

Supplemental Supervisor Guide- Alternative Forms of Contact

This tool is intended for supervisors to use in conjunction with the “Ongoing Contact Requirements for Adults” guidance document addressing family case plan caseworker visits with adult participants. It provides supplemental guidance on the supervisory responsibilities of approving the use of alternative forms of contact and ensuring that regulatory reviews occur. ***Alternative forms of contact are only permitted for adult parties to the family case plan. The following guidance does not apply to contact mandates for adults on prevention services plans, contact mandates for children, contact mandates associated with voluntary in-home and voluntary out-of-home safety plans, or to contact mandates with placement providers.***

Rule requirements for approving alternative forms of contact

Before being able to use alternative forms of contact, the PCSA must either:

- 1) Complete at least three face-to-face contact attempts with the adult during the previous calendar month OR
- 2) Agree on a plan for alternative forms of contact due to advanced knowledge of the adult being temporarily unavailable to complete face-to-face contacts for that entire month.

See the following examples of family case plan adult participants that would be eligible (pending supervisory approval) or ineligible for alternative forms of contact:



Example 1

CW completed three face-to-face attempts with the adult in January.
The adult is eligible for alternative forms of contact in February because three face-to-face attempts were completed with the adult during the previous month (January).



Example 2

CW completed a successful face-to-face visit with the adult in January.
CW does not have knowledge of the adult being unavailable for a face-to-face visit in February.
This adult is not eligible for alternative forms of contact in February because the CW did not complete three face-to-face attempts during the previous month (January) or agree to a plan for temporary alternative forms of contact with the adult.



Example 3

CW completed a successful face-to-face visit with the adult in January. CW has advanced knowledge of the adult being temporarily unavailable for face-to-face contact so CW and the adult agreed on alternative forms of contact for February.

This adult is eligible for alternative forms of contact in February because the CW and the adult agreed on a plan for alternative forms of contact due to advanced knowledge of the adult being temporarily unable to complete face-to-face contacts.



Example 4

CW completed a successful face-to-face visit with the adult in January and completed three face-to-face contact attempts in February. The adult is eligible for alternative forms of contact in March because the three required face-to-face attempts were completed during the previous month (February).



Example 5

CW completed a successful face-to-face visit with the adult in January, completed three face-to-face contact attempts in February, and completed successful face-to-face visits in March and April. CW does not have knowledge of the adult being unavailable for a face-to-face visit in May.

This adult is not eligible for alternative forms of contact in May because the CW did not complete three face-to-face attempts during the previous month (April) or agree to a plan for temporary alternative forms of contact with the adult.



Example 6

CW completed a successful face-to-face visit with the adult in January, completed three face-to-face contact attempts in February, and completed successful face-to-face visits in March and April. CW has advanced knowledge of the adult being temporarily unavailable for face-to-face contact so CW and the adult agreed on alternative forms of contact for May.

This adult is eligible for alternative forms of contact in May because the CW and the adult agreed on a plan for alternative forms of contact due to advanced knowledge of the adult being temporarily unable to complete face-to-face contacts.

Is the caseworker able to make additional face-to-face attempts?

Alternative forms of contact can only be approved when minimum face-to-face contacts are not able to be completed. Use the following information to help assess whether the caseworker should continue to make face-to-face attempts using new engagement strategies or if a plan for alternative forms of contact should be considered.

