



# STANDARDS GUIDE

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## Supervised access rights service

**Stay focused on our values ...**  
**Respect the rights of each...**  
**Define responsibilities...**

**June 2021**

This document is an adaptation of the Code of Ethics for resources supervising access rights, which was developed by the *Association des familles monoparentales et recomposées de l'Outaouais*

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## Definitions

**Observer:** Any paid person or volunteer acting under the responsibility of the supervised access rights program.

**Leader:** Member of the board of directors or of the management of AFMRO.

**Right of Access:** The legally recognized right of parents to have access to their children.

**Neutral Place:** Place other than the parents' residences.

**Safe Place:** Place where people feel safe from danger and where they are reassured; place intended to prevent a complication or a damaging event or to limit its effects. (Petit Larousse)

**Custodial Parent:** The parent or person who assumes day-to-day responsibility for the child (ren).

**Visiting Parent:** Parent (parent, siblings, extended family) exercising a right of access to one or more children.

## Preamble

This document has been produced in accordance with the recommendation of the Guide relatif aux normes et à l'organisation des services pour les ressources de supervision des droits d'accès (guide on standards and the organisation of services provided for resources supervising access rights) published in January 2018 by the ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec. The aim is to provide organisations with a guide of quality standards based on best practices in the field.

The Association des Familles Monoparentales et Recomposées de l'Outaouais (AFMRO) strives to ensure that its approach is respectful towards everyone and that the rights and responsibilities of those using its resources are defined.

These guidelines are intended for:

- Any child having access to a parent through the AFMRO;
- Any parent agreeing to use our services for parental supervision;
- Any supervisor of the AFMRO;
- Anyone working or volunteering for the supervised access program/service.

This guide promotes and reaffirms values that are at the core of the AFMRO. It covers the following elements:

- Rights (of the child, of the parents and of the parental supervision service);
- Responsibilities (of the parents and of the parental supervision service);
- Conduct of visits and exchanges of custody;
- Cost of service for parental supervision.

Except for the child, all those concerned by the parental supervision service have responsibilities.

The employees of the parental supervision service shall ensure that the standards of this guide are applied.

This guide does not take precedence over the charters of rights and freedoms and laws relating to the protection of the personal information which the AFMRO must comply with.

## 1- Introduction

### 1.1) The Association des familles monoparentales et recomposées de l'Outaouais

The Association des familles monoparentales et recomposées de l'Outaouais (AFMRO) is a community based non-profit organization whose mission is to provide specialized services for families experiencing separation or families who are blending.

a) General objectives:

- welcome the people and assist them in his personal development and family life course
- provide family members with a gathering place to share the realities of the new family structure
- develop and implement programs tailored to the needs of all members of the family
- raise awareness about the realities of single parents and blended families

b) Resources, programs and activities :

- support and family reorganization (child custody disputes)
- support to courts and enforcement of court orders
- supervised visits and transitions (exchanges of custody)
- workplace reintegration program
- consultation and relationship support (counselling)
- educational activities and experience sharing
- social and family activities
- personal development workshops
- various workshops
- documentation
- information and referral as needed

### 1.2) Resource for parental supervision

**Mission:** The services for supervised access rights **promote the best interests of the child** through maintenance and development of the parent-child relationship and aim to enhance the parenting experience.

More specifically, the resource for parental supervision allows the maintenance of the parent-child relationship when access is interrupted, difficult or too confrontational after a separation, a divorce or any other reason. It offers families a warm, neutral and safe place for the exercise of this right of access; helps to prevent abuse, parental alienation and family violence; fosters family integration; promotes communication between parent and child as well as promote the development of parenting skills. In practical terms, the service takes the form of a supervision of the meeting between the parent and the child (visits) and of the exchanges of custody (transitions).

## **2- Core values of the resource for parental supervision**

### The interest of the child prevails over to the rights of parents at all time

Maintaining and developing the parent-child relationship are the preferred ways to develop in the parent a sense of caring towards the child.

#### Equity

Parents are treated fairly when they seek the services for parental supervision, whether they have full custody of the child or not.

#### Respect

Respect is at the heart of interventions made by the AFMRO.

#### The Potential of the Parents

Parents are recognized to be primarily responsible for their child. The accompaniment of the parent aims to help the parent to develop his potential and ability to act in the best interest of the child.

## **3- Rights**

### 3.1) Rights of the child:

The resource for parental supervision acknowledges the following rights to the child as the best interest of the child is its primary concern:

- Access right to their parents:

The child benefits from favorable conditions in order to maintain and develop his relationship with his parents.

