Memo

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

From: Felicia A. B. Reid, Esq., Deputy Commissioner
       Robert M. MacGiffert, Associate Commissioner
       Dr. Joseph E. Tomassone, Acting Associate Commissioner

Date: March 22, 2022

Re: Visitation at OCFS Facilities: Spring 2022 (Updated)

Changes to prior guidance are highlighted below.

I. Definitions

A. Contact Tracing: The process of identifying individuals possibly impacted by contact with or proximity to a known case of COVID-19. Facilities will contact trace to determine if any units at the facility or groups of individuals should be medically quarantined or isolated. Contact tracing will include both discussion with the COVID-19 positive person and video review.

B. Close Contact: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) defines a close contact as anyone who is within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or longer over a 24-hour period. Facilities will offer close contacts of a known case of COVID a rapid test and must report those contacts to OCFS Personnel for further direction.

C. Known Case of COVID-19: Any youth or staff who tests positive for COVID-19 and, as determined by facility contact tracing:
   1. Has been at the facility within two days prior to the positive test, and
   2. Has had close contact (defined above) with youth or with staff who directly supervise or provide direct services or programming to youth.

D. 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).

E. Televisit: Youth contact with non-OCFS individuals by phone and/or video and according to Video Visitation with Youth at OCFS Facilities (June 29, 2020).

F. Visitor: Does not include OCFS 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. Individuals responding to facility maintenance or to make repairs are not visitors.
G. **Family**: Immediate or extended family according to PPM 3455.00, *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: In-Person Visits Modified to Televisits**

A. Following identification of a known case of COVID-19, the facility will transition to televisitation status for 10 days. The facility medical team will refer to *Summary of Guidance Documents COVID Testing and Program Placement* for rapid/PCR testing and quarantine/isolation guidance.

B. If there is a subsequent known case within the time that a facility is on televisitation status, the televisitation clock will restart.

C. Visitors and family members (as defined above) may not visit facilities on televisitation status or youth on quarantine/isolation status without the permission of the Deputy Commissioner.

III. **Facilities Without a Known Case of COVID-19**

A. **Family**

   i. The facility will coordinate visiting families so that the families are cohorted with units, either in location or by times.

      ▪ **Example 1**: A facility has Unit A and Unit B. Unit A visits with their families in one location, while Unit B visits with their families on the same day in another location.

      ▪ **Example 2**: A facility has Unit A and Unit B. Unit A visits with their families in the morning in the visiting room, after which time the visitation room is cleaned and surfaces disinfected. Unit B then visits with their families in the afternoon.

      ▪ **Example 3**: A facility has Unit A and Unit B. Unit A visits with their families on Saturday, after which time the visitation room is cleaned and surfaces disinfected. Unit B visits with their families on Sunday.

   ii. Where weather, staffing, security, and camera coverage permit, facilities are encouraged to conduct visitation outdoors and/or in any other location that can accommodate social distancing.

   iii. Facilities should continue to give youth extra televisits whenever program permits. CMSOs will continue to offer televisit facilitation to families.

B. **Outside Vendors and Service Providers**

   i. There is no prohibition on youth taking off-campus trips for recreation and to outside vendors and service providers. Youth and staff comply with those vendors’ and service providers’ own COVID precautions.

   ii. Vendors and service providers may resume a regular visitation schedule based on a facility’s scheduling ability. These may include multiple visits per week to a facility that does not have a known case of COVID-19.

   iii. Service 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.

   iv. If vendors or service providers have programming that does not permit or cannot be modified to make six feet of social distance between the instructor and the youth, the provider is required to wear a mask—surgical, doubled up, or KN95. The facility will offer the provider these items if they do not bring their own. Facilities must advise providers that they will be required to wear a mask.

      ▪ 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.
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. Youth attorneys and non-facility OCFS staff may resume regular in-person visitation, however, they may not have in-person visitation with youth on quarantine/isolation status.
   ii. 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 in accordance with current screening guidance.

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 known COVID-19 cases.

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