



Memo

To: Facility Managers, Facility Directors, Facility Assistant Directors, CMSO Regional Supervisors

From: Felicia A. B. Reid, Esq., *Acting Deputy Commissioner*

Date: November 19, 2020

Re: COVID-19: Modification of Visits to Televisits

1. Definitions

For the purposes of this guidance:

- a. **Known case of COVID-19:** Means any youth or staff who tests positive for COVID-19 **and** has been at the facility within the **14 days prior** to the positive test.
- b. **Visitor:** Does **not** include staff who work at a facility, emergency responders, law enforcement, personnel responding to facility safety and security issues (e.g. cameras, fire safety equipment, etc.), or Parole Board representatives.
- c. **Televisit:** Means phone calls and/or video visitation in accordance with **Video Visitation with Youth at OCFS Facilities** (June 29, 2020).

2. Facilities with a Known Case of COVID-19: All Visits Modified to Televisits

- a. **As of the date of this notice**, for any facility where there is a known case of COVID-19—whether among youth or staff—all in-person visits are modified to televisits until further notice.
- b. Modification of visits to televisits applies to families of youth, non-facility OCFS staff (e.g. staff from Home Office, SIU, OOTO, and CMSOs), the Justice Center, and, where feasible, outside service providers and vendors. The facility will notify any person who contacts the facility and requests to visit in-person that all visitation has been modified to televisits until further notice.
- c. For any facility where, as of the date of this notice, there are no known positives, but a positive case subsequently arises among youth or staff, the case will trigger all visits being modified to televisits. Once Facility Director or designee becomes aware of a known positive, the facility must notify all facility staff and copy the Facility Manager, all Associate Commissioners, and the Deputy Commissioner.

3. Facilities Without a Known Case of COVID-19: Certain Visits Modified to Televisits

As of **Sunday, November 22, 2020** and until further notice, for facilities without a known case of COVID-19, the following applies:

- a. Except for in-person visits by families, all in-person visits by persons in 2 (b), above, are modified to televisits.

- b. Families are permitted to visit the facility in person, with the following limitations:
 - o The facility will limit visitation to one day of the week with a **minimum of seven days** between visiting days. Example: Visitation only occurs on Saturdays at Facility X.
 - o The facility will coordinate visiting families so that the families are cohorted with units and only one unit will have visiting families each week. For example, only the families of Unit A visit on one Saturday, only the families of Unit B the next Saturday, and so on each subsequent Saturday.
 - o No more than **four** families may visit on the visiting day, and no more than **two** persons per family may visit.
 - o Facilities will take all prescreening, arrival, and visitation measures outlined in **Resuming Visitation at OCFS Facilities** (July 21, 2020).

4. In General

- a. Particularly noting the holiday season, facilities should give youth extra phone calls and/or video visitation where program permits. CMSOs will continue to offer video visit facilitation to families.
- b. Facilities will continue to screen all individuals, including facility staff, before granting entry to the facility. The DJJOY guidance that applies is: **COVID-19 Safety: Face Mask Covering Expectations and PPE for Staff** (April 16, 2020, reissued July 14, 2020); **Required Temperature Checks** (June 4, 2020); **Protocols for Mandatory Temperature Checks for Individuals Seeking Admission to DJJOY Residential Programs** (June 5, 2020); **Temperature Checkers and Screeners Guidelines** (June 5, 2020); and **Changes for Gate/Front Door Operators** (June 5, 2020).
- c. Each facility will continue to be regularly cleaned and disinfected using approved disinfectants, particularly targeting high contact surfaces and high-traffic and common areas. *See also, COVID-19 and Facility Cleaning and Documentation* (November 19, 2020). Hand sanitizer will remain available for staff and youth, and facilities will continue to encourage regular hand washing.
- d. In collaboration with OCFS' health and safety team, facilities will continue to adjust programming and facility movement to keep youth and staff safe.
- e. In accordance with guidance from the NYS Department of Health, OCFS facilities will continue to take proactive measures to contact trace. Facilities will continue to designate a specific person or persons to communicate with local departments of health about COVID-19 cases.
- f. Additional facility-based DJJOY guidance includes: **Guidelines for the Use of Personal Protective Equipment/Quarantine and Isolation Protocol** (July 18, 2020); **Out-of-State Travel Guidelines and Leave for DJJOY Essential Staff** (July 21, 2020); **COVID-19: Facility Measures and Refusal of Mask/Face Covering Directives** (July 23, 2020); **BHS COVID-19 Q&A Mailbox for Facility Questions Related to Youth** (August 31, 2020); **COVID-19, Youth, and Face Coverings/Masks** (October 9, 2020); and **Recreation at OCFS Facilities: No-, Limited-, and Close-Contact Sports** (November 10, 2020)
- g. The following COVID-19-related NYS Department of Health guidance remains applicable to visitation at OCFS facilities: **Health Advisory: All Residential Congregate Facilities** (October 23, 2020).

CC:

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