the variety of cognitive styles shown by parents and cultural differences. In addition, the coach must also be flexible and able to draw on a variety of intervention approaches to maximize the benefits of each visit.

### ***Role***

In preparation for the visit, visitation coaches will help parents articulate their goals for the visit, help them plan to give their children their full attention during the visit, and help them prepare to effectively address their children's behavior during the visit. The visitation coach will work closely with both the child's CYF caseworker and the parent(s) to identify the needs of the child and the changes in parenting necessary for the reunification process to begin.

During the visit, visitation coaches will coach the parent to engage in a healthy and meaningful way with the child, while acknowledging the parent's strengths. They will also help parents cope with their feelings during and after the visit. The goal is for the visitation coach to gradually reduce the amount of guidance and support needed by parents so that they can eventually move to a lower level of visitation (e.g., unsupervised visits, overnight visits or moderately-supervised visits).

Coaches must be able to travel to the family's home, if available and appropriate; otherwise, the Successful Proposer must provide an alternative, comfortable and home-like setting.

The child's CYF caseworker and Team will engage the visitation coach in evaluating the progress of the family to determine when the family is ready to progress to a less restrictive level of visitation. A court order may dictate decisions on transition or service closure.

### ***Qualifications***

Visitation Coaches must:

- Hold a Bachelor's Degree in a field related to Human Services
- Have experience working in the field of Human Services
- Complete training in the Marty Beyer Visitation Coaching program or a comparable model
- Have child welfare clearances required by the Child Protective Services Law
- Hold a valid driver's license and have access to an automobile in good working order
- Be willing to travel to various locations throughout Allegheny County
- Be willing to work evenings and weekends



## D. Visitation Location

Ideally, visits will occur within the family home or in another comfortable, familiar, convenient and home-like setting. If the family's or caregiver's home meets the criteria for safety, these are given preference. If not, another family member's home may be considered. If these options are not available or appropriate, expanded alternatives are needed so that visits occur in a safe and comfortable place for families. Successful Proposer(s) should provide their own thoughtfully created spaces for visitation that have:

- Flexible and extended hours of operation, including access during evenings and weekends to accommodate working parents
- Appropriate security
- Easy access to public transportation
- A familiar environment (community-based)
- A home-like environment (including cooking/dining facilities)
- An organized but flexible environment
- An atmosphere that allows families to interact comfortably (e.g., not too over-stimulating, with adjustable lighting, comfortable places to cuddle, toys that can facilitate healing, etc.)
- A location that permits privacy and interaction and that is only as restrictive as required by the visitation level
- Age-appropriate toys, game and activities

## E. Outcomes

Successful Proposer(s) are expected to track key data related to Coached Supervised Visitation and enter that information into KIDS. Data to be tracked includes, but is not limited to:

- Number of scheduled visits
- Number of completed visits
- Number of rescheduled/no show visits
- Number of visits recommended before progressing to a less restrictive level of supervision
- Visit notes
- Satisfaction surveys from parents/children, if appropriate

As a result of the Successful Proposer(s)' supervised visitation, DHS hopes to see the following:

- Increased quality in visits for parents and children,
- Reduction in time to less restrictive and finally, unsupervised visits
- Reductions in time to permanency
- Decreased number of children re-entering the system

## 3.2 What we require

Proposers must meet the following evaluation criteria and should address their qualifications in regard to the below by completing the attached Response Form, which specifies Proposal format.

### Organizational Experience

- Solid experience in serving the target population, as described in Section 3.1 A
- Solid experience providing family visitation or similar services

- Experience in tracking and measuring the impact of services on families
- Strong experience providing culturally-competent, linguistically appropriate and gender-responsive services
- A positive track record of fulfilling health and human services contracts

Meeting Visitation Coaching Standards:

- Identifies a strong model of supervised visitation coaching and describes how the model is successful in creating quality, healthy visits between parents and children
- Strong experience with staff participating as a team to assist with family planning
- Strong quality improvement system in place to monitor and evaluate the organization’s services and demonstrated experience using data and research to improve practice
- Thoughtful strategy in place for recruitment and retention of qualified staff. If the Proposer intends to use its existing staff, the Proposer should ensure that this staff meets minimum requirements for the model of Supervised Visitation Coaching that the organization elects to use.
- A commitment to meeting the needs of families, regardless of time of day, location and frequency of visit

Visitation Location

- Clear plan for developing a safe and secure space, in a home-like setting, for multiple, simultaneous visits, when they cannot occur in the family home
- Offers geographically diverse visitation space, easily accessible to public transportation

Addressing Implementation Challenges:

- Clearly understands the challenges inherent in implementing Coached Supervised Visitation
- Demonstrates a clear commitment to adhering to an established visitation model, including participating, engaging and following recommendations for visitation coaching, as trained by Marty Beyer or a comparable trainer.

