

CONTACT CENTRE CANBERRA (CCC)

ABN: 63 827 725 419

Terms and Conditions Policies and Procedures

SUPERVISED VISIT DEFINED

A Supervised Visit refers to time shared between a child and a visiting parent which occurs in the presence of an independent third person. The third person, when this is a Contact Centre staff member, is frequently referred to as the Supervisor or Case Manager. A Supervised visit may result from:

1. A formal or informal agreement between the relevant parties, including agreements reached through family dispute resolution processes.
2. An order of a court made with the consent of the parties; or
3. An order made following determination by a Judge or Magistrate.

PURPOSES OF CHILDREN'S CONTACT SERVICES

The primary purposes of Contact Service Canberra are:

1. To promote the safety and welfare of the child during changeovers and visits.
2. To promote the safety of any vulnerable persons at changeovers and visits; and
3. To facilitate child/parent and child/sibling interaction while visits are taking place.

Where appropriate, to work towards the independent, parental management of the time the child spends with each parent. We provide mentoring, parent effectiveness strategies and role modelling of good parenting styles.

VISIT DURATION TIMES

The length of a Supervised Contact Visit can range from 1-3 hours, 7 days a week. These visits are primarily held in a community setting

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however in home visits will be considered after a safety check has been conducted by a Contact Centre Canberra staff member.

WHEN SHOULD SUPERVISED VISITS OCCUR / BE PROVIDED?

The decision about whether child/parent contact is in the best interests of the child, or otherwise appropriate, will initially be one for the parents and the courts. It is not, however, possible for any agency or body (including the courts) to order or direct Contact Centre Canberra to provide supervision in a particular case. Contact Centre Canberra reserves the right to decide which cases will be accepted and which we will not engage with. Such decisions remain solely child-focussed, and as to whether any child/parent contact is appropriate.

The role of Contact Centre Canberra will be to determine whether it will take on a particular family. The service can decline service to a particular family at any time. Contact Centre Canberra will immediately suspend or cease to provide supervision if it is assessed by staff members that the child is being, or is in danger of being, adversely affected by the arrangements or any other risk factors that are unmanageable.

PHOTOS

At Contact Centre Canberra, we aim for a smooth experience for all involved. We understand that families want to have photos together. Please do not take photos during the visit unless discussed with the Supervisor taking the visit on the day. This also applies to filming or videoing during Supervised Contact visits. This decision rests under the Privacy Act and Confidentiality of a person's/child's right to privacy.

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If the client refuses to abide by the above, the Supervisor taking the visit can terminate the visit at any time. Please refer to the following: <https://www.criminaldefencelawyers.com.au/blog/is-it-illegal-to-record-a-conversation-without-consent-in-australia/>

CLIENTS

The eligible clients of Contact Centre Canberra are children and:

1. Their parents, siblings, other extended family members such as grandparents and others who may be significant in the child's life; or
2. Other people permitted by the parents, or by the relevant parent and by the court to visit the child.
3. The visiting parent must discuss bringing extended family to a visit prior to the visit occurring. The service must always know who will be attending the visit for reasons such as:
 1. The safety of those attending the visit.
 2. The health of those attending.
 3. COVID safe reasons.
 4. Court orders.

*All people in Item 1 or 2 are also bound by the Terms and Conditions of the Service and must behave accordingly during contact.

COVID

[Covid is something that we have to consider on a daily basis. Rules and restrictions are continuously changing and Contact Centre Canberra is keeping up to date with travel restrictions and general covid safe practices.](#)

Where interstate travel must occur for a supervised visit to go ahead, the service has the right to ask for any documentation

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regarding permits / exemptions / covid test results and proof of quarantine. The service can decide who they wish to accept and decline with regards to covid rules and safety standards. If requested documentation by the service cannot be provided by the family member, the service has the right to decline and cancel the visit until further notice.

CHILD FOCUSED

Contact Centre Canberra is child-focused, and this is operationalised through:

1. Child orientation and familiarisation sessions for all children prior to any service use being established.
2. Listening to children's needs and concerns and addressing them where possible, including information about children's needs in parent interviews and assessments.
3. Relevant staff training.
4. Facilities that are geared to children's activities and interests.
5. Being flexible where possible to providing an environment that is sensitive to the cultural and ethnic needs of the child's community; and
6. Policies for child refusal that help prevent re-victimisation/traumatisation of the child.

The welfare of the child has, amongst other things, implications in relation to confidentiality and the limits to confidentiality. Contact Centre Canberra establishes and maintains clear guidelines regarding matters of confidentiality, duty of care and mandatory reporting requirements.

