

Chapter:	Program
Subject:	Visiting & Communication
Section:	12.3
Page:	1 of 3
ODJFS Rule:	5101: 2-9-16; 5101:2-9-42
COA Standard:	GLS 2.01(d)(e); 3; 12.04, 12.05; 14.01(b)(d)
Revised:	10/1/19; 10/1/20; 4/23/21; 8/27/21; 3/28/22

NRTC's written policy concerning visitation and communication between a youth and family, siblings, or friends are consistent with the placing agencies' directives, court orders and/or the case plan, and those arrangements are documented in the service plan. NRTC strives to support family engagement and facilitate regular contact between the youth and his/her family members (including siblings) during all phases of the program, beginning at intake. Family involvement begins immediately within the program. This policy outlines the rules regarding youth communication and visitation.

Mail

NRTC allows a youth to send and receive mail in accordance with paragraph (A)(3) of rule 5101:2-9-15 of the Administrative Code and is subject only to the residential facility's rules regarding contraband and directives from the youth's legal custodian, when such rules and directives do not conflict with federal postal regulations. NRTC staff does not open or read a youth's mail unless specified in the youth's case plan and/or service plan and approved by the youth's custodian. The facility may require that a youth open mail in front of a staff person and empty the package or envelope, if contraband is suspected.

1. Upon a youth's admission to the facility, parents/guardians make a list of people with whom the youth is allowed to communicate by mail. Additions to the list may be made through the assigned probation officer throughout the youth's stay at the facility. Staff will provide stamps and envelopes for outgoing mail.
2. If the youth is on probation, incoming mail is given to his/her probation officer for distribution.
3. Staff may not open or read a youth's mail unless specified in the case plan. Staff may have a youth open mail in front of them if the mail is suspected of containing unauthorized, dangerous, or illegal material or substances.
 - If contraband is found, staff shall confiscate the contraband and appropriate action will be taken.
4. First-class letters and packages should be forwarded to youth who have been transferred to other facilities or released, providing a forwarding address is available.
 - If a forwarding address is not available, first-class letters and packages shall be returned to the sender.

Chapter:	Program
Subject:	Visiting & Communication
Section:	12.3
Page:	2 of 3

Phone Calls & Visitation

NRTC, in accordance with the service plan, allows youth access to a telephone which will permit the youth to make and receive calls. A youth's access to use of a telephone will not be unreasonably denied. NRTC, in accordance with the service plan, provides privacy for visits and telephone contacts.

NRTC allows each youth to confer with his/her attorney, caseworker, custodial agency worker, probation officer, CASA, and guardian ad litem by telephone or at the facility, in private, no later than twenty-four hours after the request is made by the youth. If a youth has a disability, the youth shall have the opportunity to contact the state protection and advocacy organization as required by OAC 5101:2-9-16(E) .

- Requests are to be forwarded to the youth's probation officer or to a supervisor, who will facilitate the contact.

NRTC designates space, which is not space in which youth live, to serve as an area for private discussions and counseling sessions between youth and staff.

- Several private offices, conference rooms and activity areas are available in the facility for private discussions and counseling sessions.

NRTC ensures that a youth who has access to electronic media within or outside of the facility while under the supervision of agency staff, which may include internet and e-mail service, adheres to the agency's policy regarding communications.

- Upon admission, each youth and their parent/guardian review and sign the Computer/Internet Usage Agreement regarding the use of school computers and internet for educational and free time use.
- Youth are not permitted access to cell phones while at the facility or under staff supervision.

Telephone Rules:

- Upon a youth's admission to the facility, parents/guardians fill out a Phone List specifying family members and siblings with which the youth is allowed to communicate by telephone. Additions to the list may be made through the probation officer throughout the youth's stay at the facility.
- A youth may receive telephone calls only from his/her parents/guardians, unless otherwise approved by the probation officer. All youth receive weekly outgoing calls. Youth have the ability to earn extra calls based on level advancement and incentives.
- Phone calls are not to exceed five minutes, unless given prior approval by staff.
- Private telephone calls may be restricted by court order, a parent/guardian or placing agency representative, or by advanced notice from NRTC's Director or designee. Restrictions are to be documented on the youth's service plan as to why a restriction has been put in place.

Chapter:	Program
Subject:	Visiting & Communication
Section:	12.3
Page:	3 of 3

Visitation Rules:

- Upon a youth's admission to the facility, parents/guardians fill out a Visitation List specifying people who are approved to visit the youth. Additions to the list may be made through the probation officer throughout the youth's stay at the facility. Visitation is offered several times weekly and may begin immediately upon admission. Visitation and hours are stated in youth handbook.
- Visitation arrangements are to be scheduled in advance through the NRTC probation officer.
- All visitors are required to sign the Visitation Logbook, which is located at the Administrative Assistant's desk in the reception area. Visitors may be required to show identification before being permitted to visit.
- Visitors are required to follow all agency rules and procedures while on the premises. Failure to do so could result in the termination of the visit, utilization of virtual platforms, and possible revocation of visiting privileges.
- Visitation may be denied or terminated for reasons including, but not limited to the following:
 - The visitor appears intoxicated
 - The visitor is dressed inappropriately
 - The visitor is using inappropriate language, or becomes verbally or physically aggressive
 - The visitor continuously fails to follow facility visitation rules
 - The visitor has been denied access to the facility by Court order
 - The youth's behavior is inappropriate

Home passes

Youth will have the opportunity to earn home passes so they can begin to explore using their new skills to manage their home and community behaviors. This is determined by level and weekly behavior in the program. Youth must participate in their initial family counseling session prior to their first home visit to help manage and reduce any ongoing family issues. NRTC may assist youth and families as needed with transportation and travel arrangements. Virtual visitation and family sessions may be used when appropriate to support youth and families when face-to-face visitation is not an option. Higher level home visits also provide youth with the ability to visit and communicate with family supports, siblings and/or friends.