



Telehealth Guidelines & Verbal Consent

As we know, face to face in the client's home is the best way to do our work but we're in a very unique situation right now. We will need to do our best to create meaningful conversations with clients, focusing on maintaining relationships, safety, well-being, and assisting to meet immediate needs.

STEP ONE:

Before engaging in a telehealth visit for the FIRST TIME with a client, we will need to get verbal permission to do so.

Please read the following script:

"Because of the current situation with coronavirus/COVID-19, Children & Families First has suspended most in-person visits with families. We would like your permission to continue our work using telehealth technology – by phone and/or video. The benefits of telehealth include service continuity and improved access to care. While we will do our best to ensure that the technology we use is secure, there is a risk security protocols could fail, causing a breach of privacy of personal medical information. In addition, certain situations including emergencies and crises, are inappropriate for telehealth services. If you are in crisis or in an emergency, you should immediately call 9-1-1 or seek help from a hospital or crisis help line at (800) 652-2929 or (302) 577-2484 (adults) or 1-800-969-4357 (youth).

Do you give your consent to receive services from CFF using telehealth?"

Please document the response in writing in the client record. Please let the client know that they are able to read our complete Telehealth Consent on our website at <https://www.cffde.org/telehealth>. Also let them know that we will collect written consent when we are able to resume face-to-face visits.

STEP TWO:

Once you have consent to provide services by telehealth, you need to make sure that you are connected to the correct person. **Please confirm the client's name and date of birth each time you start a session.**

In addition, please ask the following questions at the beginning of each session and document responses in the record:

What is the address of the client's current location in case of an emergency?

What is a phone number where the client can be reached in case of connection issues?

Who is present with the client?

Keep in mind the questions you ask and comments you make may be being heard by others.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES:

Visits dates and time should be planned ahead with clients in the same way we would for an in-person visit.

Pre-planning of visits is just as, if not more, essential for telehealth. How will we ensure we speak with and/or see all family members we need to? How will ensure family members are all part of the goal setting process? Will the client be able to carve out time for individual assessments in private?

DO NOT CONDUCT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INQUIRIES WITHOUT BEING CERTAIN THE PERPETRATOR IS NOT PRESENT.

Remember that even if you are not on video, it can be easy to overhear conversations.