

Practice Alert



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Issued by:

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Sibling Visitation FACES entry

PURPOSE:

This Practice Alert is notification that the method of entering sibling visits in FACES has changed. Additional information around visitation practices is forthcoming through a policy update.

OVERVIEW:

Sibling visitation plans and activity will be recorded in the Contact Communication Log.

FACES CHANGES:

The following selection options have been added to the Purpose drop down menu in the Contact Communication Log:

- Visitation - Sibling visit
- Visitation - Sibling visitation is suspended per court order
- Visitation - Sibling Visitation Plan developed/modified

Duration: A field has been added to document the duration of each visitation logged. Duration can be logged in days, hours or minutes. It may be necessary to log the visit time in hours for multiple day visits if intending to also count a partial day. For example, if the visit duration was 1.5 days, this format is not allowable in the text space. Instead document the duration as 36 hours.

PROCESS:

Follow the entry guidelines in the chart below:

AC	Sibling Visitation		
	TYPE	PURPOSE	POINT OF CONTACT
In person visit (Best option. Meets contact requirements.)	In Person – Initiated by CD or In Person – Initiated by Contact	Visitation - Sibling visit	The location the visit took place (Under Other Individuals Involved add all individuals who participated in the visit, including the supervising party, if applicable)
Phone/video contact (Second best option. Does not meet contact requirements but is tracked in the data.)	By Phone – Initiated by Contact or By Phone – Initiated by CD	Visitation - Sibling visit	Alternate #, Cell #, Home #, Work #, or Other: Video call (Under Other Individuals Involved add all individuals who participated in the phone/video contact, including the supervising party, if applicable).
Written contact (Third best option. Does not meet contact requirements but is tracked in the data.)	Written – Initiated by Contact	Visitation - Sibling visit	The location the correspondence was received (Under Other Individuals Involved add the siblings who sent and received the written contact).
To document a sibling visitation plan:	Written – Initiated by CD	Visitation - Sibling Visitation Plan developed/modified	Other: If Other, Explain: Sibling Visitation Plan (Under Other Individuals Involved add all siblings to whom the plan applies)
To document the suspension of visits per court order:	Written – Initiated by CD or Written – Initiated by Contact	Visitation - Sibling visitation is suspended per court order	Other If Other, Explain: Court Order (Under Other Individuals Involved add each sibling whom the visitation court order impacts).
To document the resumption of a sibling visitation plan following a prior court order to suspend visits:	Written – Initiated by CD or Written – Initiated by Contact	Visitation - Sibling Visitation Plan developed/modified	Other If Other, Explain: Court order terminated or modified. (Under Other Individuals Involved add each sibling whom the visitation court order impacts).

Sibling Visitation

Sibling Visitation Plans are required when all siblings who are in Alternative Care are not residing in the same placement, unless a court order specifies otherwise. Additionally, efforts should be made to maintain sibling relationships through visitation if there are siblings to the child who are not in Alternative Care. It is recommended that visits occur as frequently as possible, with a minimum of one time per month.

The Family Support Team must be intentional about planning for consistent and frequent in-person sibling visitation when siblings are not residing in the same placement.

- **Sibling visitation plans must be reviewed during each FST meeting** to ensure visitation is occurring (absent a court order) or if a court order exists that has suspended visitation, determine steps to remedy the concern and/or determine if circumstances are appropriate to make a recommendation to the court to reinstate visitation. As soon as concerns are remedied, a recommendation should be made to the court to lift the court order suspending visits. If the court agrees, document the termination or modification of the court order and details of the sibling visitation plan in the Contact Communication Log.
- **Sibling visits should not be suspended without a court order except when** emergency circumstances exist in which a child's safety is in question should the siblings have in-person contact, or other circumstances exist that sibling contact would impact a child in such a manner that is contrary to a child's best interest. If the Family Support Team determines sibling visits should cease due to these circumstances, the court must be notified, and a court order must be sought to suspend visits. If this occurs, the circumstances surrounding the emergency suspension of the visit should be documented in the Contact Communication Log.

Each visit that occurs between siblings must be documented in the Contact Communication Log in the electronic case record. Duration is the length of time the visit occurred.

Each visit that was attempted but did not occur must be documented in the Contact Communication Log as 'Attempted'.

Sibling contact that occurs simultaneously with a parent-child visit or extended family visit may be also documented as a sibling visit by selecting all relevant **Purposes** and selecting all individuals who participated in the visit under Other Individuals Involved.

If all siblings are placed together, a sibling visitation plan is not necessary.