



Caseworker Face-to-Face Visits with Children in Foster Care

Every child. Every month.

Frequently Asked Questions

The Department has received a variety of questions from counties regarding meeting the caseworker visit requirements. Following is a list of frequently asked questions and responses.

Types of cases subject to monthly caseworker visit requirements:

- ***Which cases are subject to the monthly caseworker visit requirements?*** All children in out-of-home placement are entitled to monthly face-to-face visit with their caseworker. The monthly visit requirement applies to all types of cases, including child protection, children's mental health, child welfare, developmental disabilities and, in some situations, delinquency cases.
- ***Do the monthly caseworker visit requirements apply to children who are in placement pursuant to a delinquency order?*** If the county social services agency has a Title IV-E agreement with their corrections/probation department or if social services and corrections are under the same administrative umbrella, those placements must be entered into SSIS and the monthly caseworker visit requirements apply.

Additionally, if the court transfers care, custody and control of a child to the social services agency for a delinquency placement, even if the social services agency does not have a IV-E agreement with the corrections/ probation department, the agency is responsible for making monthly face-to-face visits with the child.

Visits by a probation officer may be entered in SSIS using the "external placement case manager" role process.

- ***What are the expectations/requirements for a placement that is less than 30 days?*** Children who are in placement for less than 30 days are not subject to the monthly visit requirements. However, counties should continue all case practice that meets other state/federal requirements; and, most importantly, children should be seen as frequently as necessary based on an assessment of their safety, permanency and well-being needs.

Person(s) responsible for making monthly visits:

- ***Whose visits "count" toward meeting the monthly caseworker visit requirements?*** Statute requires that the child's caseworker visit the child monthly. "The child's

caseworker” is defined in statute as the person who has responsibility for managing the child’s foster care placement case, as assigned by the responsible social service agency. Assigned caseworker must be able to address issues pertinent to case planning and service delivery to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of the child.

- ***In my agency, we have one social worker who routinely makes visits with children placed outside of the county. That social worker is the primary caseworker for some of those cases, but not all; however she is familiar with all of the cases. Do that social worker’s visits count toward the monthly visits requirement?*** If the county agency has assigned visit responsibilities to a social worker other than the primary worker, visits made by the assigned worker would meet criteria for a caseworker visit. The social worker assigned visit responsibilities should be listed as a secondary worker in SSIS, and enter all visits in contact/activity.

Counties may have two county agency workers assigned to co-manage a case for various reasons, e.g. a Children’s Mental Health and Child Protection social worker or to have one worker cover for another. If the agency has assigned workers, for whatever reason, those workers could both be visiting with the child for issues pertinent to case planning and service delivery, and each workers’ visits would count toward meeting the monthly visit requirements.

- ***What if the child’s caseworker is on vacation or some other type of leave? How can the agency remain in compliance with worker visit requirements?*** If the child’s caseworker is on an extended leave, the case should be reassigned to a new primary worker. For shorter term leaves, a secondary worker with responsibility for making monthly face-to-face contacts should be assigned to the case.
- ***If a tribe has placed a child in foster care and the county also has a social worker assigned to the case, do both the tribal and county social worker’s visits with the child count toward the monthly caseworker visit requirement?*** Yes. If a case is co-managed with county and tribal workers, both workers have responsibility for the child’s placement, case planning and service delivery, and both worker’s visits would count toward the monthly case worker visit requirements.

Visits by the tribal worker would need to be entered into SSIS to be counted in the federal reporting.

- ***What about children placed in Rule 4 foster homes? Do the Rule 4 agency social worker’s visits count toward the monthly visit requirement?*** No, Rule 4 social worker’s visits with the child do not count toward meeting the monthly face-to-face visit requirements. Rule 4 agencies are service providers, and do not have overall case management responsibilities for children placed in their homes.

- ***If we have a child placed in another county, can we contract with that county to have visits with the child?*** Yes, it is possible to contract with other counties for case management, including conducting face-to-face visits with children. The contract should include provisions for face-to-face visits with children in foster care that meet the statutory requirements, i.e. visits are of “sufficient substance and duration to address issues pertinent to case planning and services delivery to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of the child”.

Visits by a social worker from another county or state may be entered in SSIS using the “external placement case manager” role process.

- ***Who is responsible for having monthly visits with children placed in another state?*** An assigned caseworker from the supervising agency in the state where the child is placed is responsible for having monthly visits with the child. A standard part of an ICPC agreement is that the supervising agency submit a monthly progress report (100B) to DHS and the county that the child is from. Those progress reports include any face-to-face visits the supervising agency has had.

The sending county should record any contacts made by the supervising agency in SSIS. The “external placement case manager” role is available in SSIS for this purpose.

General questions:

- ***What if the child is placed more than 60 miles outside of the county borders? Is the county still responsible for making monthly caseworker visits?*** Monthly caseworker visits are required with all children in out-of-home placement, regardless of the location of the placement. The 60-mile reference is from the Targeted Case Management billing requirements, which are totally separate from, and do not impact, the monthly caseworker visit requirements.
- ***Do ITV/VPC visits count toward meeting the monthly caseworker visit requirements?*** No. ITV/ VPC contacts are not considered a face-to-face visit, and do not meet the requirement.