

 <p style="text-align: center;">COLORADO Division of Youth Services</p>	POLICY S-18-1	PAGE NUMBER 1 OF 10
	CHAPTER: Communications: Mail, Visits, and Telephone	
	SUBJECT: Youth Visitation	
	EFFECTIVE DATE: October 24, 2023	
THIS POLICY RELATES TO: Detention Youth Centers Treatment Youth Centers Regional Offices	 Anders Jacobson, Director	

I. POLICY:

All youth in the Division of Youth Services (DYS) youth centers shall have the right to a reasonable amount of visitation with their legal guardian, siblings, and approved family members/pro-social supports. Each youth center shall encourage youth to maintain contact with family and other positive individuals in their lives through flexible and extended visiting hours. Visitation rights shall not be permanently denied but may be temporarily limited due to the availability of employees for supervision, the amount of visiting space available, or current, overriding security considerations. The youth center shall provide the opportunity for at least one visit per week with approved family members. Each youth center shall provide a written explanation for temporarily denying visitation, which includes the causes for the cancellation or denial of a visit and the process for appealing a decision to cancel or deny visitation.

II. KEY TERMS: See the Division of Youth Services website for detailed definitions.

[☰ DYS Policy Key Terms](#)

- A. Approved Family Member
- B. Pro-Social Support
- C. Special Visit
- D. Supportive Adult

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III. ASSOCIATED FORMS:

- A. [Denial of Visitation Form](#)
- B. [Visitor Log](#)

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. The following procedures shall govern visitation:

1. Designated visiting times shall be available seven days a week for a minimum of 45 minutes per visit.
2. All approved family members/guardians are allowed to visit. The maximum number of visitors allowed per visit shall be determined by the youth center based on visiting space availability and capacity.
3. Each admission to a DYS youth center entitles a youth to an initial visit. The visit may occur at any reasonable hour by the youth's family or kinship placement.
4. If a visitor is traveling an extended distance for a visit (more than 50 miles), the youth center shall work with them to set up special visit accommodations outside normal visiting hours or extended visitation time frames whenever possible.
5. Special visits shall not replace the youth's normal access to or allocation of scheduled visiting time.
6. ANIMALS SHALL NOT BE PERMITTED TO ENTER A YOUTH CENTER DURING A VISIT UNLESS THE ANIMAL IS CLASSIFIED AS A SERVICE ANIMAL.
 - a. EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS ARE NOT PERMITTED.
 - b. INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION OF AN ANIMAL AS A SERVICE ANIMAL IS A MISDEMEANOR OFFENSE (SEE §18-13-107.3, C.R.S.).
 - c. EMPLOYEES MAY ASK WHETHER THE SERVICE ANIMAL IS REQUIRED BECAUSE OF A DISABILITY, AND WHAT WORK OR TASK THE SERVICE ANIMAL IS TRAINED TO PERFORM.
 - d. EMPLOYEES MAY ASK THAT A SERVICE ANIMAL BE REMOVED IF THE SERVICE ANIMAL IS OUT OF CONTROL AND THE HANDLER DOES NOT TAKE EFFECTIVE ACTION TO CONTROL IT, OR IF THE SERVICE ANIMAL IS NOT HOUSEBROKEN.

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7. Virtual visitation may be utilized when it is more convenient for the approved visitor but is not to be used in place of an in-person visit if the approved visitor prefers face-to-face visitation unless there is an ongoing emergency situation (see “K” below).
- B. Virtual Visitation Guidelines. The following procedures shall govern virtual visitation and be communicated to the visitor prior to virtual visitation. violations of the below procedures may result in the virtual visitation being ended:
1. Only approved visitors may be present during the virtual visit. Approved visitors may not pass the device to unapproved visitors during the visit.
 2. Virtual visitors shall not drink alcohol or use drugs during the visit.
 3. Virtual visitors shall not show substances or items that would be illegal for the youth to possess (such as weapons, drugs, pornography, etc.)
 4. Virtual visitors shall not share social media content with youth during the visit.
 5. Virtual visitors shall not take screenshots or photos during the visit.
- C. The following procedures shall govern the creation and maintenance of the approved visitor list for committed youth:
1. Upon placement, the client manager and the youth center director or designee shall make decisions on visitation from immediate family members or legal guardians. all other visitors shall be decided at the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) meeting.
 2. The approved visitor list shall be created at the first MDT meeting.
 - a. The MDT shall consider the following factors when creating the list:
 - i. The relation of the individual to the youth.
 - ii. Whether the individual is/was the primary caregiver for the youth.
 - iii. Whether the individual is the parent of the youth’s child.

