

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, Inc.

PRIMARY PARENT AGREEMENT

The following is the policies and procedures of the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida. Please read the following to understand what you can expect from the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida and its staff as well as what is expected of you during your child's visits. Please note that you must agree and sign this form before visitations will begin.

A. ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE:

It is the primary parent's responsibility to be on time for appointments and to leave on time. That means you must arrive promptly at your appointment time and leave as soon as your children are returned to you. No communication between the visiting parent and the primary parent will occur without the prior consent of a Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida staff person. After completion of the visit, staff will escort the child(ren) to the waiting room to meet either the primary parent or the individual designated to transport the child(ren) (depending on the court order). The supervised parent will remain in the visitation room for an additional fifteen minutes to ensure the parties do not have any unsupervised contact.

As the primary parent, it is your responsibility to leave promptly after the appointment so that you are able avoid contact with the supervised parent. This is to ensure your safety as well as your children's safety. You are expected to go straight to your destination as the supervised parent will be leaving 15 minutes after you. This is to ensure that you do not have contact with the supervised parent.

If a party is unable to be present for a scheduled visitation, twenty-four hours notice must be provided. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida is responsible for notifying all parties in case of a cancellation. If the supervised parent is late, without notice, the visit may be canceled; the visit will be marked as "no show." Cancellations will be documented on the Visitation Attendance Form and will include the date, time, person canceling and the reason for the cancellation as well as the notification to the other party information. In Dependency division cases, the Department of Children & Families is required to notify parents. In extreme cases of "no show" or canceled visits, the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida will notify the court and the parties through memorandum in order for the Judge to review the circumstances and assess fines as determined to the party who has frequent "no show" or two cancellations without twenty-four hours notice. Individuals who develop a pattern of canceled visits or who have more than two cancellations in a row may receive a letter or a phone call requesting a commitment to comply with visitation arrangements. A commitment letter consists of asking the specific party to make a verbal commitment to the Visitation Supervisor to participate in the supervised visitation program. If no response is received or continued cancellations occur, a memorandum will be forwarded to the court and parties to notify the visits have been suspended while further action of the Court is pending.

The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida observes holidays designated of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit Court's, Administrative Office of the Courts. Should the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida cancel a visitation due to holiday conflict or an emergency, it is the parties' responsibility to contact the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida to reschedule the visitation. Because the supervised parent may have no control of circumstances where the unsupervised parent elects to cancel visits, the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida will reschedule visits canceled by the unsupervised parent.

- A.** The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida has written policies and procedures regarding conditions of the visitations including issues as:
1. Visitors – only those indicated on the court order may participate in the visit.
 2. Toys - Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida provides a variety of toys in each visit room for parents to select from as deemed age appropriate by the visiting parent.
 3. Gifts – unless stated in the court order, or unless the case has sexual abuse allegations, unwrapped gifts may be brought to the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida and after inspection by staff may be wrapped by the visiting parent or placed in gift bags for the child.
 4. Photos are allowed to be taken at the beginning and end of the visit unless the court order states otherwise or unless the case has sexual abuse allegations.
 5. Video / audio recordings (including via digital cameras) are not allowed.
 6. Cell phones are not allowed in the visit rooms.
 7. Toileting will be done by the unsupervised parent after the child is brought from the visit room by staff. Diaper changes may be handled by the visitor unless stated otherwise by the court or unless the case has sexual abuse allegations.
 8. Purses, cell phones and any other personal items will be placed a safe place at Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida. The items will be retrieved by the visitor when being escorted from the visitation room and exiting the building.
 9. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida staff will speak the language of the parent and the child being supervised or ensure that a neutral interpreter over the age of 18 is provided to translate during the supervised visit.

PLEASE NOTE: If your court order states that any of the aforementioned items are not allowed, then it will not be allowed with your visitation as the court order supersedes our policies.

