**Child Protection Statutory Visits**

1. **Purpose of the Guide**

This guide is intended to be an easy to read reference tool for social workers on completing and recording child protection statutory visits. It is not intended to replace the social care practice standards and as such should be read in conjunction with the standards.

The aim of this guide is that it will lead to improved performance and once performance targets are achieved, maintain performance.

1. **Practice Standards – A Reminder**

All children should be visited by their social worker at an individually determined level agreed by the social worker and line manager through planning or supervision process which enables the effective delivery of services.

The child’s plan should clearly detail the minimum frequency at which the child is visited by his/her social worker and visits carried out at least in accordance with this minimum level. It is essential that children are seen and spoken to regularly by their social worker and this will often need to be more frequently than the minimum level outlined in the plan. Good social work practice will be guided by professional judgement based on the needs of the child. In order to safeguard children and ensure that minimum standards are in place, the service has determined minimum visiting standards as follows:

Children subject to protection plans must be visited every 2 weeks (every 14 days, every 10 days when just counting Monday to Friday). 50% of these visits must take place in the home.

Visits to children with CP plans are every two weeks, 14 calendar day intervals (regardless of

Public Holidays).

Case records must be up to date within 48 hours that is, visits recorded on Protocol within this timeframe.

Recordings of the visit must include:

* **Purpose** of the visit
* **Whether** the visit was unannounced
* **Home conditions**
* **Educational issues**
* **Health Issues**
* Who you have seen?
* **Voice of the child**: Have you spoken to the child/ren on their own – what was discussed?
* **Parental views**
* What part of the plan you have been working on?
* **Risk factors** and plans to mitigate
* **So what?** - brief analysis of your visit
* **Actions** to take forward
* Include a **skeleton plan** for the next visit.

The recording does not have to be lengthy but needs to include salient information.

The recording will not be counted as having happened until the case note is finalised. You must finish, save, otherwise the visit remains open and will not show in the data collection and looks from a data collection perspective that a child has not been seen. You must also ensure that you tick whether the child was seen and seen alone otherwise again the visit will not be counted as a statutory visit requires the child to be seen.

1. **Protocol recording statutory visits to children subject to a CP Plan**

**Go to add case note**

**Under type of contact there are the following headings**

**Statutory visit CP**

**You can add the children involved (those present at the stat visit)**

**You can tick whether they were interviewed, seen, seen alone, whether bedroom was seen.**

**You can add which adults were present**

**You can then add the reason for the visit (brief addition here)**

**You can then add detailed notes**

**You can then add an analysis**

**You can then add any actions.**

**There is also a case note for Statutory visit CP failed where the family were not at home.**

1. **Social Workers Top Tips**

These are list of top tips provided by social workers who consistently achieve compliance for CP statutory visits that is visiting and recording within required timescales.

* Stop phone calls and instead arrange visits and diaries for all service users.
* Make it “Meaningful every time”
* Prepare for the visit
* Don’t ever do back to back visits (snowball effect)
* Tell parents how often you will visit: every so many days and to prepare for unannounced visits.
* Put yourself a reminder in outlook (day before the due date)
* Don’t delay the low level work, move it towards closure
* Blend difficult with simple work – balance workload
* At the start of every week – write down the minimum of what needs to happen – to do list.
* Book admin time – sit somewhere else (focus space) – 2 x ½ or whole day every week, not when you are on ‘**duty’**
* Break administrative time down i.e. 2 hours emails/2 hours C&Fs/1 hour organising/½ day court report etc.
* Use outlook to organise i.e.;
* Visits – Yellow
* CP – Red - when achieved take out colour
* Type up meeting – Orange
* Others minutes – Blue

**5. Management Requirements**

* Social workers must ensure robust arrangements are in place when they are on a planned break. This requires the social worker to identify a ‘buddy’ to undertake the visit on their behalf and inform their line managers of the arrangement. This should not be a duty task.
* When a social worker needs to take unplanned, for example sick ness absence they must ensure they inform their manager of any statutory visits due that day. The manager is then responsible for ensuring alternative arrangements are made to ensure the visit is completed.

Allocated social workers remain the responsible social workers and must take responsibility for ensuring visits take place with the support of their managers. This includes checking on return to work that the visit has taken place.

* Social workers to plan announced and unannounced visits taking due consideration to the needs and response of the specific family.
* Social workers to seek management advice/approval if they deem a CP visit is going to go out of timescale. The manager must record the discussion on Protocol.
* Managers to discuss statutory visiting requirements with social workers in supervision.
* Social workers to use supervision to discuss cases where there are challenges to achieving compliance.
* Social workers to ensure that they are ticking the seen/seen alone box.
* Managers to ensure all new staff, including agency staff are provided with the practice standards and visiting frequency requirements and this guide.