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- iv. The therapeutic value of the individual to the youth is determined by the client manager and the behavioral health specialist.
- v. Whether a visit from the individual would support the youth's transition plan.
- vi. Whether the individual is a positive support to the youth.
- b. The client manager shall make the final determination regarding who is on the approved visitor list.
- c. The MDT may designate visitors for either in-person contact and virtual contact, or virtual contact only.
- d. A youth center may deny entry to any visitor due to safety concerns.
- e. If necessary, client managers may perform background checks before adding an individual to the approved visitor list.
- 3. The approved visitor list shall be revised as often as necessary.
 - a. The MDT shall formally review the approved visitor list as often as needed, and at least quarterly, to consider any addition or removal of persons from the list.
 - b. Client managers shall review the approved visitors list monthly. All modifications to the approved visitors list shall be made at the monthly review and documented in writing.
 - c. Violations of visitation guidelines may result in a visitor being removed from the approved visitor list or being subject to visitation restrictions.
- D. The following procedures shall govern the creation and maintenance of the approved visitor list for detained youth:
 - 1. Upon placement, the youth center director or designee shall make decisions on visitation for immediate family members or legal guardians.
 - 2. Before adding any person to the approved visitor list, the youth center shall review court orders for no-contact orders, restraining orders, or co-defendants in the youth's current case.

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- E. Youth shall be allowed visits with their attorney(s), government officials, legislators, or persons who are assigned to supervise or deliver services to them in the community. Committed youth shall also be allowed visits with their client manager. These visits shall occur during usual visiting and business hours or at a reasonable hour approved by the youth center director or designee that does not compromise or threaten the security of the youth center.
1. Legal visitors are approved to visit youth on their current active caseload or for consultation and will verify this on the visitor's sign-in log.
 2. Visits with legal representatives may be denied, or if in progress ended at any time when staffing does not allow for the supervision of the visit and the maintenance of scheduled programming.
- F. Visitation for youth includes professionals who are appointed to the youth's active case(s) (e.g. caseworkers, probation officers, legal representatives, legal guardian(s), and approved family members).
1. When a professional assigned to a youth identifies a specific need for other members of the family or professionals to be added to the youth's contact list they shall adhere to the following guidelines:
 - a. Contact the youth center director or designee and submit a formal request in writing or email requesting approval for the visitor to be added to the youth's contact list, and provide the following information:
 - i. The name of the person, and
 - ii. Their relationship to the youth, and
 - iii. The specific purpose of the visit.
 - b. The youth center director or designee shall review the request and determine if the request is in the best interest of the youth and is safe for the environment. For committed youth, the youth center director or designee shall consult with the MDT when reviewing the request.
 - c. The youth center director or designee shall document the request and note whether the request was approved or denied. The youth center may document the request in the youth's file or by using a similar process, including electronic documentation.

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2. Professionals may be asked to provide documentation confirming their professional status prior to visiting with youth. this may include any of the following:
 - a. An inspection of the professional’s badge.
 - b. Documentation that confirms the visitor is a licensed attorney.
 - c. A letter from a professional confirming that the visitor is an agent of the professional.
 - d. A valid order from a court that the professional is representing the youth (along with an identification check).
 - e. Documentation from the Colorado Department of Regulatory Affairs (DORA) that the individual is an approved professional (licensed, provisional license, registered, etc.).
 3. Youth shall be allowed a minimum of one visit per week with their approved family members/pro-social supports, independent of their privilege level within the youth center. Youth centers are encouraged to accommodate more visits when possible.
 4. Additional visits may occur at the discretion of the behavioral health specialist for therapeutic purposes.
 5. Visits may be restricted based on variables such as youth center programming or safety concerns.
 6. Limitations related to visits shall be detailed in the youth center’s specific handbook and MADE available to visitors upon request.
- G. Visitation from law enforcement including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE):
1. Visitation from law enforcement for the purpose of interviewing the youth for an alleged criminal or delinquent activity for which the youth has retained or been appointed an attorney and the attorney has notified the DYS of their representation, shall only be permitted through a request to the youth’s defense attorney.
 2. Visitation from law enforcement for the purpose of interviewing the youth for an alleged criminal or delinquent activity for which an attorney has not yet been appointed or retained shall only be permitted under the following circumstances:

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- a. With the permission of the youth, regardless of their age; and
 - b. In the presence of or with the permission of a parent, guardian, or the most recent legal or physical custodian of the youth prior to the youth's detention or commitment to the Division of Youth Services (DYS), that is not an employee of DHS, CDHS, or a county department of human or social services, and
 - c. Only after the youth and designated adult have had the opportunity to have a confidential consultation about the request.
3. Interviewing the youth as a victim or witness shall only be permitted in the presence of or with the permission of a designated adult. A designated adult is the youth's parent, guardian, or the legal or physical custodian of the youth as identified immediately before the youth's detention or commitment to the DHS that is not an employee of the DHS, CDHS, or a county department of human or social services. This interview can only occur after the youth and designated adult have had the opportunity to have a confidential consultation about the request. The youth must also consent to be interviewed.
 4. Nothing in this policy precludes the DHS from allowing another supportive adult to accompany the youth during questioning, whether or not that adult is otherwise required under this policy.
 5. The DHS has the discretion to disallow the supportive adult to be present should problematic issues arise.
 6. Visitation from ICE shall follow all of the above, in addition to DHS informing the youth of the following:
 - a. The interview is being sought by the federal immigration authorities.
 - b. The individual has the right to decline the interview and remain silent.
 - c. The individual has the right to speak to an attorney before submitting to the interview.
 - d. The individual has the right to have an attorney present during the interview.
 - e. Anything the individual says may be used against him or her in subsequent proceedings, including in a federal immigration court.