Considerations before approving alternative forms of contact	Diligent efforts to complete before approval
Have the face-to-face attempts been scheduled or unscheduled?	If all attempts were scheduled, try unscheduled face-to-face attempts before approving alternative forms of contact.
Have the attempts been completed at different times of the day? What time of day was the last face-to-face visit completed?	If all attempts were completed at the same time of day, try unscheduled face-to-face attempts during different times of the day. Discuss information known about the adult’s schedule with the caseworker to determine when the client is likely to be home or has been home in the past.
Where did the most recent successful face-to-face visit occur?	Try attempting a face-to-face visit at that location if you have reason to believe that it could be successful.
Did the caseworker contact school(s) and/or service providers to verify contact information for the adult?	Ask them to do so if applicable.
Did the caseworker contact service providers and ask to complete face-to-face visits with them?	Ask them to do so if applicable.
If the case is court-involved, did the caseworker contact court collaterals to assist with client re-engagement?	Examples include the defense lawyer, CASA/GAL, and court social worker or advocate.
If it is a custody case, did the caseworker attempt a face-to-face visit with the adult before or after their visitation with the child? If appropriate, did they ask the child for updated contact information for the adult?	Ask them to do so if applicable.

Has there been a pattern of behavior that led to the adult not being located (i.e., positive drug screens, criminal involvement, sporadic visitation followed by disengagement)?	What has helped to re-engage this adult in the past? What new engagement strategies can you think of? Check to see if the adult is incarcerated.
Is the caseworker asking to complete alternative forms of contact because they need to focus on an emergency or go on vacation?	If so, request that another caseworker make the mandated attempts.
What alternative form(s) of contact does the caseworker think should be used for this adult?	Why are they identifying this form of contact?

Developing and documenting the use of alternative forms of contact

Once you have determined that the minimum face-to-face contacts are not able to be completed it is important to discuss and develop a plan to re-establish monthly face-to-face visits between the caseworker and the adult. The plan should:

- Identify strategies toward completion of successful face-to-face contact and
- Timeframes based on the presenting conditions.

This information must be documented in SACWIS every month that alternative forms of contact are used. Documentation of the use of alternative forms of contact could occur in activity logs, case reviews and/or semi-annual reviews. Reach out to your administrator and/or your county's assigned Technical Assistance Specialist (TAS) for guidance as needed.

Scenario	Example Documentation
Three unsuccessful attempts	Caseworker staffed case with supervisor to discuss using alternative forms of contact for <u>(client name)</u> . Three face-to-face attempts were made on <u>(dates)</u> and caseworker was unsuccessful in contacting client. Caseworker spoke to client via telephone who states that a face-to-face visit is not possible for this month due to working out of town. Supervisor has approved for caseworker to meet with client via Facetime for <u>(month)</u> . This virtual visit will assist Caseworker in getting Family Case Plan updates from client. Caseworker discussed the importance of in person visits with <u>(client name)</u> . The plan to resume face-to-face visits was discussed and the next Face to Face visit was scheduled for the following month for <u>(date)</u>. Supervisor approved alternative forms of contact for <u>(month)</u> contacts only.

Incarcerated parent	Caseworker staffed case with supervisor to discuss using alternative forms of contact for (client name). Currently (client name) is incarcerated several hours away from agency office. Caseworker has verified client's incarceration and spoken to social worker and has set up a virtual visit via zoom for (month). Completing virtual visits with client while incarcerated will allow the Family Case Plan to be discussed and for the client the receive updates on the children. Supervisor has approved alternative forms of contact. Three face-to-face attempts were not made as client is incarcerated and the jail is not scheduling in person visits for client at this time. Caseworker has been informed that the client will be incarcerated for 90 days, prior to client's release caseworker will set up a face-to-face visit with client in the community.
Client refusal for Face-to-Face visit	Caseworker staffed case with supervisor to discuss using alternative forms of contact for (client name). Supervisor has approved alternative forms of contact as client is unwilling to meet with caseworker for a face-to-face visit. Client is a party to the family case plan and is not in a caretaking role of child(ren). Supervisor has approved a Facetime call as alternative forms of contact for (month). During the facetime call caseworker will gather more information as to why client is refusing face to face contact. Supervisor and caseworker will work together with client to eliminate those concerns. Efforts will be made to complete in person visits with client and will be requested each month by service team. Completing virtual visits will assist caseworker in improving the rapport with client and discuss the Family Case Plan progress. Supervisor approved alternative forms of contact for (month) contacts only.

Regulatory Review of Alternative Forms of Contact

