

Caseworker's Role in Preparing Substitute Caregivers for In-Person Visits

Before resuming parent-child supervised visitation, the caseworker should inform the substitute caregiver that in-person visitation between children and their families will resume. The caseworker should be prepared to hear concerns related to COVID-19 and the public health crisis, and the caregiver's possible concerns regarding how to safeguard their home. This should be expected as it is a reasonable concern. The caseworker should "normalize" concerns related to COVID-19 and ensure that the caregiver is aware of the precautions being taken to ensure the health and wellbeing of all involved.

The caseworker should take special note of any caregiver or household member with at-risk health conditions and inform the caregiver that the worker will assist them in developing a plan for accommodations.

The caseworker should inform the caregiver that they will be invited to a Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) using video or phone conferencing. They should be informed that the CFTM will also include the parent, supportive individuals, the supervisor of the visit, and the child(ren) (as age appropriate). The worker should explain all that will be reviewed in the CFTM: the importance of the pre-screening questions; visitation guidelines; that face coverings to and during visitation are being mandated; and that if anyone attends visitation ill, it will be cancelled. If a parent or child is determined to be ill during a visit, the visit will immediately be cancelled and rescheduled.

With regard to children who are medically complex, the caregiver should be informed that healthcare providers or medical professionals who are knowledgeable about the child's medical condition will be invited to the CFTM and provide a medical opinion as to the safety of the child participating in parent-child visitation.

The caseworker should engage substitute caregivers in preparing the child for in-person parent-child visitation and ask that they also explain to the child the need to wear a face covering throughout the visit.

To minimize risk of exposure to COVID-19, gifts and packages shall not be exchanged or returned to the substitute care setting. The caregiver should be encouraged to change and launder the clothes of the child following visitation.

The substitute caregivers may want to send a child to a visit with favorite or familiar toy to play with during the visit. This may also lend to limiting a child's touchpoints to items with which other children play. If this occurs, the toys should be washed or disinfected before and after the visit.

The caseworker should ask the caregiver to send the child to visits with snacks to avoid food sharing and unnecessary travel to businesses.

During the preparation meeting with the caregiver, caseworker should ensure that the caregiver has an opportunity to be informed and equipped with resources, to be heard, and to have their concerns addressed.

The caseworker should share the following resources:

- [IDPH: Guidance on Use of Masks by the General Public](#)
- [IDPH: COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Tips](#)
- [IDPH: Face Covering Dos and Don'ts](#)
- [CDC: Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- [CDC: Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-emergency Transport Vehicles.](#)