POLICY TITLE: Engaging Incarcerated Parents		PAGE 1 OF 17
	CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY **Approved by: Roque Gerald** Agency Director **Date: December 1, 2009**	**REVISION HISTORY:**
LATEST REVISION: December 1, 2009	**EFFECTIVE DATE:** December 1, 2009	

I. AUTHORITY	The Director of the Child and Family Services Agency adopts this policy to be consistent with the Agency's mission and applicable federal and District of Columbia laws, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, provisions in Title 4 of the DC Code, Chapter 60 of Title 29 of the DC Municipal Regulations, and the modified final order and implementation plan in *LaShawn A. v. Fenty*.
II. APPLICABILITY	All CFSA staff and contract agency personnel.
III. RATIONALE	One of the most critical functions of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) is to strengthen families. The importance and significance of strengthening family ties for each child under Agency care cannot be overstated nor underestimated. This commitment is guided by principles and values inherent to CFSA's mission. While showing deference to legal requirements and other appropriate reasons that create barriers to children and their parents living together, CFSA is committed to using its resources to fairly assess these circumstances on a case-by case basis with a goal of strengthening familial relationships through engagement, when it is in the best interest of the child. The Agency recognizes that decisions involving the rights of children with parents who are incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision require respect, due diligence and adequate coordination of appropriate resources. Engagement is the linchpin for strengths-based case management with families.
IV. POLICY	It is the policy of the Child and Family Services Agency to provide children under Agency care with adequate opportunities to visit with parents who are incarcerated or under another form of correctional supervision. Social workers are responsible for substantive engagement of these parents to ensure they are involved in the lives of their children as needed and appropriate to the goal of strengthening family relationships. A team approach involves coordination and collaboration between appropriate agencies, organizations and individuals and is essential to ensuring that actions taken and decisions made are in the best interest of the child whose parent is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision.

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VII. PROCEDURES	**Procedure A: General Guidelines for Engagement of Incarcerated Parents** Parents who are incarcerated or under another form of correctional supervision do not relinquish their parental rights, including the right to visitation and to maintain contact by mail, telephone or other authorized means, unless such rights have been terminated by a court of jurisdiction for the case involving each child in question that is under Agency care. Contact arrangements with the incarcerated parent may also be discontinued when the child refuses to participate in the visit or ages out of the child welfare system and no longer chooses to maintain contact. The type(s) of contact between the child and the incarcerated parent depends on what is determined to be in the best interest of the child, what is directed by court order from the court of jurisdiction, and what may be permitted by the law enforcement agency, correctional facility or program. 1. The assigned social worker shall seek to obtain the maximum levels of contact permitted to enhance flexibility in the options available, provided each level is within the best interest of the child. 2. Types or forms of contact include: a. in-person visitation in the same room at the correctional facility or program b. in person visitation at a neutral location arranged by the assigned social worker, court of jurisdiction and/or the correctional facility c. non-contact visitation at the facility (via a glass partition separating the child and parent) d. video visitation (using teleconferencing equipment arranged by CFSA and the correctional facility if such technology is available

e. non-collect telephone calls arranged by the assigned social worker and assigned case manager (usually held in their respective offices)

f. collect phone calls paid for by the child's primary caregiver

g. letters and packages (including certified mail), fax and/or email (if permitted and supervised)

3. For purposes of this policy, the assigned case manager for the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision shall include any person who has primary responsibility for case planning for the affected parent, to include juvenile and adult facility case managers and juvenile and adult probation and parole officers.

4. All types of contact between the affected children and the affected parents are subject to screening and monitoring by the assigned social worker and the assigned case manager. The assigned social worker shall document each reason used to justify denying a type of contact in FACES and in required court reports related to progress in the case.

5. The assigned social worker shall provide a copy of the valid court order which indicates that parental rights have not been terminated to the parent's assigned case manager.

6. The assigned social worker shall ensure that visitation and other contact between the child and the incarcerated parent complies with the correctional facility's policies, procedures and/or practices. In the event of a conflict between the facility's policies, procedures and/or practices and Agency mandates, the assigned social worker shall discuss the issue with the parent's assigned case manager. The assigned social worker shall consult with the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) for assistance in a resolution of such issues.

