

Contact with Children in Substitute Care and Their Caregivers

SUMMIT COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

<p>ORC: 5153.16</p> <p>OAC: 5101.2-38-06; 5101.2-38-07; 5101.2-38-10; 5101:2-42-65; 5101.2-42-65.1; 5101.2-42-90; 5102.2-42-92; 5101:2-48-17; 5101.3-38-05;</p> <p>USC: N/A</p> <p>CFR: N/A</p>	<p>ORIGINAL: 10/04</p> <p>REVISIONS: 5/24/07; 10/29/08; 3/30/12; 5/12/16; 1/17/19</p> <p>RELATED FORM(S): JFS 01677 Foster Youth Rights Handbook; Regulations of the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children</p> <p>RELATED PROCEDURE/POLICY(IES): Caregiver Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard</p>
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All Staff Bargaining Unit Non-Bargaining Management

POLICY:

Summit County Children Services (SCCS) caseworkers complete face-to-face contacts with children in substitute care and their caregivers to assess and address continued safety, permanency and well-being. SCCS makes all contacts in accordance with ODJFS mandates and increases contacts when necessary to address specific needs.

PROCEDURE:

Children should be interviewed separately from the substitute caregiver based on their age and development; however some discussion should also occur with child and caregiver together. Contact with Children must be documented in a SACWIS activity log and may include, but is not limited to:

- Ensuring the child’s safety and well-being; this includes a complete walk through monthly in the substitute care setting including the child’s bedroom and all areas accessed by the child and an assessment of the environmental conditions.
- Discuss and assess adjustment of the child in the placement setting
- Support the child by ensuring that caregiver meets the basic requirements including but not limited to:
 - nutrition
 - basic personal needs
 - medical care
 - opportunity for the child to participate in their own religious and cultural preferences

- safe, pleasant, nurturing environment
- participation in age and developmentally appropriate activities
- school attendance / performance
- Ensuring that each child has an approved sleeping arrangement
- Referrals will be made by the assigned caseworker.
- Provide support and advice to the foster parent / kinship caregiver regarding care of the child, and any in-home interventions indicated in the case plan.
- As appropriate and consistent with written or verbal parental consent, share with the child and caregiver, the family's progress on case plan objectives.
- Discuss with the foster parent / kinship caregiver and the child as appropriate their involvement in the accomplishment of case plan objectives.
- Address the continuing need for placement.
- Assess whether the placement and services continue to meet the child's needs in accordance with the case plan, service implementation and any barriers to service;
- Assess child's reaction to visitation with biological family.

In addition, caseworkers should assess and document any of the following that may occur within the substitute placement including:

- Need for additional resources or support
- Referrals for additional services to address child's specific needs.
- The child's feeling of safety and well-being in the care setting.
- Observation of the caregivers' home for safety including a walk-through of the residence and observation of the child's room at least monthly.
- As appropriate and consistent with parental rights, share the family's progress on case plan objectives with the child and caregiver.
- Discuss with the foster parent / kinship caregiver and the child, as appropriate, their involvement in the accomplishment of case plan objectives.
- Assessment of child's reaction to visitation with biological family.
- The child's current behavior, emotional functioning and current social functioning in the care setting, and any other settings or activities the child is involved in, including:
 - The caseworker shall document evidence that the caregiver is following the reasonable and prudent parent standard in allowing the child regular opportunities to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities.
 - The child's current vulnerability.
 - The protective capacities of the child's caregivers.
 - Any new information regarding the child, substitute care setting and impact on the substitute caregiver's willingness or ability to care for the child including, but not limited to:
 - Changes in marital status.
 - Significant changes in the health status of a household member.
 - Placement of additional children.
 - Birth of a child.
 - Death of a child or household member.
 - A criminal charge, conviction or arrest of any household member.
 - Addition or removal of temporary or permanent household member.

- Family's relocation.
 - Child's daily activities.
 - A change in the caregiver's employment or financial hardships.
- Permanency planning in accordance with the child's case plan.

Casework Contact in Substitute Care Settings

SCCS caseworkers are responsible for conducting visits and contacts with children in the Agency's custody. Regardless of the placement setting, the assigned caseworker who has responsibility for case planning and management of the child's case shall conduct the majority of the required monthly visits and contacts. If the assigned caseworker is unable to complete the visit, the caseworker who does complete the visit shall document in SACWIS the reason someone other than the assigned caseworker visited the child.