- Right to security :

The child has access to a safe place and accompaniment that prevent complications and/or adverse events that could occur during a visit or a transition.

- Right to respect :

The child receives all the support he needs from his parents and our team. These people take the different needs of the child into account to allow him to live a valuable experience.

- Right to privacy :

The child benefits from an environment that preserves the privacy of his relationship with his parents.

- Right to confidentiality of information that concerns them:

The child is assured that the sharing of any information within and outside of the service for parental supervision will be made in compliance with the applicable laws (Annex A).

### 3.2) Rights of the parents

In compliance with the court order or written agreement, parents, whether they have full custody of the child or not, have rights.

- Right to exercise their parental role:

Parents are welcomed with respect, regardless of the circumstances leading them to the AFMRO.

- Right to receive support:

Parents are accompanied, supported, valued, and encouraged in their parenting role.

- Right to respect for their integrity:

Parents are welcomed with respect and without discrimination in a non-judgemental environment.

- Right to confidentiality of information concerning them:

Parents are assured that any information regarding them will only be disclosed with their consent and in compliance with applicable laws (Annex A).

### 3.3) Rights of the resource for parental supervision

- Right to determine the conditions of access to their services:

- In accordance with the court ruling, visits and transitions are planned based on the availability of physical space and human resources.
- The AFMRO will limit the access to the services if the user's needs exceed the field of expertise or the mandate of the organisation.

- Right to offer the service in a secure context where the physical and psychological integrity of the team is preserved:

- It does not tolerate any language, gesture or behaviour that is intimidating, oppressive, racist, insulting or violent;
- It can suspend or terminate its services when its rules and guidelines are not respected.

- Right to confidentiality:
  - We respect privacy laws; no information can be transmitted without your verbal or written consent. However, the law forces us to break the confidentiality of your information in the following cases:
    - To prevent an act of violence, including suicide, when there is reasonable cause to believe that there is an imminent risk of death or serious injury threatening an identifiable or vulnerable person or group of persons;
    - To respond to a court order or an agreement between the two parties;
    - To respond to an investigation conducted by the Direction de la protection de la jeunesse.

#### **4 – Responsibilities**

##### 4.1) Parents' responsibilities

The resource for parental supervision believes that parents are primarily responsible for their children. Consequently, they must acknowledge and take that responsibility.

Parents must ensure that visits/transitions take place in the best possible conditions. Thus, we ask them to :

- Meet the needs of their children and ensure their safety at all time during visits/transitions;
- Ensure that their children have all that they need;
- Provide the AFMRO with relevant information regarding their children's health;
- Respect our rules and policies regarding parental supervision service.

***It should be noted that supervised visits/transitions are transitory measures and that parents must commit to finding a long-term solution. With this in mind, parental supervision files will be reviewed every six months.***

##### 4.2) Responsibilities of the parental supervision resource

The parental supervision service is responsible for establishing and ensuring compliance with the conditions that allow for the proper functioning of access rights. As such, it must:

- Provide a neutral and safe place;
- Provide high quality professional services;
- Oversee the proper operation of staff;
- Oversee the smooth running of visits and transitions by ensuring that the rules and policies are enforced.

#### **5- Conduct of visits and transitions**

- Whether for a visit or a transition, the parent and child must meet first inside the premises of the AFMRO, in the presence of an observer.
- The observations made during the visit or transition are documented in a written report that is sent to the parties' lawyers within a maximum of three weeks. Parents that are not



represented can get the report within the same time, upon request and for a 25\$ fee per report.

- If a visit is canceled or shortened, or if a transition is cancelled, it cannot be resumed within the same day.

#### 5.1) Visits

The custodial parent must leave the premises (indoor and outdoor) of the AFMRO immediately after the arrival of the visiting parent.

At all times, the observer has the right to cancel the visit and ask the parent to leave if the behaviour or language of the parent causes or could cause harm to the child and/or anyone present.

#### 5.2) Transitions

The total duration of a transition is 15 minutes. The parent who brings the child, and the other parent, must enter through their assigned entrance, either the door A on Saint-Joseph Boulevard or the door C on Saint-Jean-Bosco Street. The parent who brings the child must wait with the child until the arrival of the other parent. Then, the parents leave each in turns without ever seeing each other.