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- H. All persons visiting the youth center shall be required to sign the visitor log and are required to adhere to the following guidelines, at the minimum:
1. Each visitor shall be required to provide their name and relationship to the youth being visited.
 2. All visitors 16 years of age and older will be required to provide a picture ID upon entering the youth center. This identification can be a school ID or a government-issued picture identification.
 3. All children under the age of eighteen shall be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. Exceptions may be granted by the youth center director or designee. Parents shall verify the identity of their children if under the age of sixteen.
 4. Youth centers are encouraged and permitted to tour prospective job candidates through the youth center for purposes of observation and to assist them in their employment decision-making. These tours shall be supervised by a DYS employee at all times.
 5. Employees shall ensure the person entering the youth center matches their identification and that the visitation log information is clear and accurate.
 6. Employees shall verify the name of the youth being visited and look up the youth's Trails ID number. The youths' Trails ID number shall be entered on the visitor's log to identify who the visitor is at the youth center to visit.
 7. Visitors shall not bring personal possessions into the youth center. Personal items shall be secured in their vehicle or a visitor's locker.
 8. All visitors entering a DYS youth center shall be subject to the search procedures outlined in DYS Policy S-9-13 Searches of Youth, Employees, Visitors, And Youth Centers.
 9. All visitors shall be required to pass through metal detectors and, if necessary, be subject to further search by hand-held detectors. Visitors' clothing and/or personal effects may be searched before entry into the visitation area. The reason for the search shall be explained (i.e., Safety And Security of Youth, Employees, and other Visitors). The information must be provided in the primary language of the visitor regarding their rights during the search and must be made known before searching. See DYS policy S-9-13 Searches of Youth, Employees, Visitors, and Youth Centers. If items are found that may violate the safety and security of the youth center, visitors shall be asked to return items to their vehicle or store them in a locker provided by the youth center.

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- a. The use of metal detectors for the inspection of clothing and belongings is an acceptable routine search process but should not be used to the exclusion of other more thorough search procedures such as physical inspection of purses, packages, and bundles, when appropriate.
 - b. In cases where a visitor refuses to allow the youth center employee to conduct a search or refuses to refrain from bringing personal effects into the youth center, the visitor shall be denied the current visitation using the youth center's "Denial of Visitation" form and procedures.
10. Visitors who refuse to comply with the above guidelines may be denied visitation using the youth center's Denial of Visitation form, or have restrictions placed on the visit.
- I. The visiting area shall permit open communication, including the opportunity for acceptable levels of physical contact. Surroundings should have the minimum surveillance necessary to allow for the availability of privacy while assuring appropriate security. DYS youth centers shall provide a home-like environment visitation space for youth to meet with their families and professional advocates.
 - J. The youth center's rules governing visitation shall be published and made available to youth, employees, and visitors. The visitation rules and practices shall include at a minimum all of the following:
 1. The routine days and times which have been designated for visiting, as well as who is allowed to visit and the number of visitors allowed at one time.
 2. The youth center's regulations regarding special visits; and
 3. The items which are allowed to be brought into the visiting area by visitors and/or youth; and
 4. The statutes which address offenses relating to custody, including the introduction of contraband into secure youth centers and aiding in the escape from custody; and
 5. A sign posted at the entrance informs visitors that both they and their property are subject to search upon entering the secure perimeter of the youth center; and
 6. A list of contraband items posted in the area; and

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7. Temporary or special restrictions including the dates the restrictions apply, and
 8. A statement indicating that visits may be denied, ended, or restricted for failure to adhere to the posted rules.
- K. In the case of an ongoing emergency situation, virtual visits may be temporarily used in place of in-person visits, with approval from the youth center director or designee. The reason for the move to virtual visitation shall be documented in the shift log.
- L. A denial or restriction of visitation, or a move to virtual visitation, shall be made on an individualized basis when an employee has reason to believe that the safety and security of the youth, employees, the general public, or the youth center may be in jeopardy.
1. Denial of visitation decision shall be given to the youth in writing and shall include, at a minimum, the name of the restricted visitor, the time and date of the denial of visitation, the reasons for the limitation, the name of the person making the decision, and the right to appeal the decision to the youth center director.
 2. A legal custodian seeking to block visitation by another parent shall be required to obtain a court order which will be honored by the youth center.
 3. Youth shall not be required to visit with individuals that they do not wish to see. However, the youth may be requested, but not required, to put their reason for the refusal in writing. A copy shall be forwarded to the youth center director or designee.
 4. Following the denial of visitation, the youth center administrator shall contact the client manager to discuss the next steps.
- M. A full search shall be performed on youth following unsupervised family visits within the youth center. When an outside professional is present during a visit, employees shall have the discretion to determine if a personal search is necessary. See DYS Policy S-9-13 Searches of Youth, Employees, Visitors, And Youth Centers.
- N. The youth center shall provide information to visitors about nearby public transit terminals or other forms of transportation access to the youth center, either in writing or by phone, when a visitor requests the information. This information shall also be posted in the youth center in an area visible to visitors.