Procedure B. Locating Parents In The Juvenile Justice and Criminal Justice Systems

During the investigation process, and at prescribed intervals throughout the life of the case, the assigned social worker shall initiate efforts to determine the location of a child's parent when it is suspected or known that the parent is incarcerated or under correctional supervision. At a minimum, the assigned social worker will initiate attempts to determine the parent's location **every 90 days**.

1. The social worker assigned to the case is responsible for gathering pertinent information concerning the parent in an attempt to locate and make contact with the parent in an expeditious manner. Such information includes, but is not limited to the following information:
   a. full name (first, middle and last name)
   b. aliases, nicknames, maiden name, if known
   c. race and/or ethnicity
   d. date of birth
   e. social security number

	f. Police Department Identification (PDID) g. inmate or resident identification number (assigned to the facility) h. facility's business, mailing, and web address 2. The assigned social worker shall check FACES to determine if there has been previous CFSA involvement for the incarcerated parent. As appropriate, earlier hard-copy and electronic records shall be checked for relevant information that may not be available in the current case file. 3. The assigned social worker shall review court records and consult with appropriate court officials to identify and verify data matches for an incarcerated parent who owes child support. 4. When the whereabouts of a parent known or believed to be incarcerated are unknown or have yet to be established, the assigned social worker shall take as many of the following steps as necessary in an effort to locate the parent: a. Interview neighbors, relatives and other collateral resources. b. Make a Freedom of Information Act request as necessary to obtain information on the location of incarcerated parents. c. Contact authorities at other government agencies for possible involvement by the parent, including the Department of Mental Health, Department of Human Services, Income Maintenance Administration, hospitals, etc. d. If the affected parent's full name and/or other required identifiers are known, search the Federal Bureau of Prisons online Inmate Locator Database (www.bop.gov). e. If crimes were committed in the District, check the Criminal Clerk's Office on the 4th floor of the DC Superior Court for a criminal record. f. Contact Metropolitan Police Department liaison to request a check to be conducted to locate the affected parent via the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database. g. Contact local police lockups and sub-stations, especially if the child was present at the scene when the parent was arrested. Officials from the police station can and should provide information regarding the current status of the parent, including whether he/she has been transferred to a jail or other type of facility. h. Contact authorities of local correctional facilities, including juvenile justice facilities, jails/adult local detention facilities, public and privately operated prisons. i. Contact probation and paroling authorities for halfway houses and electronic monitoring programs. j. Contact authorities from other jurisdictions based on information that the parent has been transferred to an out-of-state facility. k. Search local and national sex offender registries.

l. Use Internet search engines such as http://www.whitepages.com, http://www.zabasearch.com, http://www.freeality.com.

m. Mail certified letter in the parent's primary language to the last known address, referral address, address listed on the ACEDS and/or SPIS, and any verified address based on the agency/facility search.

5. When other attempts to locate the parent have been exhausted without success, the assigned social worker shall make a referral to the Diligent Search Unit. Staff from the Diligent Search Unit shall continue the search to locate the parent in accordance with the Agency's policy for the diligent search process. (*See Diligent Search Policy.*)

6. Contact between the child and the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision may be interrupted when the parent is unexpectedly transferred or released. The Agency must make efforts to reestablish and maintain contact, except when determined by a court of jurisdiction in the case to be against the best interest of the child. In these situations, a valid court order is required to justify the actions of CFSA staff and contracted agencies.

7. The assigned social worker is responsible for seeking to continue to engage the parent who was formerly incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision. In the event the assigned social worker discovers that the incarcerated parent has been released without proper advance notice and no forwarding address has been provided, the social worker shall:

   a. Re-interview the available parent, the child (if age-appropriate) and other family members.

   b. Contact the last known assigned case manager for the parent who was incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision.

   c. Contact the affected parent's attorney of record pertaining to his/her abuse or neglect case, if one has been assigned or retained. This is not the attorney handling the criminal cases for the incarcerated parent.

   d. Check sex offender registries and other online resources which contain information regarding the affected parent's whereabouts.

   e. Submit a referral to the Diligent Search Unit for assistance in locating the affected parent and provide them with information that supports the efforts of the assigned social worker to locate the parent.

