

CHILD WELFARE UPDATE

Title:	Supervision of Family Interactions by Family-Centered Services (FCS) Contractors
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Effective Date:	July 1, 2021
Program Manager:	Mindy Norwood, Family-Centered Services (FCS) Program Manager mnorwoo@dhs.state.ia.us 515.281.4212
Background Information:	<p>Background Information:</p> <p>Family interaction planning and implementation ensures that children and youth removed from their home maintain relationships with parents, kin, and other supports. The primary purpose of family interaction is to maintain the parent-child relationship and other family attachments and reduce the sense of abandonment that children/youth experience at placement. Family interactions should occur in the least restrictive, most homelike setting that allows for natural interaction and appropriate to meet the child's needs of safety. Creativity in defining interactions should be supported.</p> <p>Interaction planning should not only support in-person time but also other methods such as calls, letters, emails, and other electronic methods of communication. Families are encouraged to explore other ways to connect and interact with one another. Interactions should be built around meaningful activities including mealtimes, bathing, grooming, naptimes, school and sport activities, doctor appointments, etc.</p> <p>Supervision of family interactions is based upon identified safety concerns. If there are no identified safety concerns, there is no need for the interaction to be supervised. If there is some risk and a need for parental education and skill building, the interactions could be semi-supervised. If safety factors exist, these must be addressed in the family interaction plan and interactions will be supervised. In addition to formal supports identified to provide supervision, informal supports should also be identified to supervise when appropriate.</p> <p>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, or in prior years, with the Family Safety, Risk, and Permanency (FSRP) Services contractor.</p>

	<p>Stakeholder Engagement:</p> <p>The FCS contractors, the Coalition for Family and Children’s Services in Iowa, as well as DHS policy and field were engaged in these discussions. FCS contractors expressed concerns regarding the number of cases requiring supervised interactions and the total number of hours each week dedicated to supervised interactions creating a negative fiscal impact on all.</p> <p>Reason for the Change:</p> <p>The reason for modifying the type of case and the number of hours/interactions is to reduce the negative fiscal impact on the FCS contractors and provide some consistency across the state on when FCS contractors are required to provide supervision.</p>
<p>What Is Changing:</p>	<p>What Is Changing:</p> <p>Effective July 1, 2021 FCS contractors are only required to provide supervision on family interactions when a child or youth is removed and placed in out of home care with regularly scheduled family interactions. In these situations, family interactions will not exceed 20 hours of in-person supervision time or 10 separate family interactions for the month. FCS contractors may invoice DHS an additional amount of \$400 per case that meets the new requirements for supervision.</p> <p>DHS will monitor implementation of these new requirements and gather data to determine if any necessary adjustments should be made.</p> <p>Who Is Impacted:</p> <p>These changes will positively impact families and the FCS contractors. By limiting the number of family interactions supervised by the FCS contractors, it increases the number of hours a family support specialist can spend with the family to address other goals in addition to maintaining the parent-child connection. The financial support to the FCS contractors should positively impact retention of workers within the respective organizations.</p>
<p>What Is Not Changing:</p>	<p>Provide a brief summary of aspects of the policy, practice, initiative, or contract that will not be impacted by the implemented changes:</p> <p>The FCS contractors will continue to provide family interaction planning and supervision of interaction between parents and children and between siblings. This includes scheduling, planning, arranging, providing transportation</p>



	assistance for, providing interaction supervision, providing parenting instruction during interaction, and providing reports on parent/child and/or sibling interaction, as specified in the Family Interaction Plan.
Expected Benefits:	Indicate the positive outcomes that are expected as the result of the change: Children and parents will continue to maintain connections while the children remain out of the home. This provides a better opportunity to explore informal supports such as kin and fictive kin to assist in supervising interactions when there is an identified safety concern.