

## Visitation Matrix for In-person Visits Between Children and Parents

This matrix helps determine **HOW** the visit will happen, not **IF** a visit will happen.

**Use this matrix to develop a written visitation plan to share with all involved – including parents, foster parents, and visit supervisors**

**Everyone participating in the visit has confirmed they have not been exposed to COVID-19 and they do not have any symptoms of COVID-19?**

If yes, continue

If no, have the virtual visit\*



**Will every adult and child age 5 and older (children between the ages of 2 – 4 when possible) be wearing a face covering (includes face shields) throughout the visit?\***

If yes, schedule the in-person visit

If no, continue



**If an adult will not wear a face covering, can the visit happen outside with 6 feet of physical distance between visit participants?**

If yes, schedule the in-person visit

If no, have the virtual visit\*

### **Remember:**

**\*Schedule a virtual visit at the same time as the in-person visit in case the in-person visit cannot occur\*\***

**\*\*Children with behavioral, developmental, or cognitive issues may not be able to wear a face covering. In-person visits should **not** be canceled because of a child's inability to wear a face covering.**

## IMPORTANT POINTS:

**DHS must follow visit guidelines and policy consistently in every case.**

- **Develop a written visitation plan that is consistent with agency guidelines and policy in every case.** The Visit and Contact Plans (831) should be updated to reflect practice changes as a result of the pandemic. This is a great way to ensure all folks involved in the case are on the same page. It also builds trust which results in everyone being motivated to do what is best for the family.
  
- **Support the team in making innovative visitation plans.** The DHS-developed standard visit model (1X/week, supervised in the office) does not mesh well with the kind of adaptations required to promote visits in this pandemic environment. We need all of us - supervisors, caseworkers and SSAs - to be creative and to engage in problem solving with families and their supports in order to promote reunification and safety and keeps participants as safe as possible. This means visits need to occur outside whenever possible and we need to fully consider when and at what level supervision is required.
  
- **A virtual visit is only a reasonable substitution if this matrix has been completed and none of the mitigating options are possible.**

**There is strength in collaboration, so let's help each other think outside the box to offer our families and foster parents the best service available during these extraordinary times.**

**Local Branch Outdoor Visitation Options:**

**Resources:**

DHS Visit Guidance  
DHS One-page Guidance for Parents & Foster Parents

**If you have questions about hygiene or safety due to COVID regarding a visit, please contact Heidi Beaubriand, Health and Wellness Program Manager at [Heidi.Beaubriand@dhs.ohio.state.us](mailto:Heidi.Beaubriand@dhs.ohio.state.us) or a Nurse Consultant**

**This Visitation Matrix was created by representatives for Parents, Foster Parents, Public Defenders, Attorneys for Youth, DHS Staff and Managers.**