



Office of Children and Family Services

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

SHEILA J. POOLE
Commissioner

Memo

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

From: Robert MacGiffert, Acting Associate Commissioner
Office of Facilities Management

Date: December 1, 2020

Re: COVID-19: Modification of Visits to Televisits in all OCFS Facilities

Due to increasing COVID-19 cases across the state, the decision has been made to modify all visitation to televisits in OCFS facilities effective immediately. The safety of youth and staff remains in the forefront. This change in practice will be evaluated weekly and will remain in effect until further notice.

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. A televisit means phone calls and/or video visitation in accordance with **Video Visitation with Youth at OCFS Facilities** (June 29, 2020). A 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. Facilities must continue to screen (including the COVID-19 screening protocols) all other individuals, including facility staff, before granting entry to the facility.

This is a difficult time for all and a change in visitation may be particularly difficult for youth during 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. If anyone has any questions, please contact your Facility Manager.

cc:

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