

Script for Parent Child Contact

Part 1: (Call parent and caregiver individually)

Hi,

My name is _____ and I work for _____ as a _____.

I have been asked by DCF to contact you regarding next steps for Family Time. Can we set a time today to have call with you and the (parent or foster parent/ kin caregiver?)

Set up time give call in number

Part 2:

Over the past few days, DCF has been working to figure out what contact between families will look like amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As you know DCF has a responsibility to ensure that contact occur in a manner that is safe and appropriate, in alignment with the latest guidance from the Department of Health, and in compliance with the expectations of the court. Vermont is currently in a state of emergency and current recommendations from the CDC strongly encourage social distancing. In response to that, daycares, schools and many public establishments have shut down to slow the spread of the virus.

We know that you are concerned for the safety and wellbeing of your child and we would like to know if you are willing to move to virtual/ remote contact as recommended by the Vermont Department of Health. These plans will be developed to cover the period in which Vermont is in a state of emergency. Currently that is for the time period of 3/19/20 until 4/15/20.

This contact could be in the form of video chats and/or phone contact based upon all parties' technological capabilities.

(Should parents agree with making this change, create plan with parties on the phone, with specific dates/ times and platform for contact)

Please also know that you can speak to your attorney before making the decision to move to remote/virtual contact.

I (facilitator) will follow-up via email or phone with everyone regarding the written plan for remote contact.

(Should caregiver disagree – “these are hard times, during a pandemic we need to use out of the box thinking to support parent child contact, and are times that call on all of us to use an electronic medium to figure out what’s best for the

child. We are asking foster parents and parents to come together to put together a remote contact plan)

(If there's disagreement: ask these three screening questions to both parents and caregivers)

1. Have you been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19?
2. Have you felt unwell with respiratory symptoms in the last few days? *Cough, high temperature, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing?*
3. Is there anybody in your home who is high risk with serious health issues were they to contract COVID-19?

(If yes to any question, plan for virtual/ remote contact will proceed)

Because you are responding yes to one or more of the screening questions we will proceed with virtual/ remote contact.

(If agreement with virtual/remote plan)

Thank you for your patience and understanding during these uncertain times. We are all working to ensure as much consistency as possible for your family

This guidance is effective 3/19/20 and to remain in effect during state of emergency due to COVID-19 pandemic