8. All efforts to locate the affected parent shall be documented in FACES by the appropriate Agency staff.

	Procedure C: Assessments The assigned social worker ensures that all appropriate and necessary assessments that should occur over the life cycle of each case involving visitation between the child and the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision are performed and completed in a timely manner. Such assessments will determine whether safety needs are addressed as family dynamics and logistics evolve and/or change. Through this individualized assessment of the child and his or her circumstances, the social worker may determine that visitation is not in the best interest of the child and should be limited or denied. 1. The assigned social worker shall complete the Assessment Checklist (*see Attachment A to this policy*) to determine whether engagement or contact between each affected child and the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision is appropriate. 2. In the case of multiple children of a parent, a separate Assessment Checklist must be completed for each child or youth to determine whether engagement or contact with the parent is appropriate. 3. Determinations from the Assessment Checklist are made based on the criteria of safety and best interests of the child at a particular point in time. The completed preliminary assessment checklists shall be reviewed and signed by the social worker's supervisor to ensure standards for accuracy of information and fairness in decision-making are being maintained. 4. The assigned social worker conducts secondary and follow-up assessments to collect and analyze additional information to gain a more extensive understanding of the family's past and current situation, living conditions, family dynamics, underlying issues, strengths and weaknesses. Outstanding concerns are discussed and resolved in consultation with the assigned social worker's supervisor and/or by the administrative review team.
	Procedure D: Social Worker Coordination and Consultation with Correctional Authorities and the Parent's Assigned Case Manager The assigned social worker is responsible for contacting, coordinating and consulting with appropriate correctional authorities and the parent's assigned case manager throughout the process of any attempts to arrange visits between the child and the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision. 1. The assigned social worker shall share information with appropriate correctional authorities as permitted by the Agency's Confidentiality Policy. (*See Confidentiality Policy.*)

	2. The assigned social worker shall obtain and use available information on putative fathers for the purpose of establishing paternity. If a putative father is identified, the assigned social worker shall initiate court proceedings for paternity testing and rulings on findings. 3. The assigned social worker shall ensure the assigned case manager for the affected parent is involved in case planning for visitation and other appropriate activities throughout the life cycle of the case (e.g., notifying the affected parent of child support obligations, medical emergencies involving the child, etc). 4. The assigned social worker shall attempt to resolve all disputes pertaining to the visitation arrangements. Any disputes that require intervention by the social worker's supervisor shall be referred in a timely manner. 5. The assigned social worker shall request, obtain and strictly adhere to all security rules and regulations of the correctional facility or program. In some instances, security rules and regulations are posted on the website of the correctional agency. The assigned social worker shall verify with the appropriate authorities whether the visitation information obtained from the website or hard-copy documents are accurate. Changes to the established visitation schedule may be necessary to accommodate the visit. If this occurs, arrangements shall be made with the assigned case manager, the affected parent, the child or youth's primary caretaker and the child or youth. 6. The assigned social worker shall document the parent's release date, conditions of release, changes in parent's status through consultation with the assigned case manager and the parent. 7. In the event contact is interrupted, the Agency shall make efforts to reestablish and ensure contact between the child and the parent is maintained, unless such contact is determined to not be in the best interest of the child and/or such contact is at any point prohibited by a court of record and jurisdiction for the case. 8. The assigned social worker shall contact the affected parent's attorney(s) of record for his/her abuse or neglect case to obtain forwarding address information as necessary to continue efforts to engage the parent in the child's life. 9. When the assigned social worker is aware of the release of the affected parent and no forwarding address has been provided nor obtained, the assigned social worker shall continue efforts to locate the parent. Once other efforts required by Procedure B of this policy have been exhausted, the assigned social worker shall submit a referral to the Diligent Search Unit for further assistance in locating the parent again.

	10. The assigned social worker shall consult with the parent's assigned case manager to determine if there is a plan for successful reintegration of the parent into the community. The plan should identify available facility and community resources that have been coordinated to address the affected parent's continuing needs (e.g., housing, employment, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, HIV/AIDS counseling and medications, transportation, parenting classes, education services, vocational training, child support payments, anger management classes, etc).
	Procedure E: Social Worker's Contact/Engagement with Incarcerated Parent 1. The assigned social worker shall use a strengths-based case management approach to effectively engage the parent and child in the visitation efforts. 2. At a minimum, once the location of the incarcerated parent is established and initial consultation with the assigned case manager occurs, the assigned social worker shall make contact with the incarcerated parent within **45 days,** and then not less than every **60 days thereafter.** The frequency of contact between the assigned social worker and the incarcerated parent is determined by the documented service and resource needs identified through the case planning process. Contact includes telephone calls, in-person visits, videoconferencing and other forms of non-contact visits, mail, etc. 3. The assigned social worker shall develop a positive rapport and effective working relationship with affected children, parent(s) and families to engage them as full participants in case planning and achievement of well-defined goals. 4. The assigned social worker shall make initial contact immediately once a parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision is identified and located. 5. The methods used by the social worker to establish contact with a parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision includes but may not be limited to the following: a. Seeking to obtain signed releases of informed consent from the incarcerated parent to reduce the risk of losing contact information concerning the parent's location. b. Using public information to determine procedures for contacting the parent, which may vary from correctional institution-to-institution and state-to-state.

