

Family Contact Observation Form Guide

This guide will help you use the Family Contact Observation Form (form) to document family contact events and follow the recommended timing, completion, and storage of the form.

Using the form helps everyone involved focus on family contact best practices, including increasing parental capacity and building protective factors for parents and children. A child's permanency plan does not determine whether the form is used.

Purpose | The form documents and directs a family contact event in accordance with best practices in the Family Contact Best Practices Guide for Professionals. It is important to keep in mind the difference between the previous way of documenting family contact and the new way of documenting family contact. The previous way of documenting family contact focused on capturing the actions, words, and behaviors of the parent and child during a family contact event. The new way, using the form, follows best practices developed by the Family Contact Improvement Partnership, which direct that family contact should occur in a way that is always meaningful and healthy for the child and culturally centered.

- **For the parent:** The form is a learning and planning tool that supports their expectations of family contact with their child.
- **For family contact facilitators:** The form is a coaching tool for parent skill development, helps address safety concerns, if any, and provides a way to document a family contact event.

Why | The form increases transparency, strengthening the parent's ability to anticipate, plan, and learn from family contact. It also helps the parent apply parental skill development and understand safety concerns. For family contact facilitators, the form supports relationship building and strengthens trust between the facilitator and the parent. The form is also a tool for communicating important information to the parent. Using the form, along with best practices, helps family contact facilitators understand and anticipate the parents' needs related to skill development and safety concerns. The form helps create a comprehensive picture of the parent's current parental capacities.

Which cases | Each family contact event will have a completed form. This form does not apply to family cases involving in-home services.

Who completes | The assigned family contact facilitator fills out the form.



How to complete | The parent and family contact facilitator will complete the form together for the family contact event. The goals section is completed by the family contact facilitator based on goals set by the parent and the caseworker prior to family contact being arranged.

- **Before contact:** The “Pre-Contact Check In” section of the form is completed with the parent before beginning family contact routine activities.
- **During contact:** The family contact facilitator completes the “Family Contact Routine” section of the form during the event.
- **After contact:** The family contact facilitator reviews the completed “Family Contact Routine” section of the form with the parent. Then, the family contact facilitator completes the “Post-Contact Check In – Parent Reflections” and “Future Planning” sections of the form with the parent.

If the family contact event does not occur, the family contact facilitator will complete the form, documenting the event did not occur and the reason the event did not occur.

When | The form is completed for each family contact event. The form is completed whether the family contact event was held on-site, by videoconference, or by phone. If possible, a blank printed copy of the form is provided by the caseworker to the parent for informational purposes before the family contact event. For videoconference family contact events, share the computer screen with the form visible and email a PDF or screenshot of the form ahead of time. This helps the parent easily follow along.

Who gets the completed form | The parent gets a completed copy of the form by email (PDF) or mail. It is also sent as a PDF or by email to the OCS caseworker and becomes part of the family’s OCS case record. The completed form is sent to the parent and OCS caseworker as soon as possible but no later than five calendar days after the family contact event. Since the completed form becomes part of the case record, it is “discoverable” in court-involved situations.

Decision | The form is used to make decisions about the level of family contact and when to move from professionally supervised contact to supported contact. The form also documents how the family is building protective factors, how the parent is learning and growing, and that the family contact event followed best practices.

Appropriate completion | Only one family contact form is completed per family contact event regardless of the number of children involved in the family contact event.



Appendix A – Family Contact Observation Form



Family Contact Observation Form

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Client last name(s): _____ Family contact facilitator: _____

Caseworker: _____

☐ Family contact occurred

List who attended family contact:

GOALS

Current OCS permanency goal:

Parent-identified contact priorities:

PRE-CONTACT CHECK IN

Identified protective factors/strengths:

Selected resiliency activity type (select one):

Structured Parent planned Open-ended

Resiliency activity description/title and link to parent priorities:

Parent-requested support strategies:

Parent worries and how contact facilitator can help:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection | <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstration | <input type="checkbox"/> Observation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem solving | <input type="checkbox"/> Modeling | <input type="checkbox"/> Information sharing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver practice with feedback | <input type="checkbox"/> Joint interactions | <input type="checkbox"/> Conversation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guided practice with feedback | | |

FAMILY CONTACT ROUTINE

Family contact plan level of supervision provided (select one):

Unsupervised

Supported

Supervised

Guided

Greeting:

Identified protective factors/strengths:

Supports offered:

Family circle:

Identified protective factors/strengths:

Supports offered:

Resiliency activity:

Identified protective factors/strengths:

Supports offered:

Snack – if applicable:

Identified protective factors/strengths:

Supports offered:

Clean up:

Identified protective factors/strengths:

Supports offered:

Transition:

Identified protective factors/strengths:

Supports offered:

POST-CONTACT CHECK IN – PARENT REFLECTION

What went well?

What was difficult?

Considerations for next agency facilitated contact:

Considerations for upcoming non-agency facilitated contact:

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS:

FUTURE PLANNING

Resiliency Meeting: Review and update parent priorities:

Contacts have occurred in a structured and protected environment and should not be used in isolation when assessing the appropriateness of future access or custody arrangements.

Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____



Family Contact Observation Form

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Client last name(s): _____ Family contact facilitator: _____

Caseworker: _____

☐ Family Contact DID NOT occur.

Why?