Financial Management and Budget

- Strong financial health, as evidenced by audits or other supporting financial documentation
- Fiscal and management capacity to manage program funds in a fiscally responsible manner
- Provides a budget and budget narrative that reflect a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing a visitation coaching service

## **Section 4: The Evaluation Process**

### **4.1 Evaluation Model**

Proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation committee created by DHS. The evaluation committee will assign scores based upon evaluation criteria specified in *Section 3.2. What we require* and further identified in the Response Form.

### **4.2 Evaluation Process**

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. An evaluation committee will be formed by the DHS and may consist of some or all of the following:
  1. DHS staff and administration, selected for their expertise and/or experience
  2. Representatives of foundations, educational institutions, community and civic organizations, businesses and/or non-profit agencies
  3. Consumers of DHS services
- b. Each member of the evaluation committee will sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest agreement.
- c. All committee members will separately and individually review and score each Proposal based on the evaluation criteria listed in Section 3.2.
- d. The evaluation committee members then will meet collectively to compile the individual scores of each committee member.
- e. Proposers may be asked to submit additional information or to present their proposal to the evaluation committee.
  1. If this step occurs, Proposers will receive detailed instructions and sufficient time for preparation.
  2. The evaluation committee will score additional information or presentations using the same criteria identified in Section 3.2.
- f. The committee will submit their recommendation for contract award to the Director of DHS for his approval, who will submit a final recommendation to the County Manager for approval. The County is under no obligation to award a contract as a result of this RFP.
- g. All Proposers will be notified of their status following the final determination.

### **4.3 Other Requirements**

For a Proposal to be eligible for evaluation, it must be:

- Received by the due date/time to be considered for the next quarterly review
- Properly formatted and include answers to all questions, as detailed in the Response Form
- Include all required forms and attachments, as detailed in the Response Form

Proposals that do not meet the above criteria will not be considered.

Proposals will be evaluated against the criteria specified in *Section 3.2: What we require*, using the information requested in the Response Form and any additional information subsequently provided during the evaluation process.

## **Section 5: Contract Information**

In order to engage in an Agreement with the County, you must comply with all contract requirements listed below. Additional details about contracting with Allegheny County are provided in the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-(RFP/RFQ/RFI).aspx), available at [http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-\(RFP/RFQ/RFI\).aspx](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-(RFP/RFQ/RFI).aspx).

### **5.1 Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (M/W/DBE) Requirements**

Allegheny County has M/W/DBE goals of 13% for MBEs and 2% for WBEs, and hopes that Proposers assist the County in meeting these goals.

- a. An M/W/DBE Participation Statement or Waiver Statement is REQUIRED to be submitted with your Proposal.
  - i. [MWDBE Participation Statement](#)
  - ii. [MWDBE Waiver Request](#)
  - iii. A list of M/W/DBEs that have been certified by Allegheny County and the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program can be found at <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/mwdbe/index.aspx>
- b. For more information about M/W/DBEs, please review the following. [MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)

## **5.2 HIPAA Compliance**

DHS is a covered entity under the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Therefore, you must comply with all HIPAA requirements.

## **5.3 Cyber Security**

- a. You must meet the minimum computer specifications which begin on page 14 of the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at [http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-\(RFP/RFQ/RFI\).aspx](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-(RFP/RFQ/RFI).aspx).
- b. All electronic devices must have sufficient security software and settings to minimize the risk of an information breach.
- c. You must also have policies in place to ensure that electronic devices are physically secure when not in use (e.g., locked in a vehicle trunk, password protected).

## **5.4 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements**

By submitting a Proposal, you agree to not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, independent contractor, client or any other person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, familial status, age (40 or over), or use of a guide or support animal because of blindness, deafness or physical disability.