c. Identifying and contacting the affected parent's case manager (via phone, email, certified letter). Contacting the case manager is critical to establishing a relationship of trust with the parent, reducing stigma for the parent, and gaining credible information (including insights) into the parent's character, behavior, abilities, special needs and current status with the juvenile justice or criminal justice systems.

d. Writing a letter/notification to the parent using the letter template for parents who are incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision (*see Attachment B: Incarcerated Parent Letter).* Send this correspondence via certified mail.

e. Contacting the Department of Mental Health or other government agencies and community resources to obtain or corroborate information essential to the engagement process.

f. Communicating using other available methods approved by the institution for contacting parents who are incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision (i.e., video conferencing/ video visitation, email, in-person professional visits).

g. Addressing special challenges and issues facing the parent or the child, including literacy, learning disabilities, physical or mental disabilities, or indigence.

6. The assigned social worker shall document in FACES the following information:

   a. All direct contact and attempted contacts with the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision

   b. All collateral contacts and relationships to the parent or child that have implications for the visitation activity

7. Where there are multiple children of the affected parent under Agency care, arrangements shall be made to provide contact/visitation opportunities for each child with the parent.

8. In the event that both parents of the child are incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision, the assigned social worker shall make arrangements for contact/visitation between the child and each parent individually, in accordance with this Agency policy.

9. The assigned social worker shall continue to engage the parent(s) throughout periods of incarceration, consistent with the current goals approved by the Agency for the case. This occurs even if contact between the child and parent are contraindicated and/or prohibited by court order.

Procedure F: Preparing the Child for Initial or Sustained Contact With the Incarcerated Parent

1. In cases where contact between the child and the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision has not been established or has not been maintained, the assigned social worker shall pursue adequate measures to prepare the child for initial contact/visit, provided such contact or visitation is appropriate. The methods for preparing the child and facilitating such contact include but are not limited to the following:
   a. Encouraging, but not forcing, the child to communicate with the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision until he/she is comfortable and remains comfortable with this process to connect and establish rapport.
   b. Assisting the child in working through feelings of fear, confusion, shame, anger, depression or stigma concerning the affected parent's circumstances, including but not limited to the reasons for their incarceration, inability to adequately provide care, parental substance abuse, mental illness, etc.
   c. Arranging and monitoring telephone calls, as appropriate, before allowing the parent and child to converse alone. This action is performed to ensure the conversation is appropriate and to establish limits as needed.
   d. Describing the correctional facility or program and the security procedures.
   e. Arranging and ensuring that an adult is present when the child is communicating in-person with the affected parent for at least the first 3-4 visits. At a minimum, an adult must be present for at least the first three (3) in-person visits between the child and the affected parent when the child is less than 12 years old. Professional judgment and discretion are used to determine the need for adult presence when dealing with youth who have reached the age of majority (18 years or older).
2. At a minimum, the social worker shall involve the non-incarcerated birth parent and/or other caregivers (foster parents, kinship caregivers, group home staff, etc) in meetings or conference calls to understand the importance and need for the child to have the Agency-recommended and court-ordered contact with the incarcerated parent. These meetings and conference calls shall be used to assist them in working through their biases, identifying ways they can support the child in preparing for contact (including visitation) with the incarcerated parent and finding other appropriate roles for their involving various types of contact (e.g., monitoring visits, telephone calls, mail to and from the facility; obtaining school report cards; and providing emergency information to the social worker).

