

June 07, 2025

Parenting Time Services (PTS)

DCS Specialist Roles

- Determine the level of supervision the parent/caregiver needs.
- Plan for parenting time to occur in the most natural setting possible for the family, while ensuring child safety.
- Work with the family to create a parenting time plan that will support the best interest of the child(ren).
- Though the PTS Provider is able to provide transportation for the child(ren) to parenting time, there may be instances that require additional planning or resources (e.g. large siblings groups in separate living arrangements; children placed in different counties); work with the provider as needed to support successful parenting time;
- Remember that parenting time and other family contact must not be used as a reward or punishment. Changes in parenting time and Family Contact Plans should be based on the FFA – Ongoing or FFA – Progress Update.
- Review the Summary of Parenting Time (CSO-3463) to determine the family's progress and continued need for supervised parenting time.
- Communicate with the PTS provider to discuss the family's progression in parenting time, and problem solve any barriers that arise in the parenting time plan.

Description of Service

Parenting Time Services (PTS) are provided to maintain safety in parenting time while children are in DCS custody. Supervision and documentation of the interactions between family members are provided to ensure the child's safety and assist the DCS Specialist in revising the parenting time plan as needed.

The number of hours of service per week is decided by the needs of the family. There is no standard number of hours per family per week. The number of hours per week that may be referred to a PTS provider will not exceed eight (8). If the family requires more than eight (8) hours of supervised parenting time, consider utilizing a DCS Case Aide, family, kinship, or other individuals to supervise the additional hours.

Services are authorized for a period of thirteen (13) weeks. An extension past thirteen weeks may be requested if it is determined through Clinical Supervision Discussions that supervision continues to be necessary to ensure the safety of the child(ren) during parenting time. All initial PTS Service Requests and extensions must be approved per the [Service Approval Matrix \(DCS-2434\)](#).

When developing a parenting time plan, it is important to consider the quality of time that parents and children spend together, rather than focusing solely on increasing the number of in-person contact hours. Parenting time is designed to allow positive, healthy interaction and enhance parents' skill in caregiving. Extended periods of restrictive supervision may not always be a positive experience for families. Incorporating in-person supervised parenting time with additional opportunities to participate in day-to-day activities (such as attending medical appointments, school events, or extracurriculars) could be more beneficial for the family and better support the overall goal of reunification.

Eligibility

- Parents/Caregivers whose children are in out-of-home care

Consider a referral to PTS when:

- There is a danger threat that cannot be controlled through means other than supervision (changing the location, who is present, or when parenting time occurs)
- An option for supervision that would be more normal for the family is not available, such as supervision by:
 - ▶ Responsible adults
 - ▶ Family members/Friends
 - ▶ Out-of-Home Caregivers

Service Referral Process

Submit a Service Request through Guardian. Link the following documents to the Service Request as artifacts (see [Service Request Required Attachment Matrix \(DCS-3184\)](#)):

- Most recent completed FFA – Investigation (Assessment), FFA – Ongoing, or FFA – Progress Update;
- Current Case Plan including the Family Contact Plan (if the child was removed more than sixty (60) days before the Service Request);
- Current Court Report (if there is Court involvement); and
- Copy of Court Order if the order pertains to the parenting time plan.

Reference the following materials to learn more about parenting time, and planning for parenting time:

Field Guides:

Field Guide - Parenting Time Location

Field Guide - Parenting Time Supervision

Practice Guidelines:

Parenting Time (Visitation): Planning ~ Safe, Supportive Parenting Time with Families

Supporting Child and Family Well-Being Through Parenting Time

Parenting Time and Family Contact Plan (ADCS policy manual Chapter 3: Section 6.1)

TraCorp CBT: Parenting Time Planning CH160029

Submitting Referrals:

- Referrals should only be submitted when there is a viable way of reaching the parent/caregiver.
- If a parent/caregiver continues to be inconsistent in their attendance at parenting time sessions, consider utilizing a DCS Case Aide rather than PTS until the parent/caregiver demonstrates a period of consistent attendance. The DCS Specialist should discuss with the parent/caregiver any barriers to consistent attendance at parenting time sessions.

