

Division of Youth Services Parental Involvement Plan

2021-2022

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Families are involved from the beginning of the process, starting with the initial treatment team meeting. Every 90 days, guardians are invited and encouraged to participate in team treatment meetings. Guardians, school staff, and DYS personnel collaborate in efforts to make the transition back to home, school, and community as seamless and smooth as possible.

Every youth remanded to the custody of the Division of Youth Services (DYS) must be afforded the opportunity to communicate via telephonic methods with:

- The youth's parents and/or guardians
- The youth's immediate family members
- Other positive individuals in the youth's life

During the intake and assessment process:

- The youth's approved telephone list shall be compiled by the DYS Services Coordinator
- Any changes made to the approved telephone list shall be completed by the youth's facility case manager
- Youth shall be made aware of the telephone communication procedures as outline in the DYS Student Handbook
- Each facility or program shall allow a youth to make one telephone call per week to his or her immediate family or any other approved person
- The opportunity to make additional calls shall be afforded as a privilege in the behavior management system
- Youth shall not be permitted to speak with incoming callers until the callers identify has been authenticated
- Under no circumstances shall a youth be denied the opportunity to communicate with his/her attorneys or the court
- Calls to attorneys or the courts shall not be monitored
- Facility staff shall maintain a telephone call log sheet for all incoming and outgoing telephone calls that the youth makes

VISITATION AND FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Every youth remanded to the custody of the Division of Youth Services (DYS) must be afforded the opportunity to receive visits from:

- The youth's parents and/or guardians
- The youth's immediate family members
- Other positive individuals in the youth's life
- Youth may refuse to receive visitors

- Visitors shall be required to abide by the rules and regulations governing visitation to ensure the safety, security, and integrity of the facility
- In all cases, visitors shall be treated with courtesy and respect

VISITOR LIST

During the intake and assessment process, the youth's approved visitor list shall be compiled by the DYS Services Coordinator.

Any changes made to the approved visitors list shall be completed by the youth's facility case manager.

DYS may deny placements of a person's name on an approved visitor list if there is reasonable cause to believe the person would:

- Pose a risk to the safety or security of the facility
- Interfere with a youth's treatment, rehabilitation, or successful reestablishment into their community

The following individuals will not be granted visitation:

- A person who is restricted from contact with a DYS youth by a valid court order
- A former or current DYS youth, unless the former DYS youth is an immediate family member
- A parent whose parental rights have been terminated by a court, but only if the youth the parent is seeking to visit is under eighteen years of age

VISITATION (GENERAL INFORMATION)

- Normal visitation days are each Saturday and Sunday
- Major holidays
- The facility or program shall provide two eight-hour visitation days per week
- Visitation for youth is up to two hours per each visitation

Special visitation may be provided to accommodate visitors with special circumstances including without limitation:

- Long-distance requirements
- Parent work schedules that preclude visiting during normal hours
- Bereavement

Visitations are limited to four guests; however, for large families, step-families, an exception may be made on a case-by-case basis.

If there is a compelling risk, visitation may be denied or terminated. This may include circumstances in which the youth is:

- Exhibiting out-of-control behavior

- Engaging in violence or threatening conduct
- Engaging in misconduct during visitation

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to a visitation if it has been determined that a youth will not participate in a normal visitation schedule. An alternate location and time will be provided to the parent/legal guardian to allow them the opportunity to visit.

The facility shall post the visitation rules and procedures in English and Spanish on a central bulletin board in the visitation area. Facility staff shall assist non-English speaking individuals to understand posted rules, as needed.

The visitation rules shall address all pertinent issues, including without limitation to:

- Visitation days and hours
- Required identification
- Visitor dress code
- Prohibited contraband
- Items authorized in visitation area
- Expected demeanor of visitors

These notifications should be sent with the admission letter to each youth's parents/legal guardians and include the grievance process. Adequate space shall be provided for visitation. Outdoor visitation may be allowed if safety and weather permit.

DYS family advocates shall encourage family participation and also provide in the Family Welcome Packet:

- The DYS Parent/Guardian Handbook
- Quarterly Family Newsletters
- An annual calendar of all quarterly family day events

Each facility will conduct **4 Parent/Teacher conferences** each year.

Each facility will host **(4) Family Days** per year.

NOTE: DUE TO COVID-19, ON-SITE VISITATION MAY BE CANCELLED. IN THAT CASE, THE NUMBER OF PHONE CALLS MAY BE INCREASED. PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES MAY BE CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM OR TEAMS. FAMILY THERAPY AND COUNSELING SESSIONS MAY ALSO BE CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM OR TEAMS.