	3. When appropriate to do so, the assigned social worker shall notify the child of any emergencies, serious health issues and/or disciplinary sanctions involving the affected parent that may interfere with the continuity of the contact/visits. 4. Following each visit, the social worker shall help the child express thoughts, feelings, emotions behind behaviors, and positive aspects of the visit. The social worker shall guide the child in ways to support the parent and their relationship. 5. As needed, the assigned social worker shall arrange for outside support therapy services for the child, including to preparing for contact with the incarcerated parent. The assigned social worker shall consult with the therapist concerning the specific types of contact with the incarcerated parent that are under consideration and whether they are appropriate and in the best interest of the child at this time or in the future. (*See Attachment A: Assessment of Appropriateness of Child-Parent Contact.)*
	Procedure G: Preparing the Incarcerated Parent For Initial or Sustained Contact With the Child 1. The assigned social worker shall be responsible for preparing the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision for initial and sustained contact with the child. The methods used by the assigned social worker to prepare the affected parent include but are not limited to the following: a. Explaining and/or clarifying for the incarcerated parent that his/her parental rights and responsibilities have not been terminated. b. Discussing the different types of contact currently available and permitted between the child and parent. c. Informing the parent of expectations for initial and sustained contact and visitation. d. Sharing with the parent any issues that may initially affect the quality and quantity of the contact (e.g., restrictions imposed by the courts, facility rules and regulations, including non-emergency and emergency procedures, etc). Explain to the parent that establishing and maintaining facilitated communication with the child is a process that will largely be determined by his/her actions. e. Assisting the parent in talking with the child and answering difficult questions about their relationship, the incarceration or other appropriate topics. Each parent or caregiver may require assistance and support in how to appropriately discuss mistakes he/she has made, as well as when discussing the other parent or caregiver with the child.

f. Assisting the affected parent in working through feelings of fear, shame, isolation, rejection, anger or depression concerning the restrictions or lack of contact with the child during his/her incarceration or period under correctional supervision. The parent's case manager shall be consulted and should be involved in achieving this goal.

g. Informing the affected parent about the initial period where all communications and contact with the child shall be monitored to ensure the conversations are appropriate.

h. Discussing monitoring with the affected parent first so he/she understands why it is occurring and attempting to resolve concerns for the child or the parent prior to initial contact.

i. Explaining that sustained contact with the child is behavior-driven and the importance of appropriate and timely notification when the parent is not permitted visits as a result of disciplinary sanction, reasons of facility security, transfer to another facility, conditional or unconditional release from a facility or program.

2. The assigned social worker shall inform the parent's case manager of all emergency notifications involving the child that may impact or interrupt contact.

3. The assigned social worker shall arrange with the primary caregiver to contact the child's teacher and request copies of homework, school report cards and progress reports in advance of the visit to share with affected parent(s).

4. Except for extenuating circumstances, the assigned social worker shall be involved in every contact or non-contact visit between the parent and child to obtain information required for the ongoing clinical assessment. Working cooperatively, the assigned social worker and the assigned case manager shall help the child and parent use the time as productively and comfortably as possible.

5. The social worker shall work cooperatively with the case manager to identify and resolve any potential communication barriers for the child or parent using available or obtainable resources prior to any contact (literacy issues, need for hearing devices [TDD] or sign language interpreter, speech impediments, visual impairment aids, translator, etc). The assigned social worker shall make all arrangements to address communication aids for the child and the case manager makes arrangements to resolve communication needs for the parents.

6. The social worker shall reconvene with the affected parent and his/her assigned case manager to debrief and assess each visitation. This may occur by conference call or in-person.

	7. On a monthly basis, the social worker coordinates with the assigned case worker to discuss all types of communication and contact that have occurred between the parent and child, whether tasks have been accomplished and whether goals need to be reevaluated.
	Procedure H: Correctional Facility or Program Rules and Regulations That May Affect Contact/Visits 1. The assigned social worker shall encourage reciprocal communication between the parent and the child by phone, letter, greeting cards, artwork, email and video visitation (where such items and technologies exist and are permitted by facility or program rules and regulations). 2. Rules and regulations for correctional facilities and programs vary from jurisdiction-to-jurisdiction and depending on the unique mission of the facility or program. The assigned social worker shall be responsible for obtaining applicable security procedures, rules and regulations that can affect contact between the child and the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision. 3. The assigned social worker shall provide the appropriate facility or program authorities with a copy of a valid court order that requires arrangements be made for contact visitation, non-contact visitation and other types of communication/contact between the child and the affected parent. 4. The assigned social worker shall request, in writing, a copy of the facility or program rules and regulations for visitation. The social worker shall review the facility or program rules and regulations to determine the following: a. Types of contact allowed: in-person contact at the facility (with or without inmate/resident wearing mechanical restraints, in-person contact at a neutral location, non-contact visitation at the facility with the child and parent in separate rooms, letters and packages, collect and/or non-collect telephone calls, video visitation, fax, email). b. Pre-registration and on-site registration protocols for visitors (Are pre-visit tours by the social worker permitted?). c. Age restrictions for visitors. d. Screening and clearance process for entering the facility or program. e. Form(s) of identification required. f. Dress code for visitors; dress code for inmates/residents. g. Is makeup or a certain hairstyle prohibited (e.g., beaded hairdos and wigs). h. Is the environment child-friendly and adaptable, e.g., does the visiting room or public lobby area have a baby changing station? i. Number of visits that inmate/resident is allowed each week or month. Can the visits be combined to afford the inmate/resident a longer period to visit?

