

The Philadelphia Department of Human Services
Children and Youth Division
Policy Transmittal
MEMORANDUM

#01-01

September 4, 2001

TO: All Policy Manual Users

FROM: Wanda Mial, Deputy Commissioner 
John McGee, Operations Director

RE: Documentation of Visitation via the Visitation Tracking System (VTS)

- Amending Section 1000, by adding an additional section, #1360
"CYD Social Worker Visits in Cases Accepted for Service"

EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2001

- **DISCUSSION:**

Visitation of children in placement and at home is essential to ensure child safety. It is an essential tool for social workers to develop relationships with the children and families they serve. Through visitation, the social worker can determine if the services purchased are working towards achievement of the goal and objectives outlined in the Family Service Plan and initiate changes in services as needed.

The Visitation Tracking System is an automated management tool that allows the Director, Social Work Administrator and Social Work Supervisor to view and track visitation information. Information can be looked at on a social worker, case or unit level. The VTS automatically calculates the next required visit for each child using the visitation requirements outlined in the CYD Policy Manual.

In addition to tracking visits, the VTS can assist social workers and supervisors in managing their caseloads. Using VTS screens and reports, supervisors and social workers can identify when a child's location is not accurate and identify children who are not receiving services. The Next Month's Visits Report enables workers to plan and schedule their visits.

The VTS enables supervisors to make case management decisions with their staff and to measure compliance with CYD's visitation policy. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that information is timely, valid and reliable. To be effective, use of the VTS system must be integrated into supervisors' practice and should be part of regular supervisory conferences.

A separate document with tips for implementing the VTS is attached for your information.

- **SUMMARY OF CHANGES:**

- CYD policy on visitation requirements for all cases accepted for service is reiterated in a new separate section in the Policy Manual under Operational Policies. (Cf. Section 5000: #5112 CYD Case Management; #5204.3 Kinship Care placements; #5221 Initial Requirements for Placing a Child #5222 Ongoing Requirements and Responsibilities)
- Supervisors will document all visits in the VTS after they have ensured that the social worker has fulfilled all requirements of a visit, i.e. that the worker saw the child where the child lives and assessed the child's situation thoroughly. Ongoing documentation in the VTS during the month will provide supervisors and workers with information on progress during the month while there is still time to take corrective measures.

All visits completed in the previous month must be documented in the VTS by close of business the **5th work day** of the following month and the unit's report run. (Note: Use of the VTS does not in any way alter the requirement that social workers document all actions and activities that occur on a case.)

- VTS Reports will be run on the **6th workday** of the month by the Social Work Administrator.

- **IMPLEMENTATION**

Effective October 1, 2001, all visits must be entered in the VTS by social work supervisors.

- **FILING INSTRUCTIONS**

These Policy changes require amendments to the following section of the Policy Manual:

Section 1000, A new section has been added - #1360, "CYD Social Worker Visits in Cases Accepted for Service."

Questions concerning this material should be addressed to:

Wesley Brown, Administrator, Policy And Planning	x6044
Susan Weinberg, Program Supervisor	x6083
William Kreindler, Program Analyst	x6192

QUICK TIPS FOR THE VTS

Timelines:

- ❖ Document visits during supervisory conferences.
- ❖ Unit reports are run by close of business on the 5th work day
- ❖ Section reports run on the 6th work day

How to run a report

1. Overview:

As visits are entered into the system, they are automatically saved. However, until these statistics are "locked", a visitation ratio will not calculate. The program is designed hierarchically, meaning that each level needs to be "locked," starting with the lowest level (caseworker) up to the highest level (Region). Each individual caseworker needs to be locked, then the Unit, then the Section, and finally the Region. Once a worker is "locked," it means that visits cannot be entered for that worker for that month.

2. How to Lock the data so Reports can be Run:

To lock an individual caseworker, click on the button **Run S/w Casld/Visits and Stats Monthly Report**, which appears on the Caseworker Level screen or in the Quick Entry of Visits screen. You will be asked whether or not you want to save Caseworker Log totals. Click **Yes** to Lock this workers visits for the selected month.

To lock a Unit, click on the button **Run Unit's Monthly Visitation Stats**, which appears on the Supervisor Level /Unit Caseload Statistics screen. You will be asked whether or not you want to save Unit Totals for Administrator Monthly Stats? Click **Yes** to Lock this Unit for the selected month.

To lock a Section, click on the button **Run Section's Monthly Visitation Stats**, which appears on the Administrator Level /Unit Caseload Statistics screen. You will be asked whether or not you want to save Section Totals for FSR Monthly Stats? Click **Yes** to Lock this Section for the selected month.

To lock a Region, click on the button **Run FSR Monthly Visitation Stats**, which appears on the FSR Director Level screen. You will be asked whether or not you want to save FSR Totals for CYD Monthly Stats? Click **Yes** to Lock this Region visits for the selected month.