

# Provider Tip Sheet for Remote Visitation

Thank you for your continued commitment to serving children and families during this stressful time. We honor the work you have been doing and continue to do during this crisis period. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and a declaration of emergency at both the state and national levels, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is taking additional steps to safeguard the health of the children and families it serves.

On March 26, 2020, Gov. Jay Inslee issued a proclamation suspending in-person visitation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: [www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/proclamations/20-33%20-%20COVID-19%20DCYF%20Visitation-Remedial%20Services%20%28tmp%29.pdf](http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/proclamations/20-33%20-%20COVID-19%20DCYF%20Visitation-Remedial%20Services%20%28tmp%29.pdf).

This tip-sheet provides important information regarding our interim policy, video requirements for remote visitation and other important information pertaining to these changes.

## Emergency Interim Policy

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and declaration of emergency, DCYF has made changes to Policy 4254 Family Time and Sibling and Relative visits. You can view the interim policy guidance on our website: [www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Family%20Time%20Interim%20Policy%20memo%20FINAL%20\(003\).pdf](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Family%20Time%20Interim%20Policy%20memo%20FINAL%20(003).pdf).



## Video Conference for Remote Visitation

Providers will deliver visitation services by video conference. DCYF is recommending that Visitation Providers use Zoom or WebEx to provide Family Time Remote Visitation.

- Providers and their clients will need a device (phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop) with an internet connection, microphone, and a camera.
- You can find more information about using Zoom, including options and the ability to register, at [www.zoom.us/healthcare](http://www.zoom.us/healthcare).
- You can find more information about using WebEx, including options and the ability to register, at [www.webex.com](http://www.webex.com).

## Video Conference Equipment for Families

If a family does not have equipment in order to participate in the video conference call, there are options to get them the equipment they need. View *Guidance for Family Time Providers to Provide Video Conference Equipment for Families* (CWP\_0051) at [www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/CWP\\_0051.pdf](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/CWP_0051.pdf) for more details on how to help families access needed equipment.



## Reimbursement

DCYF is committed to continuing financial support to your organizations that is similar to payment you have received in the months before Covid-19. We are working out the exact methodology for calculating and paying this retainer payment. It will most likely be based on a monthly average of the last six-months of payment to your organization. We have not determined exactly how this will be billed for at this time but will nail that down in the next week. This retainer payment should be used to continue reimbursing your employees and subcontractors so they do not have to be laid off and to support electronic visitation and communication between foster children and their families. Since you will likely experience a decrease in some costs like mileage, the retainer payment should be sufficient to support investments necessary for virtual visits.

## Safety Considerations

Providing for child safety is part of DCYF's core mission. Video conferencing may have different safety risks to consider than in-person visitation. Below are a few safety considerations while a remote visitation is occurring:

- Turn the camera to focus on the user's face; don't move around a lot or walk around where sensitive data could potentially be seen.
- Check your location on your device to make sure it is turned off.
- Ensure identifying information is not visible while doing a video conference. This includes addresses or phone numbers, passwords, SSNs or full names (first middle last).
- Ensure that you do not have information about other clients in places that are visible to the camera.
- Conduct video conference in areas that are hazard free this is especially important for toddlers or children with special needs.
- No recording of the visitation is permitted.

## How to talk to kids about COVID-19

News of the coronavirus is everywhere and most children have already heard about the virus and have been impacted by the changes the virus has brought to our lives. Child Care Resources has put together a document about talking with children about COVID-19. You can access this document online: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html).

## Questions

Communication during this time is essential. It is critical that you remain in touch with your Regional Visitation Leads about any challenges or successes using video conferencing. For questions, contact Deanna Morrison, Permanency Program Manager at [Deanna.morrison@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:Deanna.morrison@dcyf.wa.gov) or call your local visitation lead.

We will continue to provide support to you during this time. Thank you for your patience and cooperation.