j. Materials that can be exchanged between visitor and inmate/resident at the facility or program (e.g., photographs, greeting cards, artwork, CD/DVDs).

k. Rules and regulations concerning prohibited and restricted items, which may be considered contraband.

l. Availability of storage lockers; permissible property (cellphones, cameras and other devices may be prohibited and must be stored in the lockers located in the public lobby or left in the visitor's vehicle).

m. Hours and Days of visitation for the affected inmate/resident.

n. Rules regarding postponed or cancellation of visits.

o. Wait time for visits. Food and snacks allowed. Is change needed to buy food from facility vending machines?

p. Games and toys available to occupy children during wait time.

q. Length of each visit; determine whether special provisions exist for visitors who travel long distances.

r. What are the rules concerning "special visits"? (Each facility has a distinct policy on such visits, which may occur outside the normal visiting hours and may allow for extended visitation time limits based on extenuating circumstances that are approved by the facility director).

s. Prohibited physical contact and displays of affection between visitors and inmates/ residents.

t. Other prohibited conduct by visitors.

u. Perceived safety of the visitation environment, if inspected or otherwise known.

v. Evacuation routes.

w. Are tape recordings allowed?

x. Availability of TDD, translator and other devices or personnel necessary to facilitate contact between the child and parent.

y. Sanctions for rule violations (suspension of visiting privileges for the inmate/resident for a specified period of time).

z. Correctional program restrictions that preclude the affected parent from contact visits with the child except in specific locations.

aa. Distance and transportation issues that need to be resolved. Are there resources in the community to assist with the cost for child-parent contact (e.g., faith-based organizations, other non-profits and community-based programs that provide services, resources and donations)?

bb. Point of contact for requesting and receiving approval for an exception to any of the facility or program rules and regulations.

5. The assigned social worker shall identify the screening process for all facility mail and facilitate the availability of special services either the child or the affected parent may need to overcome communication barriers. The primary caregiver shall be made aware of these issues so service priorities can be established for the child to obtain assistance in the community.

Procedure I: Information Sharing

1. Unless otherwise prohibited by law or Agency policy, the assigned social worker can and shall provide information to the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision to encourage their engagement in the child's life developmental activities and progress.

2. The social worker shall redact, edit or remove any information that would lead to safety or security concerns, or information that any parent or caregiver has explicitly not agreed to disclose (e.g., location of the child's school, foster home address, foster parent's social security number, and banking information).

3. Unless otherwise indicated by policy, such information provided to the affected parent shall be mailed. Such items include, but are not limited to the following examples:

   a. Case plans.

   b. Relevant court reports and orders.

   c. Child's activities, achievements, and educational progress.

   d. Athletic participation and accomplishments.

   e. Child's drawings, letters, pictures (if receipt of such items are permitted by the facility or program).

   f. Special events in the child's life (birthdays, graduations, etc.).

   g. Hospitalization or other medical issues. (*Note: The assigned social worker shall ensure that the parent who is incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision is notified immediately when there is a medical emergency or serious medical event involving the child. The social worker shall obtain informed consent from the affected parent, if required for certain procedures or decisions*. *Arrangements shall be made with the case manager to share this information with the affected parent.)*

   h. Contact information for the parent's attorney of record for the abuse or neglect case. Do not assume that the information is readily available or that there has been contact between the attorney of record for the abuse or neglect case and the affected parent.

   i. Date of next court hearing and administrative reviews involving the child. Encourage the parent to speak with his/her abuse and neglect attorney about being present for the court hearing or administrative reviews via telephone or video conferencing if such capabilities are available and permitted by the facility or program.

