



*A Family Affair Supervised Visitations and Safe Exchanges*

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## **Information Packet**

### **Services Provided:**

Our primary service is to provide the supervision of court ordered parent-child visitation, as well as assisting in the reintroduction of a parent in to a child's life. There are many situations in family law cases, or other cases affecting the parent-child relationship, when the need arises for a neutral third party to supervise visitation between a parent, or another party, and a child or children. Reasons for referral include sexual, physical, and emotional abuse of a child, parent alienation syndrome, domestic violence, kidnapping, drugs and alcohol abuse by a parent and mental illness of a parent.

We have a great deal of experience in dealing with family trauma as an organization we have over 50 years of legal experience. All supervisors with our company are off duty or retired law enforcement personnel or mental and/or physical health professionals. We also have certified counselors.

Services are established by mutual consent of all parties involved and can only continue as a result of **cooperation by all parties**.

All additional persons to be present at visitation periods shall be **pre-approved** or the visitation will be denied.

Visitation will take place at a predetermined location agreed upon by all parties. If supervised visitation periods are uneventful, then field trips away from the predetermined location will be allowed, subject to discretion.

## **Initiating Services:**

Services begin with an intake interview in which each client completes paperwork, learns about policies and procedures along with an assessment of the family situation to ensure proper services to each individual family. This interview provides the forum where questions are answered and a cooperative working relationship is established therefore creating a foundation for successful supervision. To schedule an intake interview, please contact me at 214-206-1855.

Fees are as follows:

\$50.00 initial administration fee for setting up services.

\$50.00 per hour for one child and one other party

\$60.00 per hour for two children and one party

\$70.00 per hour for three or more children and one party

\$25.00 per hour for video taping.

\$35.00 per hour for each additional supervisor that is required.

\$1.00 per mile for fuel fees if visitation site is more than 10 miles outside of Garland.

Payment is required for copying of video tapes or written record.

Payment is expected 72 hours in advance by cash, money order or online on our website at <http://www.a-family-affair.org>. Failure to provide 8 hours advance notice of cancellation of a scheduled visitation period will result in a cancellation fee equal to the amount of the visit, payable by the party canceling visitation.

Failure to provide 4 hours advance notice of rescheduling visitation will result in a \$50.00 rescheduling fee. Any party who is no-shows for a scheduled visit will be financially responsible for the entire fee.

If any supervisor is subpoenaed to court to testify, a charge of \$50.00 per hour, door to door, plus mileage and expenses will be assessed and shall apply to all time spent either on travel time, court time, waiting time, etc. to the party issuing the subpoena.

If you are more than 10 minutes late picking up your child/children or more than 10 minutes late dropping off your child/children, there will be a charge of \$1.00 per minute added until your arrival.

### **Service Policies:**

1. An adult must accompany the child/children inside the designated visitation site but can depart at that time until the other parent or party arrives to deter any aggressive behavior. Parties are not to interact with other while picking up/dropping off before or after a visit to prevent any conflict between the two parties in the presence of the child(ren).
2. No visitation will take place with any person who appears to be or who is believed to be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or who appears to be experiencing emotional problems to the extent that the physical or emotional welfare of the child/children might be endangered.
3. No weapons are allowed to be in the possession of anyone during the visit.
4. No physical discipline will be used by anyone participating in a supervised visit. Verbal threats, vulgar or abusive language directed toward anyone present during supervised visitation is not permitted.
5. During a visit, no one will discuss issues related to the divorce, pending litigation, or future living arrangements in the presence of the child/children. No derogatory remarks about the other parent or family members shall be made in the presence of or hearing range of the child/children. No one is permitted to ask questions of a child/children or encourage a child/children to discuss information about the other parent.

6. Any threats of physical violence to anyone present during a visit, or any implied threat of kidnapping, will be taken seriously and will result in summoning of law enforcement officers.

7. The supervisor reserves the right to terminate services at any time, when appropriate.

8. Any party who is known or suspected of being a “flight risk” while visiting the child must surrender their car keys, cell phone, pager, or any other outside communication/transportation means they may have prior to the start of the visit. Failure to do so will forfeit your right to the visit and it will be rescheduled and a rescheduling fee will be assessed.

The supervisor will need to have adequate information about the allegations to additional boundaries may need to be set beyond the standard guidelines.

### **Visitation Policies:**

1. **Parents are expected to be responsible for their child/children's behavior** during visits and are expected to exhibit appropriate parenting skills during parent-child visits.

2. All regularly scheduled visits will only be arranged when notice is given 72 hours in advance. Rescheduling a visit must be made 4 hours before a visit to prevent a \$50 late rescheduling fee from being assessed. A cancellation of a visit must be made 8 hours before a visit in order to prevent the total amount of the visit being required to be paid.

3. Any parent desiring other adults or children to attend their supervised visit is required to secure permission 48 hours prior to the scheduled visit. Any unauthorized visitor will not be allowed to remain for the visit.

4. Visits are **only** for the party or parties named in the Court's order. Any additional person(s) attending a visit must follow the guidelines and policies. If the additional person(s) interferes with the positive nature of the visit, then the supervisor has the sole discretion to deny the additional person visitation or may ask them to leave at any time.

5. **We have the final authority in determining the activities during visits.** If the parent has a specific activity planned during the visit such as a trip to the lake, ice skating or roller-blading, then the parent needs to notify the supervisor in advance.

6. During visitation times, parents are to keep the child/children within the supervisor's sight and hearing **at all times**. Any attempt to evade the supervisor or to trail far enough where you can no longer be heard will terminate your visit.

7. Should the supervisor determine that the health, safety or welfare of the child/children is endangered at anytime during the visit, the supervisor has the authority to terminate the visit. If it is determined that services need to be terminated, the Court, attorneys of record, attorney ad-litem and Child Protective Services will be notified, if appropriate.

8. Do not attempt to discuss with your supervisor about any information about the other party or the courts regarding your case. Any information known about the matter is confidential and if you are inquiring about something regarding your case, then please consult your attorney.

### **Guidelines for Supervision When Sexual Abuse has Been Alleged**

If the Court has ordered supervised visitation because of allegations of sexual abuse of a child, it is **not** the supervisor's role to validate or invalidate such allegations. However, it is important to create an environment that is safe and will operate with a structure which serves to protect all parties.

The following are the standard behavioral/physical boundaries which must be maintained between a child/children and parent who has been allegedly sexually abused the child/children:

1. The child may not sit on the parent's lap.
2. No full-body frontal hugging is permitted.
3. No kissing on the lips is permitted.

4. No wrestling or tickling is permitted.
5. Only English may be spoken during the visit.
6. **All dialogue** between the visiting parent and the child/children must be loud enough for the supervisor to hear.
7. The supervisor must be able to see the child/children at all times.
8. The visiting parent may **not** change the diapers or the clothes of the child/children, and may **not** be present in the room while the child is being changed.
9. The visiting parent may not examine the child/children physically, ask questions about intimate body functioning, discuss any sexual topics or body parts, or tell sexual jokes.
10. If the child/children are transported during the visit, then the child must sit in the back seat and the supervisor will sit in the front.
11. The visiting parent may **not** assist the child in the bathroom.

It is important that the visiting parent understands the boundaries, and have a plan for dealing with them, before visit begin. Both the child and the visiting parent will be more comfortable if the parent takes responsibility for adhering to the boundaries without intervention. If the visiting parent does not adhere to the rules of the visit, they are at risk of losing their rights to future visits with the child.

**\*\*Please do keep in mind that visitation is a privilege given to you by the court. Please don't take it for granted.**