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	<b>Part No./Name</b>	9 – Ongoing Services to Foster Children
	<b>Section No./Name</b>	Ongoing Services to Foster Children
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## I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The term visit is defined as any face-to-face contact between the case worker and verbal child which provides for free and private communication. Visiting with a verbal child on the same date as a visit with the foster parent/caregiver is permissible, provided the case worker and child visit privately. Visiting with the child privately allows the child to share any concerns more openly and discuss his/her care. The case worker should also spend time visiting the child and caregiver together to observe interactions and support positive relationships within the placement. The case worker should document in case notes that he/she visited privately with each verbal child and the foster parent/ caregiver, if more than one person was seen during the same visit.

When the child is pre-verbal or unable to communicate, a visit is defined as any face-to-face contact between the case worker and the child. The case worker must observe the caregivers with each child during each visit to determine the adequacy of care and evidence of bonding. It is expected that the case worker will visit privately with the foster parent/caregiver during each visit. It is also expected the case worker will hold or interact with and examine the pre-verbal/non-verbal child to assess his safety, wellbeing and development.

The case worker's visit with the child in the child's placement at least monthly is required without exception and is important in order to:

- assess and monitor the care the child receives, including the child's safety, clothing, physical environment (observe the child's room), developmental or educational progress, and health needs;
- ensure the child is receiving the monthly allowance allotted in the board rate, as appropriate based on the child's age and developmental level;
- observe interaction between the foster parent/caregiver and child;
- listen to both foster child's and foster parent/caregiver's concerns;
- lend support;
- provide ongoing clarification regarding the reason for continued foster care setting;
- discuss approvals for reimbursements and resolve payment issues;
- review the child's Lifebook;
- review the case plan and expectations of child, caregivers, case worker, etc.;

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- solicit information needed in revising and updating the case plan;
- collect documentation from the school and service providers, such as physicians, from the caregiver to scan into the child’s case record;
- provide recent information about the child’s parents, and other significant individuals when available, especially if reunification is a goal; \*\*\*
- review portions of the [402 Know the Facts Handbook](#), as needed; \* and
- review the Foster Youth’s Bill of Rights ([Appendix J: Foster Youth’s Bill of Rights](#)), as needed.

The Monthly Visitation Guide Sheet provides guidance for discussion topics when conducting in-person visits with foster children and caregivers. Topics covered during in-person visits should be well documented in case notes.


During the first face-to-face visit following a youth’s 12<sup>th</sup> birthday and at each visit prior to a case plan review, the FC case worker provides the youth with the [Know the Facts Handbook \(CW 402\)](#). The FC case worker reviews the handbook with the youth, particularly portions of the book related to the youth’s current situation. The provision of the CW 402 and the review with the youth is documented in the case notes.

During the first face-to-face home visit with youth, age14-18, the FC worker shall provide the youth and caretaker with the Foster Youth Bill of Rights ([Appendix J: Foster Youth’s Bill of Rights](#)). The FC worker shall review the Foster Youth Bill of Rights with the youth and their caretaker. The youth, caretaker, and case worker shall sign and date the Foster Youth Bill of Rights Signature Page stating that the Foster Youth Bill of Rights have been reviewed. FC worker shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that all youth’s rights are met. \*\*

## II. PROCEDURES

### A. FREQUENCY OF VISITS WITH THE CHILD

Regular visitation is necessary to fulfill the responsibility of ensuring the health, safety and permanency plan of the child. The frequency of visits between the FC case worker and each child in foster care, including those placed in specialized foster homes, private agency foster homes, relative homes, residential facilities or psychiatric hospital shall be based on need, but a face to face visit by the assigned FC case worker shall occur at least once per month in the child’s placement. Other visits may occur at the child’s school, public area, doctor’s office, etc. as needed, but these visits shall not replace the monthly visit in the child’s residence.

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If there is reason to believe a threat of danger exists when the case worker is visiting with a child, the case worker shall complete the CW-Form 5, Safety Assessment then contact the case supervisor to discuss. The case worker shall utilize the Appendix 3-B Threats, Vulnerability and Caretaker Protective Capacities when completing the CW Form 5 Safety Assessment. If a threat of danger exists, the case worker and supervisor shall determine the child’s vulnerability and assess caretaker protective capacities when necessary. If a child is unsafe, the case worker shall contact Centralized Intake to make a report. The case worker, case supervisor and Child Welfare Manager shall determine if it is safe for the child to remain in the home with a safety plan or to transition the child to another home. If it is determined that the child should remain in the foster home, the Child Welfare Manager must approve the use of the safety plan as compared to changing care settings and endorse “yes” on the safety analysis section of the Form 5. If it is determined that a child should be removed from the caregiver’s home, the case worker, supervisor and Child Welfare Manager are encouraged to explore if the child’s parents have met conditions for return, to allow the child to return to the parent’s home, with or without additional services.

