

WINDOW Visitation Center

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320-384-6638

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Safe Exchange General Policies and Conditions for Participation August 2006

WINDOW Visitation & Safe Exchange Center will treat all participants with respect and honesty. We will have an attitude that is non-judgmental and objective during all times and toward all participants. While the visitation & safe exchange center is located within the victim services building and is part of W.I.N.D.O.W., Inc., visitation facilitators are employees of the visitation center only. Facilitators do not perform victim advocacy. Facilitators are not told or given background information about the family unless it is part of a public record and/or pertains to ensuring the safety of all participants and/or the visitation facilitator.

WINDOW Visitation & Safe Exchange Center does not assess parenting ability or do parenting skills training/coaching. We are here to allow parents a safe environment to maintain healthy relationships with their children and opportunities to continue their important role as parent. We expect both parents to model appropriate adult behavior when their children are present and to parent to the best of their ability.

WINDOW Visitation & Safe Exchange Center can, at any time, discontinue services. We have the right to decline referrals for any reason.

WINDOW Visitation & Safe Exchange Center is required to report all alleged or observed occurrences of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The visitation facilitator is a mandated reporter and will report if necessary.

Office hours for the visitation center are Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. We can be reached at 320-384-6638. While visitations & exchanges can occur evenings and weekends, you will likely not be able to reach staff if calling after business hours so please plan accordingly if you need to cancel or change your appointment.

- 1) Parties shall arrive punctually at the arranged times for the start and end of visits. If you arrive and you believe the other party is still in their vehicle or see them in the parking lot do not pull into the parking lot. You are to drive around the block until you are reasonably sure the other party is inside the building.
- 2.) The parent dropping off the child(ren) shall use the single door of the building. The parent picking up the child(ren) shall use the double doors of the building.
- 3) Non-visiting parent shall **bring** the child(ren) no sooner than 15 minutes prior to the exchange and no later than 5 minutes prior to the exchange

- time. The non-visiting parent will remain with the child(ren) in a secure and separate area. The non-visiting parent shall arrive to **pick up** the child(ren) no sooner than 5 minutes after the time the visit ends and no later than 15 minutes after the time the visit ends. You will be expected to follow this procedure unless you have been directed, in writing, otherwise by program personnel.
- 4) The visiting parent must arrive at the center to **pick up** the child(ren) at the scheduled time of visitation and no later than 15 minutes after the assigned time of the visitation. The visiting parent must **bring** the child(ren) at the scheduled time to end the visit and no sooner than 15 minutes prior to the end of visitation. The visiting parent must enter the building with the child(ren) and remain in the designated area of the building for 5 minutes after the children left the parking lot with the non-visiting parent. This is to ensure that neither parent has any contact whatsoever with the other. You will be expected to follow this procedure unless you have been directed, in writing, otherwise by program personnel.
 - 5) When emergencies arise, please contact the provider immediately. The provider will communicate with both parties to reschedule the exchange. The time and date must be agreed upon by both parties and the provider. If the visiting or non-visiting parent creates a routine of canceling and/or rescheduling exchanges, fees may be assessed and this will be reported to the courts or appropriate agencies. If cancellations occur multiple times because of illness, the provider may ask for verification from a licensed health care provider.
 - 6) Both parents must agree that they will remain separate physically and visually so that contact between them does not occur unless there has been a specific agreement between the parties and the provider that contact may occur provided that such contact will not violate a court order.
 - 7) A program participant may not follow or harass any other program participant before or after a scheduled visit.
 - 8) No weapons of any kind can be brought to the visitation center at any time. Staff has the right to search for weapons.
 - 9) Neither parent or others transporting the child(ren) will use illegal substances or alcohol before or during the exchange. Children will not be allowed to leave the WINDOW building if staff suspects drug or alcohol use. The non-visiting parent will be called to pick up the children or alternative safe transportation for the child(ren) will be arranged. Law enforcement will be called if necessary. Additionally, all children under 4 years old must be secured in a child safety seat before leaving WINDOW property. Children will not be allowed to leave if they are not properly secured.
 - 10) Neither parent may make any threat of violence or threaten to breach any court order during an exchange.

- 11) No adult may physically discipline or threaten to physically discipline a child during the exchange.
- 12) Neither parent may ask the child(ren) or WINDOW staff to deliver support payments, legal documents or any type of message verbally or in writing to the other parent.
- 13) Parents may not make negative comments about the other parent, the other parent's partner, friends or family members to the child or within the child's hearing. Questioning your child about the other parent is not permitted. Topics that are adult in nature are not to be discussed with the children at any time. For instance, details about divorce/custody proceeding, details about visitation, etc. It is in your child's best interest to spend stress free, quality time with you. The facilitator will intervene if necessary. The procedure for handling this issue is detailed in (13).
- 14) The exchange facilitator has the right to determine what is and what is not appropriate in behavior, words or actions. If the facilitator feels that a parent is behaving inappropriately, the parent will be told that they are being inappropriate. The parent must immediately stop the activity without argument. The parent will have an opportunity to speak with the facilitator after the visit to discuss the issue. If the parent chooses to continue the activity or argue with the facilitator, the visit will be terminated immediately. Law enforcement will be called if necessary.
- 15) Written records by the exchange facilitator will be maintained. If all Policies and Conditions for Participation as stated here are followed, documentation will state "Parent's name had visitation with child(ren)'s name(s) on this date at this time". Violations by either parent of these General Policies and Conditions for Participation will be documented with specific details about the event. At intake both parents will be asked to sign an authorization for the release of information.
- 16) FEES. Both parents are responsible for payment unless a judge has ordered one parent to pay the entire fee. The fees charged by the provider are \$40 per weekend exchange (\$20 per parent). Fees must be paid before exchange unless other arrangements have been made with the director. If fees are not paid, this will result in the suspension or termination of services.
- 17) Parents are responsible for the care of their children at the visitation & safe exchange center. This includes picking up games and toys after the exchange, discipline of the child(ren), and attending to their needs and requests.
- 18) WINDOW Visitation Center is not responsible for accidents or injury to children or parents. WINDOW is also not responsible for lost or stolen property.
- 19) WINDOW reserves the right to amend these policies and conditions at anytime. Current participants will be made aware of significant changes.