## Appendix A: DHS Supervised Visitation Structure and Goals

Supervised Visitation Structure	Unsupervised (Default)	Moderate Supervision	Strictly Supervised/Highly Structured	Overnight
<b>Visit Outline</b>				
<b>Description-</b> This is a general outline of what the visit should be like	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No monitor is present during the visit after drop off.</li> <li>Parents are available by phone</li> <li>Parent(s) arrive on time and prepared for the visit.</li> <li>Parents return child at the agreed upon time and location.</li> <li>May check in with visit coach or caseworker by phone or in person at the conclusion or after the visit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visits are unstructured and monitor is largely not present in the visit.</li> <li>Parent(s) agree to drop off and pick up location and time, then follow through with those agreements.</li> <li>A visit coach may take part in the visit as needed or determined in a conferencing and teaming meeting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child will not be left alone at any time</li> <li>Supervisor can see the Child at all times and can intervene momentarily.</li> <li>Supervisor can hear conversation at all times and listened for inappropriate conversation.</li> <li>In the case of domestic violence follow best practices. See side panel for more details and resources.</li> <li>Caseworker will follow up in conferencing and teaming meeting or individually to assess how the visit went.</li> <li>* This is not a therapeutic visit, when more intensive therapy is needed other DHS services should be utilized. In the case of sexual abuse best practices stress conducting a proper assessment of the safety issues and child and parent readiness for visitation, including therapist evaluations and recommendations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occurs when the child are close to returning home with their birth parents or other members of the birth family.</li> <li>Can be approved by a Judge or case worker upon agreement of the involved parties.</li> <li>Duration and frequency of visits is determined in conferencing and teaming meeting or with courts</li> <li>Parents will be available by phone and will not take the child outside of the county unless permitted to do so.</li> </ul>
<b>Duration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit may be many hours (3-6) or more as determined by involved parties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit may be several less hours (1-3) or more as determined by the involved parties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit lasts 1-2 hours (depending on supervisor's availability).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit lasts more than 24 hours. Caseworker or judge may suggest a length of time based on case history and previous successful supervisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Who can attend</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any parent or member of natural family including: Birth parents, grandparents, foster parents, other family or friends tied to the children</li> <li>Sibling if determined appropriate by the court or CYF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any parental figure including: Birth parents, grandparents, foster parents, other family or friends tied to the children</li> <li>Sibling if determined by the court or CYF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only those included in the court order.</li> <li>Sibling as determined by the court or CYF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any parent or member of natural family including: Birth parents, grandparents, foster parents, other family or friends tied to the children</li> <li>Sibling if determined appropriate by the court or CYF</li> </ul>
<b>Arrangement Style-</b> refers to the way in which visits are planned for the future. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Formally Arranged-</b> each visit is organized by CYF Staff and logged into KIDS.</li> <li><b>Informally-</b> CYF/Courts agree that visits can happen at an ad-hoc basis as agreed to by Foster Parents</li> </ul>	Informally or Formally Arranged	Informally or Formally Arranged	Formerly Arranged	Formally Arranged
<b>Location</b> - Should occur in the family home when safety and risk has been managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any safe location as determined by a family member and that resembles natural environment. Some suggestions include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local public libraries</li> <li>parks</li> <li>recreational centers</li> <li>restaurants</li> <li>community and youth centers</li> <li>foster parent's home</li> <li>school events</li> <li>local churches or other places of worship</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located in a space where all parties can attend, with the family home the primary option. DHS contracted space in the future. Some suggestions include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local public libraries</li> <li>parks</li> <li>recreational centers</li> <li>restaurants</li> <li>community and youth centers</li> <li>foster parent's home</li> <li>school events</li> <li>local churches or other places of worship</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The space should allow for the visit coach to be involved as needed in the visit, but still resemble a natural environment.</li> <li>Family home</li> <li>DHS contracted space in the future *CYF or provider office should only be used when no other option is feasible</li> </ul>	Family Home or other natural environment
<b>Who can Supervise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case aid, case worker or visit coach might check in, but no supervisor is present.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit Coach</li> <li>Family member- who has been briefed on their role and expectations</li> <li>Friend-who has been briefed on their role and expectations</li> <li>Community Member-who has been briefed on their role and expectations</li> <li>Foster parent-who has been briefed on their role and expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit Coach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit Coach</li> <li>Family member</li> <li>Friend</li> <li>Community member Foster parent</li> </ul>
