



How Can Safe Visitation Services Support You? Information Sheet

The need for safe visitation was identified during the 2004 Alberta Roundtable on Family Violence and Bullying, a public consultation process that focused on finding solutions to prevent family violence and bullying.¹

The safety of children and families continues to be a top priority of the Government of Alberta.

Get Help

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, phone 911.

For help in your community or for more information, phone the 24-hour Family Violence Info Line at **310-1818**, toll-free in Alberta, or visit **www.familyviolence.gov.ab.ca**.

Alberta Children's Services is proud to lead Alberta's Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying Initiative.

Family violence, separation and children

Children need contact with their parents, but what if there has been violence?

Research has shown that it is important for children to have safe and positive contact with both their parents. But when there has been family violence between parents and the parents are separated, visits can be stressful. You may want additional support to provide a positive experience for your children's visits with their non-custodial parent during this stressful time.

Safe visitation services may be able to help

The Alberta Government's Safe Visitation Initiative helps protect children and families in situations where there is a high risk of family violence between parents. Safe visitation provides an opportunity for children to visit with non-custodial parents in a safe and secure environment. Safe visitation services are provided by trained staff to help ensure children have a positive experience visiting with their parent.

You may be eligible for safe visitation services if...

- There has been and continues to be family violence between separated adults, and
- You are concerned that the children (or someone else) could be harmed without specialized supervision.
- You have discussed your concerns with Children's Services.
- You would like your child to have safe contact with the other parent, your child wishes to visit the other parent, or a court has ordered that a child must have the opportunity to visit the other parent.

What does the safe visitation service do?

- A caseworker from a Child and Family Services Authority (CFSA) or Delegated First Nations Agency (DFNA) may meet with you and help to assess the risk in your situation.
- The caseworker will connect you with trained staff from the safe visitation agency.
- The agency staff will meet with you and the other parent separately to develop safety measures that include no contact between the adults, allowing both parents to focus on the best interests of the child.
- The visit will take place outside of the parental homes in the community.
- The visit will be monitored and supported to enable your child to have a positive experience.



- Before and after the visit, the agency staff can assist you and other family members to access services, such as specialized counselling and parenting support.

If your situation does not require safe visitation services, the caseworker will connect you with other sources of help in the community.

Where is safe visitation available?

Safe visitation is being piloted in five sites:

- Calgary – YWCA Sheriff King
- Edmonton – YWCA Edmonton
- Grande Prairie – PACE
- Lethbridge – YWCA Lethbridge and District
- Red Deer – Central Alberta Women’s Outreach Society (CAWOS)

Is there a cost? Do you need a court order?

There is no cost for families to access services from a safe visitation pilot site, and a court order is not necessary for a referral.

Find out more

Contact the CFSA in one of the following locations:

Calgary: (403) 297-2995

Edmonton: (780) 644-8386

Grande Prairie: (780) 538-5102

Lethbridge: (403) 381-5500

Red Deer: (403) 340-5400

Safe visitation services are an initiative by the Alberta government to support families impacted by family violence. The services have been designed based on information from other safe visitation programs and services from across North America.

Safe visitation sites are located in five communities where local organizations work together to respond to family violence, and where there is a domestic violence court. Experience from these five communities will assist in determining the need for safe visitation services in other areas of the province.