



Advocacy During the Time of COVID: In-Person CASA Visits

All CASAs are allowed to have in-person visits with their children/youth as long as the CASA, child/youth and caregiver are comfortable with the in-person visits. CASAs are required to follow current CDC guidelines, including [wearing masks](#) and practicing [social distancing](#) during these visits. CASAs can continue to have phone and virtual visits.

When NOT to Visit

Do not visit in-person if:

- You are not yet comfortable with visiting in-person.
- You are in regular contact with or caring for a person who is at higher-risk of severe illness.
- You've tested positive or have had [symptoms](#)/been feeling sick within the last 14 days.
- If you are currently isolating/quarantining due to possible exposure to COVID.
- Any of the above points apply to your youth/child and/or the youth/child's caregiver.
- If your youth/child or anyone in their placement has tested positive or had symptoms, do not visit until they have been symptom free for at least 14 days.
- If you arrive at a visit and anyone in the home/placement appears sick, leave immediately.

Guidance for Vaccinated CASAs

As vaccines become more available, you may feel more comfortable visiting with your young person and spending more time with them out in the community. As you plan for your visit, make sure you do what you can to minimize risk:

- Not everyone in the community will be vaccinated, including your young person and their support system. Always consider your risk and the risk to your young person and their community in planning your visit/outing. Low risk options include outdoor activities, like taking a walk or having a picnic.
- Continue to follow [CDC guidelines](#) around hand washing and mask wearing!

Before your Visit

Call the child/youth's placement:

- Is the placement allowing visits? Are there any special requirements or expectations of visitors?
- If you are planning to take your child/youth to a different location (park, restaurant, etc), get permission from the caregiver/placement.



- **IMPORTANT:** At least one day in advance – ask these screening questions of the caregiver/placement staff:
 - Has anyone in the placement tested positive for COVID or had symptoms of COVID in the last 14 days?
 - Has anyone living in the placement had close contact with someone who tested positive with lab confirmation in the last 14 days?
 - Is anyone in the home under quarantine or isolating?
 - Does anyone in the home have a fever?
- Consider having more in-depth conversations with the caregiver or placement staff prior to the in-person visits. This will help you minimize the amount of time you are spending in the home/facility.

If age-appropriate, call your child/youth:

- Set expectations for your visit. Let the youth know that you'll be practicing social distancing and wearing a mask. Make sure they understand what social distancing means and that there will be limits on what you can/can't do during your visit.
- If possible for your child/youth, consider having the more in-depth conversations over the phone.

During your Visit

What to bring:

- Masks. Bring extras for your youth/child and caregiver. (Note [exceptions](#) for masks for children under 2). (The CASA office has masks for children and adults!)
- Hand sanitizer

Where to meet:

- Be prepared to comply with requests of the placement – this could include questionnaires, temperature checks, etc.
- If possible, meet with your child/youth and/or caregiver **outside** or in an indoor space that is very well-ventilated (such as a large room with open windows). Outside and indoor spaces should allow for social distancing (at least 6ft apart). If not possible, keep visits very short (15 min or less) and wear your mask inside.

Driving with your Child/Youth

Yes, you can finally drive your child/youth! To minimize risk to you and your child/youth, make sure you do the following:

- Receive permission from their caregiver to transport the youth/child.



- Ask that your child/youth sit in the back seat, this will help with social distancing (as much as possible in a car!)
- All occupants of the car should wear masks.
- Whenever possible, keep the windows down or use the car's vents to bring fresh outside air in.

Visit Dos & Don'ts

Do's!

- Wear your mask, even if others don't!
- Try out no touch greetings like elbow bumps and air high fives (You will look very cool, promise.).
- Bring food for your youth, in separate, disposable containers, no sharing!
- Bring a care package, groceries or new items (books, art materials, etc) you can leave with your child/youth.

Don't's!

- Don't make promises about your next visit. Things can change and you may need to resume virtual visits.
- Don't feel pressured to have a visit if you don't feel comfortable. Talk to your supervisor about discussing this with your child, youth and placement.

After your visit:

- Wash your hands thoroughly or hand sanitize if you can't wash your hands right away - don't touch your face!
- Put those notes in ETO!