B. SUPERVISOR'S DUTIES:

Please note that the Visitation Supervisors duties include the following:

1. following procedures to help ensure that no physical harm is directed toward child(ren) and/or to the other parent or to other program participants
2. monitor conversation between visiting parent and child to guard against inappropriate remarks made toward child, other parent, etc.
3. facilitate the visit when necessary by suggesting age-appropriate games or activities
4. explain role of visit supervisor and rules of program
5. redirect inappropriate behavior, both physical and verbal, in a manner consistent with program rules
6. avoid letting personal feelings about the parents, child or situation interfere with objectivity
7. ensure electronic recording occurs (if available)

Visitation Supervisors cannot:

1. violate confidentiality of any family member using the visitation center
2. discuss the parent's situation (unless it is specifically required by your job description)
3. give out personal information about themselves

4. offer advice about problems
5. engage in dialogue about the “other” parent, stepparent, boyfriend/girlfriend
6. engage in therapy or counseling

C. ISSUES/INCIDENTS:

Any issues or incidents that requiring resolution during the visitation will be responded to by staff, including requests for restroom visits, water, facial tissues, etc. The supervised parent should remain in the room at all times and communicate to the visitation supervisor if a need arises. Staff will escort the child(ren) outside the room if necessary and intervene as needed to enforce policies.

Staff may interrupt or cancel a visit if a violation of the signed Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida Visitation Agreements occurs. In addition, staff will interrupt any visit during which any of the following occurs:

1. a child becomes acutely distressed,
2. when it is deemed by the Visitation Supervisor that the child is in a situation of possible risk either emotionally or physically,
3. if the supervised parent acts in an inappropriate manner towards the child, staff or others present
4. derogatory comments or gestures are made about the other parent
5. conversation involving custody, allegations, or court issues
6. asking children who they want to live with
7. asking children for information about the other parent
8. asking children to carry messages to the other parent
9. predict future changes in visitation or the parenting plan
10. promise anything they cannot deliver, such as vacations, different parenting arrangements, etc.
11. discuss the details of any ongoing legal processes
12. visiting parent is under the influence of alcohol/drugs or is belligerent

If necessary to intervene, the Visitation Supervisor will ask the visiting parent to change the subject or re-direct the activity. Depending on the child’s reaction and the Visitation Supervisor’s assessment, stopping the visit may be a temporary interruption with the visitation resuming or ending entirely for that day. If the visiting parent does not change the subject or behavior in question, the Visitation Supervisor will give them another warning before terminating the visitation for that day. If a visitation is terminated due to numerous interventions, the Visitation Supervisor may speak to the visiting parent about the violation to the policies and procedures. If necessary the Visitation Supervisor may provide suggestions on how the visiting parent may redirect conversations that arise pertaining to custody, allegations, or court issues.

D. SUSPENSION OF SERVICES:

If the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida suspends visitation services, no future visitations will be scheduled without a review of the case. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida will **suspend** visitations for the following reasons:

1. safety or other issues that cannot be effectively addressed by the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida
2. one or both parties have failed to comply with the program’s or court’s conditions for participation

3. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida may review and analyze client information to determine whether services can be provided safely and /or deny or suspend services because of potential risks of harm to a client or staff member.

A suspension letter consists of the violations that have occurred by the parties while at the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida, as well as an overview of all the visitations that have occurred at the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida. Upon suspension of services, pending further review, the designated schedule will not be maintained as other services may be scheduled during an interim time period.

E. SAFETY CONCERNS:

The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida does not guarantee safety. However, every reasonable effort will be made to maintain a safe, child-friendly environment.

The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida Supervised Visitation Program reserves the right to decline or to accept any cases where the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida cannot reasonably ensure the safety of the clients and staff.

The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida has the right, as a condition of furnishing services to request security services to:

1. Search or “wand” any individual gaining entrance to the facility, or his/her personal property, in order to maintain security. (Clients convicted of violent offenses will be subject to search procedures prior to each visit)
2. Confiscate contraband materials discovered during search procedures.
3. Question about alcohol/drug consumption prior to the visit.

Refusal to submit to search procedures upon the request of the Security officers will result in suspension or cancellations of visit services.

