

## Protocol for Supervised Visits

- Most supervised visits will take place in the biological parents' home. If the visits cannot take place in the home of the biological parents or kin, they will take place at a Valoris facility or in the community.
  - Non-supervised visits may also take place in the home of the biological parent, a kin or the foster parents, or in the community. The details of these visits will be determined by the case advisor and supervisors.
- Visits will be supervised by the case advisor or collaborator, or their replacement. The clinical team may also decide that the visits be supervised by kins once all proper evaluations have been made.
- The majority of the visits will be limited to the biological parents, adoptive parents, anyone having a visitation right established in an order, and those who had care of the child before the removal.
  - If other want to join, the case advisor and supervisor will determine whether the visit can proceed safely with others present.
- The number of hours and frequency of visits will occur as set out in the order.
  - It is always possible for the clinical team to vary the visitation schedule (i.e.: increase the frequency, change the location of the visit, change the participants, etc.) if this change is in accordance with the child's best interest and as long as it is legally possible. However, a discussion must first occur within the clinical team, who will also consult the foster family. Ultimately, the clinical team will take the final decision, in consultation with the legal department.
- If the supervised visits need to occur at the Valoris office, the case advisor will reserve the room in Sharepoint and will inform the concerned individuals.
- The case advisor will notify the parents about the procedures to follow during the visits, for instance:
  - Everyone participating in the visit must wear a mask, even if the visit is taking place in their home.
    - Exception: If all visit participants have been double vaccinated more than 14 days ago, and that the foster family or the kinship family where the child resides is in agreement, the participants may remove their mask during the supervised visit. The employee who supervises the visit must however keep his mask, even if he is double vaccinated.

- COVID-19 screening questions will be asked before the visit.
  - Parents will have to ensure that their home is suitable for the visits (clean and safe).
- **The day of the visit** (these instructions apply to visits in both the Valoris facilities and in the family home, unless otherwise indicated):
- The employee supervising the visit will contact every concerned party (parents and children) to go through the COVID-19 screening questions with them, no more than 24 hours prior to the commencement of the visit.
    - Go to <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/> for the screening questions about COVID-19. The EOHU recommends checking this site every time you need to screen someone because the information is updated daily.
    - Employees will have to self-assess.
    - If the recommendation of the self-screener is to self-isolate, the employee supervising the visit shall contact all of the parties to advise them that the visit is cancelled. The case advisor will then be responsible for following up with the person displaying symptoms to inform him that the visits will only resume as per the recommendations from the Health Unit (recommendations that are given after the self-screening test).
    - Exception:
      - If the visit is scheduled for a Saturday or Sunday and is not supervised, the case advisor and his supervisor will determine who will need to contact the visit participants prior to the visit to ask the screening questions.
  - If the employee responsible for supervising the visit has to drive a child or parent in his/her own car, he/she will ask the screening questions before letting them into his/her car. He/she will also self-assess before letting the client into his/her car.
    - An employee who drives a child or a parent to a Valoris facility will follow Valoris' transportation protocol ([Protocole pour les transports](#)).
- **Upon arriving for the visit** (these instructions are for every visit to a Valoris facility or the family home unless otherwise indicated):
- Upon their arrival, children aged 2 and over, parents and the employee must wear a mask.

- Exceptions:
      - Children under 5 years of age (but over 2) who refuse to wear a mask do not have to wear one unless one of the adults present can convince the child to do so.
      - Anyone with a health issue who is unable to safely wear a mask (including breathing problems or cognitive issues) or who cannot put on or take off a mask without assistance.
      - If the visit occurs at a home and all visit participants have been double vaccinated more than 14 days ago, and that the foster family or the kinship family where the child resides is in agreement, the participants may remove their mask during the supervised visit. The employee who supervises the visit must however keep his mask, even if he is double vaccinated.
    - If a parent or a child refuses to wear a mask (other than in a case listed as an exception) or to visit outdoors and follow the physical distancing measures, the visit will be cancelled. If a parent cannot wear a mask due to an exception, the two-metre physical distancing will have to be maintained during the visit, whether it is outdoors or indoors.
- When they arrive, everyone involved in the visit must sanitize their hands.
  - At Valoris: hands must be sanitized right before entering the room, including every time a person leaves the room and re-enters. Hand sanitizer (Purell) is available at the entrance to each service centre and in each meeting room.
  - At the home: hands must be sanitized right before entering the home, including every time a person leaves the home and re-enters. The employee supervising the visit will bring hand sanitizer to the visit (available in their PPE kit, and can be refilled at the service centres).
- At Valoris office: everyone (employees and guests) taking part in the visit must sign the register at the service centre reception desk.
- At the home: before each visit, the employee supervising the visit must ensure that the home is suitable for the visit (clean and safe).
  - If the home is unsanitary, not clean or not safe (see the section on Criteria to be applied for explanations in that regard), the visit will be cancelled. Subsequent visits will take place at Valoris until the parents have properly cleaned their home and the advisor confirms that it is now suitable for visits.