***It is strongly advised that each parent refrains from going near the entrance assigned to the other parent, whether before or after visits or transitions.***

### 6- Confirmations

Between Thursday and Saturday, parents will be notified by the AFMRO's administration staff, by phone or email, of the date and time of their visit or transition the week before. The AFMRO requires that each parent confirms the booking of the visit or transition in writing or by phone. The visit or transition will be cancelled if the AFMRO does not receive both confirmations at least 2 working days in advance.

### 7- Payments

Fees for opening the file and fees of the first visit must be paid before the date of the first visit.

### 8- Cancellations

The cancellation of **3 transitions/visits by the parents**, within a three-month period, will result in temporary suspension of services and will be reported to the lawyers for review of the situation. A written engagement by the parents (or the parent that will have cancelled two or three times) will be required to resume the services, and a \$30 fee will apply to reopen the file. Once the written engagement is signed and services have resumed, non-compliance with the conditions set in the written engagement will lead to suspension of services for three months.

Any cancellation due to vacation, child's sports or for similar reasons must be notified to the AFMRO at least 4 weeks in advance. Visits may be postponed if parents so request and both agree to it. These types of cancellations will not be tracked if made within the 4-week timeframe.

<b>9-Costs of parental supervision services</b>	
Administrative fee (opening of file)	30 \$
Visit (on site, call or videoconference)	15 \$ per hour
Transition	5 \$ per transition
Visiting room rental (external resources)	40 \$ per hour
Visit report (unrepresented users)	25 \$ per report
<p>➤ <b>Please note:</b> In the event of a cancellation in less than 36 hours, <u>the person who cancels the visit/transition</u> must pay the full cost of the visit or transition.</p> <p>➤ A revision of the fees will be possible, subject to provision of the most recent tax return or a proof from Service Canada or Services Québec.</p> <p>➤ A \$15 fee will apply for the reopening of a file if it is within less than a six-month period from the date of the initial request. A \$30 fee will apply if it is after six months from the initial request.</p> <p>➤ Methods of payment accepted are: cash, Interac, Visa and electronic transfer.</p>	
<p><u>Information to be used for electronic transfer:</u></p> <p><b>E-mail address:</b> <a href="mailto:dqafmro@videotron.ca">dqafmro@videotron.ca</a></p> <p><b>Password / security answer</b> (in lowercase) : afmro2021</p> <p><b>Message</b> : Who is paying? (father or mother) + your name + child's first name and last name            _____ // _____ // _____ // _____</p> <p><i>Example: John Smith (father) - Melina Morin-Smith</i></p>	
<b>10- Required documents to open a file</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judgement of the Superior Court</li> <li>• Most recent tax return or a proof from Service Canada or Services Québec (to see if a cost review is applicable.)</li> <li>• Health card (see service request)</li> <li>• Consent to disclose information form (see service request)</li> </ul>	

**No service can start until the request file is complete.**

## 11- Rules and guidelines of the parental supervision service

1. **ZERO tolerance**: Intimidation, threats (verbal or physical), aggression, harassment, violence of any kind, racist comments or behavior, parents in a state of intoxication – none of this will be tolerated. Non-compliance with the guidelines and rules will result in the immediate ending of the visit.  
**After an evaluation of the case, a warning and a letter of commitment will be subject to the offender according to the gravity of the facts.**
2. Respect the court judgement or the instructions issued by your lawyer.
3. Park on the street of your assigned entrance (door A on Saint-Joseph Boulevard or door C on Saint-Jean-Bosco Street).
4. Parents must respect the time for which the visit or transition is scheduled. A delay of more than 15 minutes will result in the cancellation of the visit/transition and service will be billed. If you arrive early (5 to 10 minutes in advance), we ask that you await the time of the visit/transition outside our premises, if possible, for reasons of confidentiality and space limitation.
5. To cancel a visit/transition, the parent must call the AFMRO at 819-771-3269, extension 21, at least 36 hours in advance and leave a message if no one answers. Any cancellation notice made less than 36 hours in advance will lead to the billing of full cost of the visit/transition to the parent that cancelled. After three cancellations within a three-month period, services will be suspended until a written engagement is signed by one of the parents or both.
6. Any cancellation for medical reasons or in the event of impediment will not be counted upon presentation of proof.
7. The administrative fee for the opening of file and the fee for the first visit must be paid before the date of the first visit. During your first visit, fees related to the second visit must be paid, and so on for the following visits. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange for payment of the next visit (at least 24 working hours in advance), otherwise the AFMRO will cancel the scheduled visit.
8. Notify the Coordinator of the supervised visit service by email [gestionsp@afmro.ca](mailto:gestionsp@afmro.ca) of any changes to the terms and conditions of the agreement. All parties involved must be aware of and in agreement with the changes.
9. Parents are encouraged to bring snacks or meals for the visit as several stores are closed in evenings and on Sundays.

