



# The Mediation Center

Finding common ground.

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## **Family Visitation Program** **DSS Referral Procedure**

The Family Visitation Program (FVP) welcomes referrals from the Department of Social Services. To ensure that referred families are scheduled in a timely fashion, please adhere to the following procedure. At any point in this process, it may be determined that the family is not an appropriate fit for FVP services. FVP staff will promptly notify the DSS case worker. With any questions of concerns, please call the FVP Client Services Coordinator at 828-251-6089 x20.

**Step 1: DSS case worker determines that a family or client is an appropriate fit for supervised visitation or safe exchange services provided by FVP.**

- FVP does not handle DSS foster care cases, but **does** handle cases involving kinship placement.
- FVP does not work with clients who are registered sex offenders or with families with substantiated claims of child sexual abuse.
- FVP may decline any case where the needs of the family outweigh the training and experience of the staff.

**Step 2: DSS case worker completes the Family Visitation Program *DSS Referral Form*, and forwards to the FVP Client Services Coordinator.**

- FVP DSS Referral form should be completed by the case worker, not the client.
- Form must be received by FVP before FVP can schedule an intake with the referred parties.
- The Referral Form is used in lieu of a court order or other signed written agreement.
- If the referral originates with the case worker, a Referral Form must be completed, **even if** the family or client being referred has an existing court order or 50B.

**Step 3: FVP Client Services Coordinator follows up with DSS case worker before contacting both referred parties.**

**Step 4: FVP Client Services Coordinator contacts each party individually to schedule an intake appointment.**