The assigned caseworker must complete at least the following visits with a child in SCCS's custody:

Relative Placements & Foster Homes:

- Face-to-face contact with the child and the substitute caregiver in the caregiver's home within the first week of placement, not including the first day of placement.
- Face-to-Face contact with the child and the caregiver in the caregiver's home during the first four (4) weeks of placement, not including the visit during the first week of placement.
- Monthly face-to-face contacts with the child and the caregiver(s) in the caregiver's home.
- If there are two or more substitute caregivers, each caregiver must receive at least one of the face to face visits in each three (3) month period.
- If circumstances of the case require more than one monthly visit, additional visits may be conducted by a caseworker employed by an agency contracted by SCCS to provide services for the case.

Contracted Therapeutic Foster Home Network:

- One face-to-face contact with the child and substitute caregiver within the caregiver's home during the first week of placement, not including the first day of placement.
- One face to face visit with the substitute caregiver and child should occur twice monthly, but not within the same week. At least one of the monthly visits shall occur within the treatment or medically fragile foster home.
- One visit each month may be conducted by a network foster home coordinator or caseworker employed by an agency contracted by SCCS to provide services.
- One telephone contact with the caregiver each week to monitor the child's progress.
- Any additional visit may be conducted by a caseworker employed by an agency contracted by the PCSA to provide services for the case.
- The assigned SCCS caseworker must enter the contact information provided by the coordinator or contracted caseworker with the correct date and time of the coordinator's contact with the child and caregiver, and note who completed the face-to-face contact. The necessary information regarding content can be copied by the caseworker from the network monthly summary or the worker may

gather the necessary information through telephone contact with the coordinator.

Residential Facility or Group Home:

- One contact (*telephone or direct*) with the residential facility or group home within ten (10) days of the child's placement, not including the first day of placement.
- Monthly face to face visit with the child within the residential facility or group home regarding the child's progress related to case plan goals, safety and well-being, the resource's treatment plan, and child's adjustment to placement.
- Quarterly contacts with the residential facility or group home consistent with progress and treatment plan reviews.

Adoptive Homes Prior to Finalization:

- Visits with the child and adoptive parent(s):
 - One face-to-face visit with the child and adoptive parent(s) in the home during the first seven (7) days of the adoptive placement, not including the date of placement.
 - At least one face-to-face visit with the child and adoptive parent(s) in the adoptive home during the first thirty (30) days of placement, not including the visit during the first seven (7) days.
 - After the first thirty (30) days, at least one face-to-face visit with the child and adoptive parent(s) in the adoptive home, once a month.
 - If circumstances of the case require more than one monthly visit, the additional visits may be conducted by an assessor employed by an agency contracted by SCCS.
- Visits with other household members:
 - At least one face-to-face visit in the home with any household member whose permanent residence is the adoptive home, every sixty (60) days.
 - At least two (2) face-to-face visits in the home before finalization with any household member whose permanent residence is the adoptive home, even if they temporarily live somewhere else. Such visits must occur no less than sixty (60) days apart.

All Face to Face contacts with children, including good faith attempts will be entered in the SACWIS system within 48 hours, or no later than the end of the week the contact occurred.

For a child placed through Interstate Compact on Placement of Children:

- The regulations of the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children can be found at <http://icpc.aphsa.org/content/AAICPC/en/ICPCRegulations.html>.
- Telephone contact with the local Child Protective Services Agency will be made within 10 days of placement and every other month thereafter to determine the child's safety and well-being and, if applicable, assess progress toward the child's case plan objectives;
- The local Child Protective Services Agency will provide necessary supervision and services consistent with the state statute to the child as identified in the child's case plan.
- The local Child Protective Services Agency will provide monthly reports throughout the time Summit County Children Services maintains custody of the child.
- At least monthly the caseworker must conduct face-to-face visits with the child within the substitute care setting or may request that the local Child Protective

Services Agency make this visit.

- The caseworker and Supervisor will review the monthly reports and child's adjustment to placement and as appropriate will request the Court to terminate custody or transfer custody to the local Child Protective Services Agency.

SCCS shall provide the Foster Youth Rights Handbook (JFS 01677) to all children placed in substitute care who are fourteen years of age or older.

- If the child is fourteen (14) years of age or older, the caseworker shall give the child the JFS 01677 within seven (7) days after the placement. At the time of receipt, the caseworker shall have the child sign the signature page of the JFS 01677.
- If the child attains the age of fourteen (14) while in custody, the child shall be given the JFS 01677 within seven (7) days after their fourteenth birthday. At the time of receipt, the caseworker shall have the child sign the signature page of the JFS 01677.
- The caseworker shall review the JFS 01677 with the child. At the time of review, the caseworker shall have the child sign the signature line acknowledging review on the JFS 01677.
- Once both the receipt and review signatures are obtained from the child, the caseworker shall include the signature page with the child's case plan, initial or amended, for submission to Court.

SCCS may provide the JFS 01677 to a child younger than age fourteen (14).