ACCESSIBILITY

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Contact Centre Canberra will aim to be as accessible as possible. Services will aim to be accessible to adults and children with a disability. The diversity of client needs will be recognised and, as far as possible, accommodated. The parent having the visit has the right to choose the visit location. This can be discussed with either party, or if any issues arise that raise safety concerns, the service will make judgments regarding visit locations.

LOCATION

Contact Centre Canberra primarily operates within a community setting. Contact Centre Canberra is open to change of location for each individual session but is also able to make suggestions and changes if need be due to time restraints for staff.

IN HOME SUPERVISED CONTACT VISITS

If you request an in-home Supervised Contact Visit a safer check must be conducted prior to your first visit by a Contact Centre Canberra staff member.

FACILITATING RESOLUTION OF PARENT/PARENT INTERACTION ISSUES

In cases where independent management of arrangements is assessed as being a viable goal of the parties, Contact Centre Canberra will aim, where possible and appropriate, to help address the practical aspects of parent/parent interaction which adversely impact on arrangements. This may be progressed only while remaining within the bounds of the service's role and level of expertise. Any such process should be managed carefully, and it is recommended that the support of other Family Relationship Service Programs be canvassed to assist parties in further resolving their

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parenting issues. Safety must never be compromised in the pursuit of developing parent/parent interaction.

Some problems such as substance abuse, family violence, underdeveloped parenting capacity, mental illness, post separation grieving, depression and child abuse are not things which the parents can sort out together. It is clear, in such instances, that the solution lies with an individual. Contact Centre Canberra will be realistic and aware of the differences between issues where there may be a possible solution through joint effort, and issues where the solution lies with one of the adults or the Courts.

TERMINATION OF A SESSION

Grounds for suspension or termination of a service may include:

1. One or both parents fail to comply with the rules of the service
2. Inappropriate conduct by a parent during service use
3. Angry or threatening behaviour
4. Behaviour which appears to be affected by substance use or abuse
5. If a parent leaves during a scheduled visit to attend other arrangements; or
6. A child's refusal to have a visit after presentation in accordance with a Court order.

CHILD REFUSAL

Child refusal is a very real and serious issue. At Contact Centre Canberra, the child's needs and desires are always in the best interest of the staff and service. If a child arrives at the scheduled visit and refuses to want to stay for the visitation, staff will do their best to encourage the child to at least say 'hello' to the parent they

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are visiting. Contact Centre Canberra will never physically handle the child in this case and the decision is ultimately up to the child. The custodial parent must encourage the child to attend. The non-custodial parent will be informed of the child refusal by Contact Centre Canberra staff.

CONDUCT

Contact Centre Canberra will not accept any disorderly behaviour towards a child, family members or staff. If there is evidence of substance use, inappropriate language, or targeted behaviour, Contact Centre Canberra can make decisions to cancel the session on the spot. Contact Centre Canberra will make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

The service is in no way responsible for any result of uncivil behaviour between any parties or family members outside the scheduled visit times. It is not the responsibility of the service to dissolve negative behaviours or document such events.

FEES

Fees may cause hardship or limit the amount of child/parent contact. Contact Centre Canberra may determine that an agreement be reached, or a court order made by both parties, to split the fees for service where there is the ability of one or both parents to pay to share this burden.

All fees must be paid within a strict 7-day policy and paid prior to a scheduled visit. The client cannot decide to only pay part of an invoice. The only exemption to an invoice not being paid is if either

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party has cancelled the visit at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled booking or child refusal. Contact Centre Canberra reserves the right to cancel any future Supervised Contact visits if invoices are not paid in a timely manner.

This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

CANCELLATIONS

Cancellation of a scheduled visit may happen for several reasons. But like many other services, Contact Centre Canberra has a cancellation policy.

If a Supervised Contact visit is cancelled with 48 hours or more notice of the visit start time, the cost of the visit will be credited to you.

Where a client cancels or wishes to make changes to a scheduled visit without providing at least 2 days' notice, (48 hours), they will be required to meet any costs associated with the cancelled booking, unless a medical certificate is provided. This applies to either party, whomever requests the cancellation.

The service can decide if the reason for cancellation or rescheduling is deemed appropriate to charge the fee or waive the fee for the client. The fee is \$85.00 for a cancellation without 48 hours' notice.

This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

BUSINESS HOURS

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Contact Centre Canberra operates 7 days a week from 9:00am – 5:00pm AEST.

All parties must sign this agreement upon Intake, prior to the first Supervised Contact visit occurring.

Client: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____