Security will provide the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida with a written incident report any time they intervene to enforce policies and procedures of the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida. The report will be copied for the client’s file, along with a written account of incident from the staff. Please note the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida staff will take the appropriate precautions to ensure safety for the children, victim and themselves. This may include security personnel escorting children and/or the primary parent to and from his/her car.

F. COMPLAINTS:

Because the Supervised Visitation Program performs work that literally involves the future of the lives of children and families, it is often emotionally charged and evokes a wide range of feelings from both staff and clients. It is therefore common and expected that there will be criticism from some of the parties involved. **Due to the sensitive nature of the work, all complaints are cause for concern and are given consideration. All written complaints should be directed to the Program Director.**

Any client with a question regarding the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida policies should speak with a Visitation Supervisor. If the client is not satisfied with the response received by the Visitation Supervisor, they should speak with the Program Director.

The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida has a procedure for applicants or clients to appeal a service decision. Every effort will be made to promptly and satisfactorily resolve any concern through

the Informal Process. Should further consideration of the concern be requested, there is a Fair Hearing Procedure available. The applicant/client has 30 days from the date the service decision is rendered to request a reconsideration or appeal.

G. RECORDS OF VISITS:

The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida maintains records of each parent/child contact, including cancellations of appointments.

PLEASE NOTE: Case file information is not released except as provided by law, court order, or consent of the parents. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida will protect identity of all providers, as required by Florida law.

H. MANDATED REPORTING:

The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida staff is considered to be mandated reporters for incidents where children disclose abuse or where there is known or suspected abuse.

I. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHILD:

At all times while at the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida, the best interest and safety of children will be of paramount concern and objective of all services and contact.

While parents are responsible for their own behavior during supervised visits, Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida will hold a parent accountable for their behavior by ensuring that the parents follow the program policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, the agreements they sign and the court order. Unsupervised parents or the supervisor will supervise bathroom activities of young children. Parents are responsible for the care of the child(ren) and their belongings during the supervised visit, subject to any contrary order of the court.

Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida's Responsibility is as follows:

1. No child will be left unmonitored with a supervised parent anytime during visitation services.
2. When decisions need to be made concerning conditions of parent /child contact which have not been covered by the court order, or Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida policies and agreements of the parents, the parties are referred back to court for the issues to be addressed. If it is an imminent issue, then the Program Director will resolve the issue, until the court has the opportunity to provide direction.
3. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida will not be responsible for the care of any child during their visitation other than to ensure procedures, which promote safety and well-being during visitation.

The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida does not offer off-site visitation supervision.

J. REFUSAL OF VISIT:

The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida's policy and guidelines for handling situations when a child refuses to visit include: If a child refuses to visit with the supervised party in such a way or for such period of time that it raises concerns that continuation of services may be detrimental to the child's safety and emotional wellbeing, then the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida will suspend efforts to schedule services pending further review and order of the Court. Despite a child's

reluctance to visit, it is the policies of the Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida to have staff encourage the visitation.

K. FEEDBACK TO PARENTS:

1. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida will inform the unsupervised parent if there has been an injury to a child, a critical incident during the visit, or an incident that presents a risk to that parent's safety and;
2. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida will inform a visiting parent if he/she has violated a Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida rule.

L. MISCELLANEOUS:

1. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida staff does not perform any evaluations.
2. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida staff does not make recommendations or state opinions about future visitation arrangements and/or child custody determinations.
3. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida functions independently. The Family Resource Center of Southwest Florida staff may provide factual information based on observations of clients which may be used by others conducting evaluations (i.e. Child Custody Investigations services, licensed mental health professionals, parenting professionals, developmental/ and or attachment assessment and evaluations) at the discretion of the Program Director.

BY SIGNING THIS FORM, YOU AGREE TO FOLLOW THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OUTLINED IN THIS DOCUMENT. YOU AGREE THAT YOU WILL PARTAKE IN SUPERVISED VISITATION AT THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA.

SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINT NAME