In extenuating circumstances, when the absence of the child’s regularly assigned case worker prevents him/her from making the minimum required monthly visits, the supervisor may temporarily assign another case worker to make the visit(s), and shall document such temporary assignment in the case notes. The temporarily assigned case worker shall document the visit(s) in the case notes. Supervisors or other supervisory staff within the region may also fulfill the role of a temporary assignment to complete visits in extenuating circumstances.

The location of each visit must be clearly documented in the case notes. Tracking of in-home visits is necessary to comply with P. L. 109-288, the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, which requires states report the percentage of children in foster care who are visited on a monthly basis by the case worker handling the case and the percentage of the visits that occur in the residence of the child.

Timely and accurate documentation of all visits in case notes is important to ensure visitation is being made. Supervisors should routinely discuss visitation with FC case workers in quarterly case staffings on each case and provide support to assist in regular visits with the child, if needed.

When a Louisiana foster child is placed in an out of state placement, the FC case worker shall request the receiving state make monthly visits with the child in the child’s placement. Requests for monthly visits shall be made by checking the corresponding box for “other” on the ICPC 100A, Interstate Compact Placement Request, and indicating monthly visits. A written statement clarifying the request is for monthly visits with the child in the child’s placement should be included in the cover letter. In addition, the case worker shall monitor visits via written reports received from the receiving state. Refer 11-225, Requirements when Louisiana is the Sending State, and 11-230, Special Considerations and Procedures for Working with

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ICPC and the Sending State. If the receiving state does not make monthly visits as requested, the FC case worker needs to document when visits were not made as requested and staff with the supervisor/Child Welfare Manager to determine how to specifically address the concern regarding that case.

Certain case situations require visits more frequently than once a month. These situations include, but are not limited to:


Replacement - a child, who is moved from one placement to another, must be visited twice within the first 30 days following replacement. A visit on the day of replacement or the next working day is mandatory by the child's currently assigned case worker.

Abuse/Neglect Reports - A child who has been the reported victim of neglect or abuse in a foster home, relative home, or residential facility must be visited the next working day after the report, whether or not the child has been replaced. If the FC case worker accompanies the Child Protective Services (CPS) worker, this contact satisfies the requirement. This requirement does not preclude more frequent visits between the case worker and child based on any changes or modifications in the child's case plan as the result of the incident, the corrective action plan developed with the family if the child has not been replaced, or more frequent or immediate contact at the case worker's and supervisor's discretion.

Children with Special Needs Placed in Certified or Noncertified Foster Homes - Visitation between the case worker and the child may occur two times per month based on the child's current level of special needs and the individual child's circumstances. Examples of children who may need to be visited twice a month are:

- suicidal children;
- children prone to runaway activity;
- children with emotional or behavioral problems which warrant additional intervention by foster care staff;
- children whose placements are unstable;
- children who need to be prepared for a move; and
- children who have had a recent loss.

This requirement does not apply to children placed in therapeutic foster homes or residential settings which provide professional level intervention, unless the case manager has a relationship with the child which would improve the child's functioning by more frequent contact.

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## B. FREQUENCY OF VISITS WITH THE FOSTER PARENT/CAREGIVER

Visits with the foster parent, noncertified caregiver or contact person for the residential caregiver shall occur at least monthly in the child’s home/residence. It is possible to have circumstances or situations that require more frequent visitation based on the caregiver’s or the child’s needs.

The case worker and supervisor should assess the need for increased visitation with caregivers whenever there is a recent abuse/neglect report, increased emotional or behavioral problems of the child, placement at risk of disruption, and/or additional consultation/assistance is requested or appears to be needed by the caregiver. The foster parent’s Home Development Worker can also be utilized to assist in additional visitation based upon the needs of the foster parent. This requirement does not apply to therapeutic foster homes or residential settings which provide professional level intervention.

Refer to the [Structured Decision Making Policy and Procedures Manual](#) for other requirements of ongoing visits.

## C. TEAMING WITH FOSTER CAREGIVERS TO PREVENT PLACEMENT DISRUPTION


When a child’s care setting is in jeopardy of disruption, a team of the caregiver’s personal supports and individuals involved in the care of the child may be pulled together to assist the caregiver in caring for the child. A preservation staffing should be held where the team is able to support the caregiver in assessing the underlying issues impacting the care of the child, strengths of the caregiving relationship, and planning for addressing the care needs of the child.

## III. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

[Form 5 / Instructions](#) Safety Assessment  
[402 Foster Care Handbook Know the Facts](#)  
[ICPC Form 100A Interstate Compact Placement Request](#)  
 Visitation Guide Sheet [Form / Instructions](#)  
 \* Foster Youth Bill of Rights Signature Page \*\*

## IV. REFERENCES

[Appendix 3-B Threats, Vulnerability, and Caretaker Protective Capacities](#)  
[Policy 11-225](#), Requirements when Louisiana is the Sending State  
[Policy 11-230](#), Special Considerations and Procedures for Working with ICPC as the Sending State  
[P.L. 109-288](#), Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006

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\* CW [Appendix J: Foster Youth's Bill of Rights](#) \*\*