



# Supervised Visitation Monitor Training

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## The Role of a Supervised Visitation Monitor- Confidentiality

Hi. Welcome to part eight of the Supervised Visitation Monitor Training, brought to you by Family & Children’s Counseling Services, Inc. I am your host, Melinda Haynes.

In this segment, we will learn about the Role and Responsibilities of the Supervised Visitation Monitor- specifically, confidentiality.

Section k of Standard 5.20 reads...

### (k) Confidentiality

Communications between parties and Providers of supervised visitation are not protected by any privilege of confidentiality. Providers should, whenever possible, maintain confidentiality regarding the case except when:

- (1) Ordered by the court;
- (2) Subpoenaed to produce records or testify in court;
- (3) Requested to provide information about the case by a mediator or evaluator in conjunction with a court-ordered mediation, investigation, or evaluation;
- (4) Required to provide information about the case by Child Protective Services; or
- (5) Requested to provide information about the case by law enforcement.

All of these people have the right to know about the case and how the visits are going. Your client may also have you speak with their attorney. While these people can learn information about



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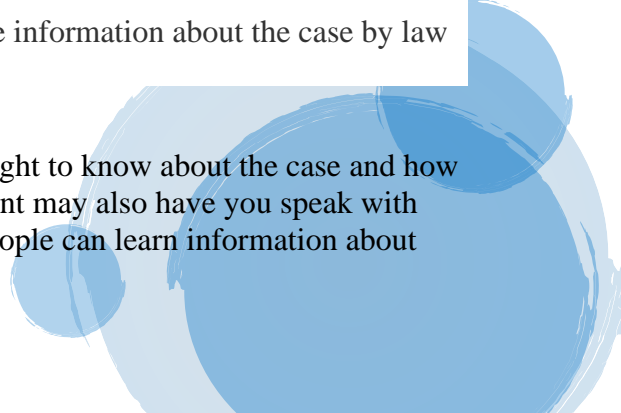
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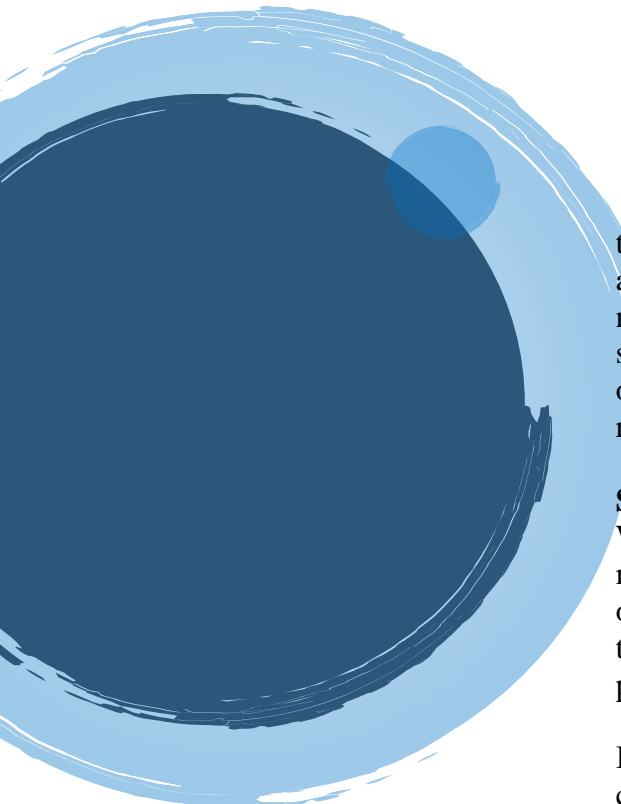


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the visits, you cannot offer your judgement or opinion. Some attorneys will try to get you to provide an opinion, but remain neutral. Only when a judge orders you to provide an opinion should you give one. And, even then, do so from the perspective of a neutral person, in the name of professional integrity and reputation.

### **Sending Information**

When sending information about scheduling or documentation, make sure you do not give one Parent's contact information to the other Parent. Some Parents are cordial, but some are not, and they will use the group text to harass the other Parent (and you, by proxy).

In some cases, one or both Parents do not know each other's contact information and they want to keep it that way. This means no group texts; no group emails. And, no sending documents that contain contact information.