### Visits/transitions

1. The custodial parent or the person from the family-type resource (FTR) must be reachable at all time in case the AFMRO has to contact him due to an emergency or sudden ending of the visit.
2. If the child is sick and contagious (eg. influenza, stomach flu or lice), the custodial parent or the FTR must refrain from bringing him to the AFMRO and must inform the AFMRO of the situation as soon as possible.
3. Contribute to setting a good atmosphere by promoting values such as respect, integrity, and equity.
  - a. Use respectful language with children and AFMRO staff .
  - b. Do not criticize anyone in the presence of the child (foster family, other parent, family, new spouse, observer, etc.);
  - c. Have appropriate conversation topics (positive and pleasant);
  - d. Do not use emotional blackmail with the child and do not make promises to the child.

4. The conversation and exchanges must be conducted in a way that the observer can see and understand everything that is happening at all times. Therefore, the parent is not allowed to leave the visiting room with the child unless the observer accompanies them and/or to make noise that prevent the observer from hearing what they and the child are saying to one another
5. The parent must take the last 15 minutes of the visit to put away toys, clean the room and make the payment. The room should be freed 5 minutes before the end of the visit as a privacy measure in case of consecutive visits. The room should be left as it was at the beginning of the visit.
6. Keep in mind that the observer is there to observe and not to transmit messages from one parent to another, except if it is information concerning the immediate health of the child.
7. Respect the AFMRO's premises (equipment, supplies, furniture, cleanliness, etc.)
8. Regardless of their nature and whether they concern AFMRO's staff or visits, any video or audio (conversations) recordings by the AFMRO or its users on AFMRO's premises or over the phone are forbidden. However, pictures are allowed.
9. If the parent must assist the child with toileting needs, the observer will go in the bathroom with them.
10. If the instructions in your file state that you are not allowed any visitor(s) during the visit, it also means that any form of communication (verbal, visual, written, via video, etc.) between the child and any person other than the visiting parent is forbidden.
11. It is strictly forbidden to smoke, drink alcohol or do drugs inside the premises of the AFMRO.
12. Animals are always prohibited inside and outside the premises of the AFMRO.
13. It should be noted that any food as well as any container that is left in the fridge will be thrown away every week.
14. We ask for parent to put used diapers in the garbage bin outside after the visit or during the visit if necessary.

## 12- Procedure to file a complaint

**By mail:** Service Quality and Complaints Commissioner  
105, boulevard Sacré-Cœur  
Gatineau (Québec) J8X 1C5

**By phone:** 819-771-4179; toll free: 1-844-771-4179

**By fax:** 819-771-7611

**By email:** [commissairesauxplaintes@ssss.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:commissairesauxplaintes@ssss.gouv.qc.ca)

**Online:** [File an online complaint](#)  
[General information on how to file a complaint](#)

# INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

## Risk factors associated with AFMRO and family members

### Supervised visits

If a risk factor has been identified, we offer alternative services (supervised videoconferencing, supervised calls).

If no risk factor has been identified or a low risk factor has been identified (risk 0 does not exist), the supervised visit can take place in our premises by respecting the following measures:

1. If the family consists of more than 2 children, an assessment (age, autonomy, personality, problematic) must be carried out by the management of the supervised access program in order to identify whether the group should be divided;
2. At all times, the observer must carry out an abbreviated assessment of risk factors before each visit and check the psychological state of the family (mental health, aggressiveness, drug addiction, etc.). Depending on this assessment, the supervised visit may be reduced or canceled;
3. The observer must take the temperature of the users before each visit;
4. The parents and children should wash their hands when entering the premises, and regularly during the supervised visit (hourly);
5. The parent cannot bring anything from home except food and something to drink, and a diaper if necessary. Neither the refrigerator nor the microwave are available;
6. Gifts are permitted only if they are new and wrapped;
7. The parent must wear a mask, as well as the child (except under 6 years old);
8. Parents and children must respect the designated routes on the ground;
9. No visitor will be accepted, even if the judgment mentions it (except by videoconference);
10. The family will have access to the terrace;
11. Outings in shops and in the park are permitted under certain conditions (within the authorized perimeter);
12. Only toy and DIY bins intended for the room are allowed (limit of toys to be determined);
13. The parent must put the toys back in the bin before leaving;
14. Bins will be placed in the rooms to deposit personal effects such as handbags, rucksacks, etc. These must be disinfected by the observers after each visit;
15. The toy bins will be stored and disinfected after the supervised visit or later;
16. Disinfection of the room (furniture, handles, surfaces, remote controls, bathroom and, etc.) before and after the supervised visit. (observer)

