**Notes from a phone conversation with Lisa McKee, Visit Program Specialist at Children’s Administration**

Lisa is in charge of coordinating all of the contracted visit supervisors and making sure they are all in contract compliance. She wants to hear from ANYONE (foster parent or provider) if there is a concern with a visit supervisor that has not been resolved directly or with social worker intervention. Her phone number is: 206-923-4842 and her email is: mckeela@dshs.wa.gov

I asked Lisa about birth parent screening for substance abuse before visitation…she said the policy can vary by visit provider agency. Some of the providers have a rule that if the parent is under the influence, the visit ends. Others have more of a behavior-based/safety approach (as long as the parent behaves and the child is safe, the visit can still occur). Lisa said that most of the time, visits aren’t stopped until a parent proves him/herself to be unsafe.

I asked Lisa about the standard set of visit rules that I received at a talk given by her supervisor about 7 years ago. She said now each contracting visit supervision agency has their own set of rules (that may be requested from that agency by the foster parent or social worker) **but there are still some rules that all providers must follow, per their contract with Children’s Administration**. Those rules are:

* 3 no-shows/cancellations (under 24 hours) by birth parent=contract ends (can be picked up again by that same visit provider, but must first go back into the ‘pool’--on Lisa’s spreadsheet).
* Visit does not occur if birth parent is more than 15 minutes late. After 15 minutes, it’s considered a missed visit.
* If there is a physical threat to the children/visit supervisor, the visit supervisor is to get the kids safely in the car and then call the police.
* Every visit is to be recorded by the visit supervisor on a standardized visit narrative form and delivered to the SW within 5 working days. (They are required to check off the boxes, they are not required to write comments, that’s optional.)
* No show and incident reports must be sent to the SW within 24 hours.

When a birth parent has a pattern of not showing up or being late, the SW on the case is the one who places the stipulation on that parent that she must call 24 hours ahead to confirm (this is not the decision of the contracted visit supervisor).

When Lisa gets requests for visits from social workers, she sends out a spreadsheet to all of the contracted agencies and they bid on the jobs they want. The visit provider is chosen by the lowest mileage (who has to drive the least distance, thus costing CA the least amount of money to hire) **UNLESS** there is a previous relationship with a visit supervisor (those get honored above lowest mileage/saving CA money).

Lisa is not directly responsible for assigning visit supervisors to any cases that don’t originate out of a King County CA office, however, if your Sno or Pierce Co case is being handled by a visit supervisor who contracts in King County, too (likely), she still wants to hear about concerns, so that she can address those with the providers.

There are 15 contracted providers for King County, but Lisa sends out her spreadsheet to 40 providers (some cases originate in King County but the foster children are living in other counties). To be a visit supervisor, you must be 21 years old, have a HS diploma, some experience with children, and a driver’s license. Lisa does two trainings per year with all of the visit supervisors. One thing Lisa trains the visit supervisors on is having a “code word” with the child (if this is needed; applies to verbal children) so that if the visit supervisor isn’t in the room (she might be watching through a 1-way mirror), she knows to go into the room and take the child to the bathroom or otherwise intervene to help the child feel safer.