### **Confirming Visits**

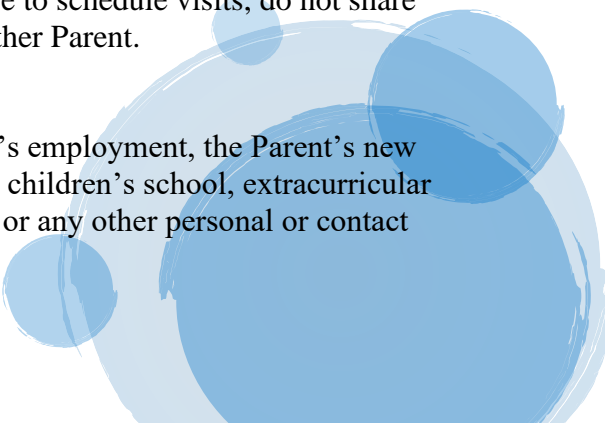
When you schedule a visit, you want to first encourage the Parents to collaborate via their approved method of communication. Talking Parents ([www.TalkingParents.com](http://www.TalkingParents.com)) is a commonly used source for communicating about the children. By communicating in this manner, neither Parent needs to disclose contact information to the other, and there is a record of communication in case someone makes inappropriate comments or threats.

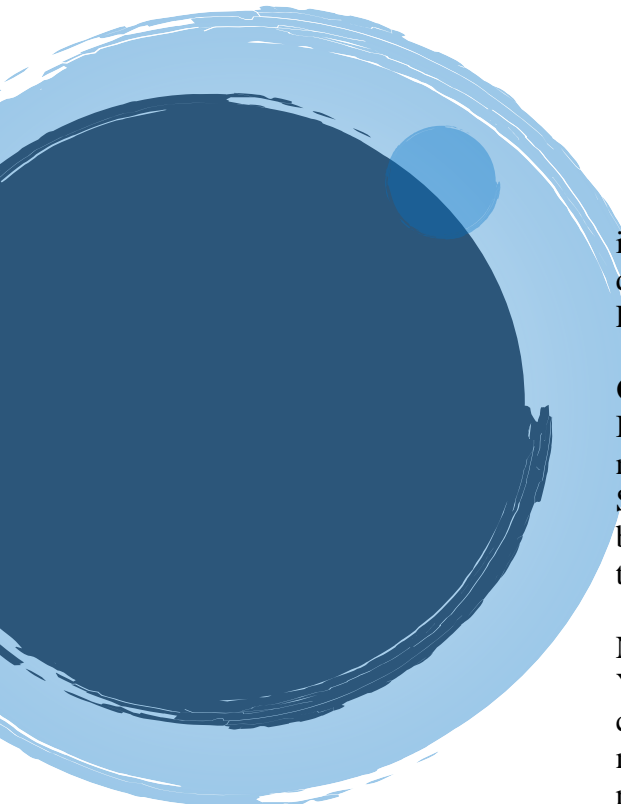
When this method is not possible, I will try to get them on a schedule of same day, same time, every week, so there is less going back and forth, hassling over schedules. That is time consuming and gives some Parents too many opportunities to complain about how inflexible the other Parent is. Once we are on a fixed schedule, I send separate texts to each Parent the day before, confirming the time and location of the visit.

No matter what method you use to schedule visits, do not share contact information with the other Parent.

### **Additional Information**

Information such as the Parent's employment, the Parent's new significant other or spouse, the children's school, extracurricular activities, relative's addresses, or any other personal or contact





information should be kept confidential. When sending documents make sure you remove all information about the Parent and Child.

### **Confidential but Not Confidential**

In addition to these safeguards, Parents need to know that there is no confidentiality in what is said or done throughout the Supervised Visitation process. We need to know the difference between potential contact information and information related to the interactions that occur.

No phone call, voice mail, email or conversation is confidential. You are a Supervised Visitation Monitor, not a therapist or confidant. An example would be, if a Parent leaves you a voice mail at 2:00 am and sounds really out of it. They leave a rambling message about the kids or the next visit. This is something to document and send to all parties involved.

Another example is a Parent tells you they pretend the Child is sick so they can skip a visit and go on vacation. That's something to be documented and sent to all parties involved.

If you do this long enough, you will find all sorts of interesting things other than actual Visits that will have to be documented. I have it in my Agreement that there is an additional fee every time I have to write up a report. It's not just the writing time that I'm concerned with. It's also the increased chance of me being called in to testify with every Random Act of Nonsense that happens.

Please review the Neutrality and Guidelines in your Training Manual for more details regarding the issue of Confidentiality.

Thank you for watching. I'll see you again at the next video, The Role of the Supervised Visitation Monitor- Terms and Conditions.

Family & Children's Counseling Services, Inc. is a California LMFT non-profit corporation directed by Melinda Haynes, MA, LMFT 102308.

You can find FCCS online at [www.HealPlayLove.org](http://www.HealPlayLove.org).

You can find Melinda's therapy channel, Can We Talk?, at <https://www.youtube.com/canwetalk>