<b>DHS Staff Role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case aids may drop off or pick up child. Case worker, Case Aid or foster family will confirm the visit took place. A case worker may call a parent to check the progress of the visit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case aids may drop off or pick up child. Case worker or foster family will confirm the visit took place. If Non-DHS staff is doing the supervision, they will be provided with materials that explain the expectations and role as supervisor. (This was previously called "pop-in" supervision but unsupervised visits are the default should be considered first)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trained visit coach will actively support parent(s) through education and demonstrate parenting skills. They will confirm the visit took place as scheduled.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case aids may drop off or pick up child. Case worker, Case Aid or foster family will confirm the visit took place. A case worker may call a parent to check the progress of the visit.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Questions to determine level of supervision-</b> These are questions to be asked in assessing visitation levels at conference or within the first 60 days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsupervised visits should be a default option considered during preparation stage and the conferencing and teaming meeting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a detailed discussion taken place family should take place to identify safety threats and other reasons to go to more supervised levels</li> <li>• Are there safety reasons that would require some supervision level?</li> <li>• Is there an active concern by CYF staff that serious safety risks exist for this child if left along with a parent/family member?</li> <li>• Is there a court mandate for visits to be supervised?</li> <li>• Does the level of visitation match the permanency plan?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can safety threats be managed in a way that less restrictive visitation would be safe and appropriate?</li> <li>• Does the level of visitation match the permanency plan?</li> <li>• Is the child comfortable during visits?</li> <li>• Have the parents been consistent in following the current visitation plan?</li> <li>• What has been the child's reaction to the visits?</li> <li>• What has been the parent's response to the visits?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can safety threats be managed in a way that less restrictive visitation would be safe and appropriate?</li> <li>• Is the child comfortable during visits?</li> <li>• Have the parents been consistent in following the current visitation plan?</li> <li>• Should this case be in a more intensive therapeutic supervision? (Link DHS therapy options)</li> <li>• Has the parent appeared to be under the influence of any substance during the visits?</li> <li>• Has there been any concern with the parent's mental health or behavior during the visits?</li> <li>• How does the child seek comfort from the parent?</li> <li>• What is the child's mood like during the visit?</li> <li>• How does the child act before and after the visit?</li> <li>• Does the child reference domestic violence incidents including verbal, emotional or physical abuse?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a low risk assessment and safety threat</li> <li>• Unsupervised visits have been successfully completed and parent(s) are following the permanency plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Decision Indicators-</b> These are behaviors that could be exhibited at each level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a low to medium risk assessment</li> <li>• Safety threats are managed and the child feels comfortable visiting with the parent.</li> <li>• Child is strongly attached to parents.</li> <li>• Parent(s) are aware of their children's behaviors and resolve problems that arise during their visits.</li> <li>• Parent(s) are involved in age-appropriate activities and conversations with their children by showing positive communication and appropriate parent/child behaviors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent(s) may benefit from the support of another adult, but are not high risk to children.</li> <li>• Semi-structured supervision would be used to ensure a child's safety.</li> <li>• The parent(s) may need assistance in establishing a parent/child relationship through visit coach, friend or family.</li> <li>• The child may need or want reassurance of a third party.</li> <li>• Might be appropriate for parent(s) visiting with multiple children and need help managing the group</li> <li>• There is a low to medium risk factor (potentially neglect cases), especially if no abuse or sexual misconduct is reported</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This highest level of supervision is only appropriate on high risk cases or when there are significant child well-being issues.</li> <li>• There is a reasonable basis to believe that the child may be in a serious physical or emotional safety risk.</li> <li>• There have been past instances of physical abuse or sexual abuse. See special case -sexual abuse panel for more details.</li> <li>• They fall under another special population including incarcerated parent, substance abuse during a visit or cognitively disabled.</li> <li>• There is a reasonable basis to believe that the parent may attempt to interfere with, manipulate, or coerce the child's potential testimony in court.</li> <li>• The age of the child.</li> <li>• The severity and chronicity of the abuse.</li> <li>• The potential for abduction or continued abuse of the child.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case worker recommends overnight visits with the goal of reunification.</li> <li>• The child feel physically and emotionally prepared to spend long periods of time with parent(s).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Re-evaluation Criteria-</b>Used when considering movement to a new level and at every conferencing and teaming meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitation level was discussed at Conferencing and teaming meeting.</li> <li>• There is a safe place for visitation to take place in which all parties feel comfortable.</li> <li>• Parent(s) follow the agreed upon visitation plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitation level was discussed at Conferencing and teaming meeting.</li> <li>• Parent(s) are engaging in positive interactions with their children by encouraging and supporting them.</li> <li>• Parent(s) are independently parenting their child most of the time, needing minimal support from staff throughout their visitation.</li> <li>• No new criminal or abusive activity has been seen or suspected.</li> <li>• Parent(s) are implementing visit coach's recommendations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitation level was discussed at Conferencing and teaming meeting.</li> <li>• Parent(s) are on time and prepared for visits.</li> <li>• Parent(s) are actively engaged with visit coach.</li> <li>• Parent(s) improving their ability to maintain control of their children and monitoring their activities.</li> <li>• No new criminal or abusive activity has been seen or suspected.</li> <li>• Visit coach sees improvement in parent-child relationship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitation level was discussed at Conferencing and teaming meeting and parties agree that overnight visits are warranted.</li> <li>• Time, duration and location for the visit have been discussed and agreed upon.</li> <li>• There is a safe place for visitation to take place in which all parties feel comfortable.</li> <li>• Parent(s) follow the agreed upon visitation plan.</li> </ul>