### Supervised custody exchanges

Custody exchanges must be maintained, as indicated in the court order. They will take place on the terrace or on the sidewalk that runs alongside the AFMRO premises. The following measures must be followed:

1. The exchange takes place outside, one parent near Door B and the other near Door C, under the supervision of an observer;

2. No more than one family at a time (30 minute lag between families) ;
3. Parents are asked to arrive at the exact time for their exchange;
4. Each parent respects the designated place to park their vehicle;
5. The child can go to their other parent by using the terrace or the sidewalk along the AFMRO premises;
6. If the child is too small or unable to move around on their own, the parent is asked to carry the child to the other parent themselves or to use the wheelbarrow;
7. Luggage can be left on the terrace or be moved with the wheelbarrow.
8. If there is a prohibition of contact, the person subject to the prohibition of contact should stay close to the designated door. The observer will take care of accompanying or transporting the child, as well as the luggage;
9. Wearing a mask is recommended, but not mandatory;

**If you have taken a COVID test and it is negative, a copy of the result must be sent to us to resume face-to-face visits / exchanges.**

*An assessment in the form of a COVID questionnaire will be made with the parents (guardian and visitor) **24 to 48 hours before each visit / transition.***

*If we are unable to complete the questionnaire before the visit / transition (unable to reach the parents, no call-backs or questionnaire within the time allowed), it will be canceled.*

## LEGISLATION GOVERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION AND PRIVACY

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### ACT RESPECTING ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS HELD BY PUBLIC BODIES AND THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION (CQLR c A-2.1)

Subject: Make available documents held by a public body while ensuring confidentiality of personal information.

Section 59 A public body shall not release personal information without the consent of the person concerned.

Clarification: Information of a personal nature is personal information and is confidential. A person's name is public information, except where it appears in conjunction with other information concerning that person, in which case it is confidential. There shall be no disclosure of such information without the consent of that person, except in the cases set out in the Act and strictly on the conditions therein.

### ACT RESPECTING HEALTH SERVICES AND SOCIAL SERVICES (CQLR c S-4.2)

Section 19 The record of a user is confidential and no person may have access to it except with the consent of the user or the person qualified to give consent on his behalf. Information contained in a user's record may, however, be communicated without the user's consent [...] on the order of a court or a coroner in the exercise of the functions of office; [...] to an institution [in the cases set out in this Act].

### ACT RESPECTING THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR (CQLR c P-39.1)

Section 1 The object of this Act is to establish, for the exercise of the rights conferred by articles 35 to 40 concerning the protection of personal information, particular rules with respect to personal information relating to other persons which a person collects, holds, uses or communicates to third persons in the course of carrying on an enterprise within the meaning of article 1525 of the Civil Code.

The Act applies to such information whatever the nature of its medium and whatever the form in which it is accessible, whether written, graphic, taped, filmed, computerized, or other.

**CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS  
(CQLR c C-12)**

Section 2        Every human being whose life is in peril has a right to assistance.

Section 5        Every person has a right to respect for his private life.

Section 9        Every person has a right to non-disclosure of confidential information.

No person bound to professional secrecy by law and no priest or other minister of religion may, even in judicial proceedings, disclose confidential information revealed to him by reason of his position or profession, unless he is authorized to do so by the person who confided such information to him or by an express provision of law.

The tribunal must, *ex officio*, ensure that professional secrecy is respected.

Clarification:    Basically, professional secrecy is a client's right, not a professional's privilege. Therefore, it is an obligation on the part of the professional. Professional secrecy is relatively absolute and can only be lifted with the client's authorization or by an express provision of law.

**CIVIL CODE OF QUÉBEC  
(CQLR c CCQ-1991)**

Article 35        Everyone has a right to the respect of his reputation and privacy.

Article 37        Every person who establishes a file on another person shall have a serious and legitimate reason for doing so. He may gather only information which is relevant to the stated objective of the file, and may not, without the consent of the person concerned or authorization by law, communicate such information to third persons or use it for purposes that are inconsistent with the purposes for which the file was established. In addition, he may not, when establishing or using the file, otherwise invade the privacy or injure the reputation of the person concerned.