	4. The assigned social worker shall assist the non-incarcerated birth parent or other primary caregiver in preparing for and understanding the child's post-visit behavior. The social worker shall educate the non-incarcerated birth parent or primary caregiver about the dynamics of visitation.
	Procedure J: Case Planning With Incarcerated Parents 1. Parents who are incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision are permitted to fully participate in case planning for their children. 2. The Agency and its contracted agency personnel shall be responsible for including the affected parent in the case planning activities. 3. The assigned social worker shall complete the following activities related to the case planning process: a. Provide the parent who is incarcerated or under some other form of correctional supervision with updated information on their child's progress, the child's needs, and the established goals for the case. b. Solicit input from the affected parent in terms of strengths of the child, concerns for the child, ways they believe they could be helpful and supportive to the child (e.g., talking with the child about finishing his/her homework or doing chores in the foster home). c. Ask the affected parent for suggestions regarding relatives that can or should be assessed as placement options and/or lifelong connections for the child. d. Obtain information from the affected parent concerning other family members who the parent maintains contact with. One or more of these family members could be potential placement options as kinship caregivers. The assigned social worker and the parent's case manager shall arrange for non-collect telephone calls to establish contact and involve these family members to determine if they are suitable for such roles. The affected parent should also be asked about substance abuse or other dangerous activities that might not make one or more of these other family members who are suitable candidate for foster parenting. e. Inform the affected parent of his/her legal options and direct them to talk with their attorney(s), if adoption or guardianship is the permanency plan for the child. f. Ask the affected parent about his/her release date and their plan for re-entering the community. If the release date is imminent, ask about the affected parent and his/her needs. Consult with the parent's assigned case manager to determine those community resources and service linkages that if made available could enable him/her to become a contributing member of society and an effective parent. Explore whether the affected parent could become an option for permanency.

	g. Discuss with both parents and the child, where appropriate, how visitation and parenting will occur once the parent is released and/or fulfill the remaining requirements of correctional supervision. Lack of preparation for the parent's release may result in an uncomfortable or stressful experience when the affected parent is re-introduced to the child's life after release. h. In the event the child ages out of the child welfare system and does not desire to continue contact with the incarcerated parent, the assigned social worker shall engage them in a period of transition activities prior to the voluntary termination of contact by the child. All efforts concerning these transition activities shall be documented in FACES and included in court reports.
	Procedure K: Recordkeeping and Monitoring Requirements 1. The Agency and its contracted service providers shall maintain accurate and complete records on all efforts to establish contact and relationships between children and their parents who are incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision. 2. Social workers shall document all visits between Agency children and parents who are incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision in FACES within 24 hours of the visit. 3. Reasons for denying visits between children and their parents who are incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision must be documented in each affected child's case plan and in the court reports pertaining to this case. 4. Administrative Review shall monitor the Agency's compliance with legal requirements and policies and procedures related to visitation by children with parents who are incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency

Assessment Checklist for Appropriateness of Child-Parent Contact

1. Is the parent incarcerated? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Is the parent a juvenile? ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. If the parent is a juvenile, is he/she assigned to a juvenile facility or an adult local detention facility (jail)?
   Specify:

4. If the parent is an adult, is he/she currently incarcerated or under some form of correctional supervision?

   Indicate state where parent resides and name of facility:

5. What reason/charges are associated with parent's current incarceration status, if applicable:

6. What reason(s) is/are associated with the child/parent/family's involvement with the Agency?

7. Is the parent a legal resident of the United States? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   If, no, what country is the parent a legal resident of, if known?

8. What is the parent's capabilities for communicating in English?
   Is a translator needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. If the parent is not a legal resident, is he/she being held at an ICE or other facility that allows for more flexible family visitation? (The parent's immigration status will have already been checked by law enforcement and corrections officials for all offenses requiring incarceration.)