Time frames for Outreach and Services

Within 24 hours of provider assignment, the PTS provider will:

- Confirm receipt of the referral
 - ▶ Note: The provider may also request at this time that the DCS Specialist confirm key information such as the approved participants, contact information, etc.
- Contact the parent/caregiver to begin scheduling supervised parenting time

Within 3 days of provider assignment, the PTS provider will:

- Contact the assigned DCS Specialist and provide the name and contact information for the assigned Case Aide and their supervisor.
- Communicate the scheduled dates and times of parenting time with the DCS Specialist
- Notify the DCS Specialist if they have been unsuccessful in their attempts to reach the parent(s)/caregiver(s) for scheduling
 - ▶ Note: The DCS Specialist shall make reasonable efforts to obtain viable contact information for the parent(s)/caregiver(s) and/or assist with removing any identified barriers

Within 5 days of provider assignment, the PTS provider will:

- Hold the first parenting time session

Ongoing service delivery timeframes:

- The PTS provider is to document observations of the parent's/caregiver's parenting and upload the Summary of Parenting Time into Guardian by 5:00 pm on Friday of the following week
- The PTS provider will notify the DCS Specialist of Significant Incidents within 2 hours of the incident or of receiving information regarding the incident
- If the parent/caregiver does not show up for a scheduled session, the PTS provider will attempt to call the parent/caregiver and wait at least 15 minutes for the parent/caregiver to arrive
- The PTS provider will reschedule parenting time within one (1) week if the parent/caregiver or out-of-home caregiver cancels a session
- If a parent/caregiver continues to miss parenting time sessions, the PTS provider will reach out to the DCS Specialist to attempt to problem-solve the barriers causing the parent/caregiver to not attend parenting time

Closure/extensions:

- The PTS provider will contact the DCS Specialist thirty (30) days prior to the end date of the service authorization to determine if the service will be closed or extended
 - ▶ Note: The DCS Specialist or Program Supervisor should respond to this contact and inform the PTS provider whether services will be closed or extended
- The PTS provider may request approval to close the service early per the process outlined in the [Service Request Closure Standards \(CSO-3707\)](#)

Service Delivery

The PTS provider is responsible for:

- Reviewing the Parenting Time Guidelines with the parent/caregiver to set the expectations for safe and enjoyable parenting time;
- Preparing the parent/caregiver for possible reactions from the child during parenting time, and helping the parent/caregiver manage their feelings in order to assist their child during parenting time;
- Encouraging the child to attend parenting time, but not forcing a child who is unwilling to participate;
- Being present during the entirety of parenting time while ensuring all contact between the parent/caregiver and the child is within sight and hearing of the PTS provider;
- Monitoring family interactions while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the child(ren) throughout parenting time;
- Monitoring parent/caregiver behaviors when there are allegations of sexual abuse (i.e. prohibit photography, physical contact, diapering, gift giving);
- Intervening or ending the parenting time session if it becomes harmful to the child; and
- Observing and documenting the parent/caregiver's parenting skills while the parent/caregiver is interacting with their child.

PTS and Nurturing Parenting Program (NPP) Coordination

If the parent/caregiver is engaged in both PTS and NPP, remember the following:

- NPP Practitioners do not supervise parenting time, nor do they provide transportation for children or adults.
- An NPP Practitioner may reach out to the PTS provider to request information about the dates, times, and locations of when parenting time is occurring.
- The PTS provider must allow the NPP Practitioner to participate in parenting time and allow the parent/caregiver, child and practitioner to engage in the 30-minute nurturing activity.
- The PTS provider must remain in or at the parenting time location as they would if the NPP Practitioner was not there.

Modifying open PTS referrals

At times, there may be a need to modify PTS referrals that are already open and assigned to an agency.

- If the weekly parenting time hours will increase or decrease (remaining within 8 hours per week) per court order or DCS discretion:
 - ▶ A new Service Request is not needed to increase or decrease hours in the middle of an authorization period, as long as it remains within 8 hours per week.
 - ▶ Notify the PTS provider of the change in hours via email.
 - ▶ Allow up to 2 weeks for the PTS provider to implement the change in hours. Utilize DCS Case Aides to provide additional hours in the interim, as required.
- If new participants will be added to parenting time sessions (such as a new baby or other relatives):
 - ▶ A new Service Request is not needed to add participants in the middle of an authorization period.
 - ▶ Notify the PTS provider of the approved participants via email.
 - ▶ At the end of the current service authorization period, if services will be extended, include the new participants in the new PTS Service Request under the Request Participants tab.