
SUPERVISION OF FAMILY INTERACTIONS

UPDATED DECEMBER 13, 2021

Overview

Family interaction planning and implementation ensures that children and youth removed from their home maintain relationships with parents, kin, siblings and other supports. Family interactions should occur in the least restrictive, most homelike setting that allows for natural interaction and appropriately meets the child's safety needs.

Supervision of family interactions is based upon identified safety concerns. If safety factors exist, these must be addressed in the family interaction plan and interactions will be supervised. However, if there are no identified safety concerns, there is no need for the interaction to be supervised. In situations in which some risk is present and there is a need for parental education and skill building, the interactions could be semi-supervised. In many instances, natural supports to the parents such as kin, fictive kin, and community supports may also be accessed to ensure a child's safety during a family interaction.

Over the years, the frequency and length of professional supervision of interactions significantly increased with the primary responsibility placed upon the family-centered services (FCS) contractor. While these increased interactions are very much aligned with a Family First philosophy and is a position that DHS strongly supports, the number of hours/interactions being required for FCS to supervise was not financially sustainable under the terms of the FCS contract. Starting July 1, 2021, DHS placed parameters around family interactions in the FCS contract to limit FCS professional supervision to children/youth in out-of-home care and to no more than 20 hours of in-person supervision time or 10 separate family interactions per month.

Update

Effective January 1, 2022, DHS is expanding circumstances in which family interactions are eligible for FCS contractor professional supervision to include Non-Custodial Parent (NCP) and safety plan situations with regularly scheduled family interactions. These regularly scheduled family interactions must be documented in the Family Interaction Plan for services to be provided.

In all eligible situations (out-of-home placement, NCP, and Safety Plan), family interactions will not exceed 20 hours of in-person supervision time or 10 separate family interactions for the month. Sibling visits are eligible for FCS professional supervision in these circumstances but are not counted separately toward the 20 hours/10 interactions if used in combination with parental interactions. FCS contractors may invoice DHS an additional amount of \$705 per case that meets the requirements for supervision.