

**TUSCARAWAS COUNTY JOB & FAMILY SERVICES  
CHILDREN SERVICES POLICY**

**VISITATION POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN IN CUSTODY**

**POLICY**

Visits between children and their parents are scheduled as soon as possible after children come into agency custody.

**GUIDELINES**

**A. Location:**

Visits will be held in the least restrictive setting that can promote parent-child interaction and provide protection for the child.

**B. Discipline:**

No physical discipline is to be used during a visit.

**C. Purpose:**

1. To reassure children that nothing bad has happened to their parents.
2. To reassure children that their parents still care about them.
3. To maintain and enhance the relationship/bond between children and their parents.
4. To ease separation and loss issues for children.
5. To monitor parents' use of skills learned through Parent Education.
6. To help determine additional services needed for children and parents.
7. To facilitate the reunification process.

**D. Who may visit:**

1. Parents and primary caretakers.
2. Unless specifically court-ordered, the Worker and/or Supervisor will determine who can visit.
3. Other-than-parents may visit during the last 15 minutes and under the following conditions:
  - a. The Worker and/or Supervisor have been given prior notice of at least 24 hours; and
  - b. The parent(s) approve the visitors; and
  - c. The Worker and/or Supervisor approve the visitors.
  - d. This policy has been reviewed with all visitors and signed.



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### E. Late/Cancellations:

1. Visitation time is not made up by extending the visit when a parent is late.
2. Visitations may be extended if the child arrives late.
3. Parents are expected to call and cancel their visit when they cannot attend. These visits will not be rescheduled.
4. Visits are canceled when parents are 15 minutes or more late. These visits will not be rescheduled.
5. Visits are canceled when inclement weather closes the school district in which the child now resides. These visits will not be rescheduled.

### F. Observers:

1. Therapists, attorneys, guardian ad litem, other professionals related to the case may observe a visit with Worker and/or Supervisor approval.
2. Visits may be videotaped with parent and Worker or Supervisor approval.
3. Parents and children are told who will be observing/taping their visit.

### G. Disruptions:

1. Agency staff has the authority to stop a visit because of inappropriate behavior or language, ill health, or other circumstances threatening the child's well-being. These visits will not be rescheduled.

### H. Food/Special Celebrations:

1. Parents may bring appropriate snacks or meals to the visit.
2. Special celebrations; i.e., birthdays, Christmas, must be arranged in advance.
3. Gifts should only be brought on special occasions.

### I. Some things visiting parents should do:

1. MAKE THIS A POSITIVE TIME WITH YOUR CHILD.
2. ASK ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL AND OTHER FUN ACTIVITIES.
3. LET YOUR CHILD KNOW IT'S OKAY TO LIKE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE TAKING CARE OF HIM.
4. ASSURE YOUR CHILD YOU LOVE HIM.
5. SAVE YOUR PERSONAL PROBLEMS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR CASE FOR YOUR WORKER OR SUPERVISOR. DO NOT MAKE YOUR CHILD

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WORRY ABOUT YOU.**

6. LEAVE THE VISITING AREA WHEN YOUR VISIT IS OVER. LONG GOODBYES CAN BE PAINFUL FOR EVERYONE.
7. REMEMBER, YOU ARE THE ADULT AND THE SUCCESS OF YOUR VISIT DEPENDS ON YOU.

J. Rules of the Visitation Room:

1. Cell phones and pagers are not permitted in the visit.
2. All meals, snacks and drinks must be served at the table. Children should not be permitted to play with any type of food or candy.
3. Immediately notify the room monitor of any injuries.
4. Notify the room monitor if a restroom break is needed. You must be accompanied through the building to the restroom.
5. You may not leave the visit without the room monitor to accompany you.
6. The last 5 minutes of your visit is to be spent doing clean up and saying good-byes.
7. No weapons are permitted inside the agency. This includes anything with a blade; i.e., pocket knives, kitchen knives, tools, etc.

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*Detach signature section & file in child's file.*

Parent/Caretaker:

Your signature below indicates that this Visitation Policy and Guidelines has been reviewed with you and you are being given a copy this date.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Caretaker

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Original: \_\_\_ Child=s file; Copy: \_\_\_ Parent/Caretaker

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Lynn Angelozzi, Director

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Effective Date