- The employee supervising the visit will remind the participants of the measures to be followed during the visit (those measures are listed in the section entitled “During the visit”).
- **During the visit:**
- At Valoris office:
    - Everyone must wear a mask during the visit.
      - If the visit occurs outside, the mask is not an obligation, but individuals must then respect the social distancing requirements.
    - Toys will be limited to ten (10).
      - Toys should be selected before the visit by the employee supervising the visit. The employee can wait until the parent arrives before choosing the toys, but it is very important that the parent/child touch only the toys they want.
      - The parents may not bring toys from home unless the person whose home the child lives in agrees.
      - The parents may bring new toys / presents to play with and/or to give the child during the visit.
    - Everyone must sanitize their hands before, during and at the end of the visit.
    - Proper practices must be encouraged:
      - Sneezing and coughing into the crook of the arm.
      - Avoiding touching one’s eyes, nose or mouth.
  - At the home:
    - Everyone must wear a mask during the visit.
      - If the visit occurs outside, the mask is not an obligation, but individuals must then respect the social distancing requirements.
      - If all visit participants have been double vaccinated more than 14 days ago, and that the foster family or the kinship family where the child resides is in agreement, the participants may remove their mask during the supervised visit. The employee who supervises the visit must however keep his mask, even if he is double vaccinated.
    - Everyone must sanitize their hands before, during and at the end of the visit.
    - Proper practices must be encouraged:
      - Sneezing and coughing into the crook of the arm.
      - Avoiding touching one’s eyes, nose or mouth.
- **After the visit:**
- If the foster parent has provided a change of clothing, the child will change into it before leaving the family home or Valoris.

- At Valoris office: the employee supervising the visit will notify the maintenance worker that the visit is over so that the room can be cleaned.
- If a COVID-19 case is reported following a visit, Valoris will contact the Health Unit and will follow their recommendations.

### **Removal of supervision**

- If it is in the child's best interest to start removing the supervision during visits, the clinical team can do so if it is legally possible. The clinical team will consult the biological family and the foster family to determine what is the best plan to remove this supervision, be it gradual or all at once. Ultimately, the clinical team will have the final decision, in consultation with the legal department.
  - This plan could include one or many of the following elements: replace the full time supervision with partial supervision or spot checks; ask a kin to supervise the visits; have the visits in the community or at a kin's home; increase the number of hours of the visits and include sleepovers; etc.

## **VARIATIONS during LOCKDOWN periods**

In the event that Ontario issues a Lockdown / Stay at home Order (as it did in December 2020 /January 2021 and again in April / May 2021), all scheduled visits between children and their parents will continue as described in this Protocol, but with the following amendments:

- Visits will be limited to family members or anyone having a visitation right established in an order. No extended family member or friend will be allowed to participate in the visits.
  - o Other than the children, the visits will be limited to the individuals living at the same address. Hence, if the parents are separated, we will offer one supervised visit to each parent, individually.
- Visits that need to be supervised will be supervised by a Valoris employee because kins will not be able to supervise visits, except for KINS where the child already resides.
- Visits that were supposed to occur at group homes might no longer be authorized by the group homes. Hence, arrangements will need to be made for Valoris employees to supervise these visits.
- Visits that were scheduled to occur in our offices will continue to occur in our offices as planned.
- Visits that were supposed to occur at the family home will occur at the family home unless the family home is no longer safe for the visits or the parents are not respecting the directives (see below in this Protocol to know when visits should occur at home vs at the office).
- Everyone must wear a mask, even if all participants are double vaccinated and the visit occurs at the family home.

These changes will be applied to all files, such as:

- files before the court;
- files where the child is placed under the Society's extended care, with visits to his/her parents;
- files where the child is placed in kinship out of care or kinship in care;
- files where the child is placed under a Temporary Care Agreement (TCA); and
- files where the child lives with a parent, but we have stopped the other parent's visits with his consent to offer him supervised visits instead.