\*Sources

[http://www.nyc.gov/html/acs/downloads/pdf/asfa\\_3.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/acs/downloads/pdf/asfa_3.pdf)

[http://butlercountychildrenservices.org/content/about/documents/4\\_9\\_VISITATION\\_PLAN\\_AND\\_RULES.pdf](http://butlercountychildrenservices.org/content/about/documents/4_9_VISITATION_PLAN_AND_RULES.pdf)

[http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety\\_model/procedure\\_manual/ch04/ch4-section26.pdf](http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety_model/procedure_manual/ch04/ch4-section26.pdf)

<http://www.ourkids.us/SiteCollectionDocuments/Handbooks/Visitation%20Minnesota%27s%20Guide.pdf>

<b>Goals of Supervision:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the child’s sense of abandonment and loss upon removal</li> <li>• Maintaining meaningful contact consistent with the development and/or special needs of the child and family that will further progress toward achieving permanency for the child</li> <li>• Maintain relationships with siblings, parents, and other individuals</li> <li>• Provide opportunity to assess caregiver/child relationship</li> <li>• Provide opportunity to assess caregiver needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Parent Training</li> <li>o Community Resources/Referral</li> <li>o Concrete Supports</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Source:</u> Foundations Supporting Family Interactions. (2008). University of Nebraska - Lincoln Child Maltreatment Lab</p>
<b>Special Case: Sexual Abuse</b>
<p>In cases where there are allegations of sexual abuse, in addition to the requirements above, the following terms and conditions apply, unless otherwise ordered by the court:(1)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No exchanges of gifts, money, or cards.</li> <li>2. No photographing, audio taping, or videotaping of the child.</li> <li>3. No physical contact with the child such as lap sitting, hair combing, stroking, hand holding, prolonged hugging, wrestling, tickling, horse playing, changing diapers, or accompanying the child to the bathroom.</li> <li>4. No covert communication such as whispering, passing notes, hand signals, or body signals.</li> <li>5. Visitation may not take place in the location where the alleged sexual abuse occurred. It should take place in a contracted DHS location unless another place has been identified and agreed upon.</li> </ol> <p>Parental readiness after sexual abuse would include taking responsibility for the abuse, showing empathy for the victim, identifying risk factors, and demonstrating coping skills. Child readiness would include the ability to articulate thoughts about their feelings, a desire to see the abuser, and feelings of safety in the presence of the abuse. A court may also set rules and boundaries about contact under these circumstances. (2)</p> <p><u>Sources:</u> (1) Best Practices for Visitation and Family Time. (2013). Texas Children Commission (2) Foundations Supporting Family Interactions. (2008). University of Nebraska - Lincoln Child Maltreatment Lab</p>
<b>Special Case: Domestic Violence</b>
<p>Practices and operations should reduce a batterer’s opportunity to continue the abuse during visitation and exchanges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Offer staggered arrival and departure times.</li> </ul> <p>Develop a policy requiring visiting and custodial parents to arrive and depart at staggered intervals. Because safety and other needs change over time, the arrival and departure schedule of each family should be designed (and redesigned when necessary) to meet the unique safety needs and concerns of the child(ren) and adult victims. In some cases, the visiting parent may be the victim and the custodial parent may be the batterer. Therefore, designing arrival and departure times based solely on custodial status is discouraged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Allow custodial parents to wait on- or off-site.</li> </ul> <p>Allow custodial parents to wait on- or off-site, based on the safety needs, age, and developmental stage of the visiting children, needs of visiting children with disabilities, and other concerns of child(ren) and adult victims. Make the waiting area secure and in a location not accessible to the other parent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Prohibit conversations about the victim.</li> </ul> <p>Do not allow a batterer to talk or inquire about the victim with staff; redirect such conversation to the batterer’s interaction and relationship with the children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Address continued abuse.</li> </ul> <p>Discuss with the adult victim the options available for addressing or reporting occurrences of a batterer’s continued abuse of the victim, whether such abuse is witnessed by or reported to staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Check in frequently with the adult victim.</li> </ul> <p>Out of the presence of the children, follow up with adult victims to determine if the visitation center’s policies and the visitation or exchange plan are meeting their safety needs.</p> <p><u>Sources:</u> (1) Guiding Principles Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program. (2007). Department of Justice (Link) (2) A lay person’s guide to providing safe visitation between children and parents in Domestic violence Cases. New Hampshire Governor’s Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence. (Link)</p>