10. Is the parent awaiting detention hearing related to deportation by ICE officials?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

11. What other form of correctional supervision is the parent under (electronic monitoring/house arrest, halfway house, work camp, group home, probation, parole)?
    Name of program, if applicable

12. Where (county/city/state) is the community based correctional supervision occurring?

13. How long has the parent been incarcerated?

14. Was incarceration the primary reason the child was placed in foster care? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    Please explain

15. Was the child present at the time of the current incarceration of this parent? ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. Was there previous incarceration of this parent? ☐ Yes ☐ No

17. Has the child already had some type of visitation with the parent since incarceration? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, please indicate the type of contact. In-person visitation ☐; Non-Contact Visitation ☐; Video Visitation ☐; Telephone Call ☐; Letters and Packages ☐; Other ☐ (please indicate)

18. Is the parent incarcerated in a facility in the Washington Metropolitan area (Note this area includes core areas: **D.C., Arlington County, VA; Alexandria, VA; Fairfax County, VA; Fairfax City, VA; Manassas, VA; Prince William County, VA; Loudon County, VA; Montgomery County, MD; Prince Georges County, MD; Frederick County, MD Charles County, MD;** and peripheral areas Jefferson County, WVA; Warren County, VA; Fredericksburg, VA; Spotsylvania, VA, Calvert County, MD)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, please indicate which county or city:

19. Is the parent incarcerated in another county, state or country? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, where?

20. Has the parent been transferred from another facility? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, when did the transfer occur? To which facility was the parent transferred to?

21. Are there detainers or outstanding warrants involved in the parent's case?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

22. Is the parent scheduled for transfer to another jurisdiction to face other charges? ☐ Yes ☐ No

23. In the case of questionable paternity, does the parent admit to being the child's father?

24. Has a paternity test been requested from an appropriate court of record?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

25. Has the paternity test been ordered by the appropriate court of record?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

26. Has the putative father cooperated with this process?

27. Has paternity been forensically established? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, has CFSA received a certified copy of the results? If no, please explain

28. What was the nature and extent of the contact and/or relationship between the child and the parent prior to incarceration or other form of correctional supervision?

29. Are there multiple siblings involved? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    Are all siblings residing at one foster home? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, please explain

30. Does the parent who is incarcerated or under some other form of correctional supervision desire to have contact and/or a relationship with the child or youth? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If no, have the reasons been identified, discussed and documented? ☐ Yes ☐ No

31. Does the child/youth wish to have contact and/or a relationship with the parent in question? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If no, have the reasons been identified, discussed and documented? ☐ Yes ☐ No

32. Are there any safety or health risks to the child that must be considered prior to, during or after a visit between the child and the parent in question? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    Please note whether there are allegations or documented history of sexual or physical abuse, medical neglect, domestic violence, current contagious diseases, parental substance abuse, prostitution, TB, other dangerous activities (please explain), etc.

33. What was the nature and severity of the abuse or neglect perpetrated or tolerated by the parent?

34. Are there identifiable safety risks for the caregiver or other significant parties in the child's life as a result of pursuing the contact/visit with the incarcerated parent?

35. Are there any barriers in this case that if removed or negotiated would favorably change the results of the assessment to facilitate the Agency's efforts for a renewal of family ties? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, please explain

36. Are there unresolved issues that will have future consequences for interrupting or discontinuing the relationship between the child and parent? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, please explain

37. Is the child currently receiving outside therapy services related to this case? ☐ Yes ☐ No

38. Has the child's therapist been consulted regarding the proposed contact between the child and the incarcerated parent? ☐ Yes ☐ No

39. Does the therapist agree with plans to engage the incarcerated parent with the child? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If no, please explain

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency

Notice to Incarcerated Parent

TO: [Incarcerated Parent's Name]
[Name of Institution]
[Street Address]
[City, State and Zipcode]

DATE:

Hello, my name is [Social Worker's Name]. I am a social worker with [Agency Name]. I am writing to inform you that the [Agency Name] is currently providing case planning and case management services for your children, [Children's Names], and invite you to participate in the planning for your children.

Incarceration does not end your responsibility as a parent and you play a vital role in your child's life. I understand that incarceration can make it difficult to perform your parental duties, however, I strongly encourage you to use all the available resources to preserve, maintain, and strengthen the parent-child relationship.

Therefore, please contact me at [Desk Phone Number] or [Cell Phone Number], between the hours of 8:15 AM and 4:45 PM. If I am not available to take your call, please leave a message with a telephone number where you can be reached.

I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

_____
Social Worker

200 I Street, SE ♦ Washington, DC 20003
www.cfsa.dc.gov