



Memo

To: Facility Directors and Assistant Directors

From: Felicia A. B. Reid, Esq., Deputy Commissioner
Rob MacGiffert, Associate Commissioner, Facilities Management
Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth

Date: April 9, 2021

Re: **Limited In-Person Visitation at OCFS Facilities**

On November 19, 2020, DJJOY issued *COVID-19: Modification of Visits to Televisits*, which limited entry to all OCFS residential facilities to only facility staff. All other visitation, by families of youth, youth attorneys, outside service providers and vendors, and non-facility OCFS staff, shifted to televisitation. Beginning **April 12, 2021**, any facility that has **not** had a known case of COVID (defined at [I][A] below) can resume limited in-person visitation according to the procedures outlined in this guidance.

I. Definitions

- A. **Known Case of COVID-19:** Any youth or staff who tests positive for COVID-19 **and** has been at the facility within **14 days prior** to the positive test.
- B. **In-Person Visit:** A visit that occurs according to all prescreening, arrival, visitation, and cleaning measures outlined in **Resuming Visitation at OCFS Facilities** (July 21, 2020). Where weather, staffing, and camera coverage permit, facilities are strongly encouraged to conduct visitation outdoors and/or any other location that can accommodate social distancing.
- C. **Televisit:** Youth contact with non-facility individuals by phone and/or video and according to **Video Visitation with Youth at OCFS Facilities** (June 29, 2020).
- D. **Visitor:** Does **not** include facility staff, contracted psychiatry or dental providers, emergency responders, law enforcement, personnel responding to safety and security issues, Parole Board representatives, or individuals that Executive Law § 519 permits.
- E. **Family:** Immediate or extended family according to PPM 3445.00, *Visits to Youth in OCFS Facilities*, a youth's caregiver/release resource, and/or a person with whom the youth is a co-parent.

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

- A. Visitation to any facility where there is a known case of COVID-19 will occur by televisit.
- B. For any facility where there are no known positives, but a known case among youth or staff arises after the effective date of this guidance, the case will automatically trigger modification of visits to televisits for no fewer than 14 days. The 14 days may be extended at the DJJOY Deputy Commissioner's discretion based on the circumstances at the facility.

III. Facilities Without a Known Case of COVID-19: In-Person Visits Limited

A. Family

- i. The facility will limit family visitation to **one day of the week** with a **minimum of seven days** between visiting days.
 - **Example:** Family visitation only occurs Saturdays at Facility X. At Facility Y, visitation only occurs Sundays.
- ii. The facility will coordinate visiting families so that the families are cohorted with units and only one unit will have visiting families each week.
 - **Example:** A facility has Unit A, Unit B, and Unit C. Only the families of Unit A visit the first Saturday of the month, only the families of Unit B visit the second Saturday, and only the families of Unit C visit the third Saturday. Once a rotation is complete, it begins again.
 - **Note:** In the example above, if a month has four Saturdays, Unit A will have two visits in the month. If the month has five Saturdays, Unit A and Unit B will have two visit days in the month. In short, a unit could have more than one visit day a month.
- iii. No more than **four** families may visit the facility on the visiting day, and no more than **four** persons per family may visit.
- iv. Where weather, staffing, and camera coverage permit, facilities are strongly encouraged to conduct visitation outdoors and/or any other location that can accommodate social distancing.
- v. Facilities should continue to give youth extra televisits **whenever program permits**. CMSOs will continue to offer video visit facilitation to families.

B. Outside Vendors and Service Providers

- i. Outside service providers and vendors may not visit the facility more than **one day of the week** with a **minimum of seven days** between visiting days.
 - **Example:** The Zumba provider only comes on Thursdays.
- ii. Providers' and vendors' movement throughout the facility must be limited to only those areas where their provision of service or programming requires that they be.
- iii. Outside service providers and vendors cannot engage more than one unit at a time during a visit and cannot work with more than one unit in any seven-day period **unless** the units can be separated by more than six feet of social distance and all youth are masked throughout instruction.
 - **Example:** A facility has Unit A and Unit B. An arts program works with Unit A on Wednesday in a classroom. The arts program cannot work with either Unit A again **or** with Unit B until the following Wednesday.

- **Example:** A facility has Unit A and Unit B. A theater program works with Unit A and Unit B in the gym on Mondays. In the gym, there is enough space for there to be more than six feet of social distance between the units and all youth are wearing a mask or face covering. The theater program cannot work with the units again until the following Monday.
- iv. At this time, facilities cannot bring in vendors or service providers whose programming does not permit or cannot be modified to make six feet of social distance between the instructor and the youth.
 - **Exception:** Providers for youth haircuts/hairstyling are, for now, limited to youth who have an upcoming court appearance (video or in-person), voluntary agency visit, or release date. Facilities must advise providers that they will be required to wear a multi-layer mask, face shield, and gloves during the haircut/hairstyling. (The facility will offer the provider these items if they do not bring their own.)
 - **A haircut/hairstyling can only occur if the barber/stylist and the youth are both wearing multi-layer masks/face coverings and other directed PPE during the entire haircut. No grooming services may be performed on a youth's face.**
 - If multiple youth are receiving haircuts, only one youth can be in the haircutting area at a time. The chair and surrounding area must be wiped down with disinfectant between youth, and the barber/stylist must be permitted to clean their tools before cutting each youth's hair. If a facility has multiple units, there must be a **minimum of seven days** between barbering/styling each unit.
- v. Facilities should preemptively encourage outside service providers and vendors to explore televisiting capabilities if the facility must shift to televisitation due to a known case of COVID-19.

C. Youth Attorney and Non-Facility Based OCFS Staff

- i. For youth counsel and non-facility OCFS staff (e.g. CMSO, QAI, BETS, BHS, BBHS, Office of the Ombudsman, etc.), no individual visitor may visit any facility more than once every **seven days**, unless situational exception has been made by the DJJOY Deputy Commissioner.
- ii. Youth counsel and non-facility OCFS staff may do a facility visit with several youth on one unit, but cannot visit with another unit at that facility or with youth at another facility for **seven days**.
 - **Example:** If a CMSO case worker visits Facility X on Monday, they cannot visit Facility X again **or** Facility Y until the following Monday.
 - **Example:** If a youth attorney visits a youth client at facility X on Thursday, they cannot visit with that same youth **or** a youth who is a client at Facility Y until the following Thursday.
 - **Example:** If an ombudsperson visits with youth on Unit A on Friday, they cannot visit with youth on Unit B or with youth at another facility until the following Friday.
- iii. Facilities will continue to make televisitation available to youth counsel and non-facility based OCFS staff.

IV. Miscellaneous

- A. 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, reissued February 2, 2021); **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); **Revised Facility COVID Questions** (January 11, 2021); **Revision Scripts- Front Door- Gate Operators** (January 11, 2021).

- B. 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.
- C. In collaboration with OCFS' health and safety team, facilities will continue to adjust programming and facility movement to keep youth and staff safe.
- D. 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.
- E. Additional facility-based DJJOY guidance includes: **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); **Recreation at OCFS Facilities: No-, Limited-, and Close-Contact Sports** (November 10, 2020); **Access to Fit Testing for OCFS-Issued N95 Respirators** (February 23, 2021); and **Guidelines for the Use of Personal Protective Equipment / Quarantine and Isolation Protocol** (February 23, 2021).
- F. 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).

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