



## The Children's Bill of Rights

### **Every child has:**

- 1) The right to love and be loved by both of my parents without feeling guilt or disapproval.
- 2) The right to be protected from my parents' anger with each other.
- 3) The right to be kept out of the middle of my parents' conflict, including the right not to pick sides, carry messages or hear complaints about my other parent.
- 4) The right not to have to choose one of my parents over the other.
- 5) The right not to have to be responsible for the burden of either of my parents' emotional problems.
- 6) The right to know well in advance about important changes that will affect my life; for example, when one of my parents is going to move or get married.
- 7) The right to reasonable financial support during my childhood and through my college years.
- 8) The right to have feelings, to express my feelings, and to have both parents listen to how I feel.
- 9) **The right to be a kid.**

Welcome to the 4 the Children Supervised Exchange and Parenting Time (SEPT) Program. **Our mission is to protect childhood today for stronger families tomorrow.** The goal of SEPT is to provide a safe place for children and parents to spend time together or to exchange parenting time with minimal emotional risk. **At SEPT we see our client as the child. SEPT staff are neutral** in that we do not assess parenting capacity or make recommendations in custody cases. We will, however, be making observations in regards to your behavior during supervised visits and exchanges both toward the program staff and volunteers and your children. **Please note: SEPT visitation settings are artificial constructs and do not provide any indication of how parents and children may interact outside of the artificially constructed supervised environment.**

What you are going through personally right now is likely stressful. It is not uncommon for adults in stressful relationships to need temporary assistance in arranging for parental visitation or exchanges. We realize you have many concerns, and we are here to help create a safe environment for you and your family. **We are a child-focused service that strives to provide a safe and comfortable place for parents and children to build positive relationships and memories.**

## Our Primary Goals

- 1) To provide a neutral and safe environment for children to spend time with a family member or members in order to maintain or build a healthy relationship and to create pleasant memories.
- 2) To prevent contact between the parents/guardians/family members who are in conflict, in order to protect children from witnessing that conflict.
- 3) To protect victims of domestic violence from being re-victimized by providing supervised parenting time and exchanges.

Supervised Exchanges and Supervised Parenting Time may be Court ordered or by agreement. Whether by Court Order or by mutual agreement, **both parties** will be required to make separate appointments to complete the SEPT Program intake and orientation. **4 the Children will not** provide supervised visitation or exchanges until **both parties** have completed the intake. We will also conduct a meet and greet with the child(ren) if age appropriate. **There is a \$20 mandatory intake fee, charged to each party** payable at the time of the intake. We offer a sliding scale fee, which can be discussed at intake. **Copies of the court order and any protective orders are required at the time of intake.** These documents must be supplied by both parties or an attorney. In addition, **all other SEPT intake paperwork and documentation must be completed and/or provided at the time of the intake and orientation.**

### **Supervised Exchanges**

A supervised exchange is facilitated by a trained volunteer or staff member, in which the dropping off parent leaves the child(ren) at the visitation center with the volunteer or staff member, then, the picking up parent arrives 15 minutes later to visit or for an exchange (for example, 2:00 and 2:15). After dropping the child(ren) off, the bringing party must depart the premises. This avoids any conflict and crossover of protected parties. The supervisor/trained volunteer will stay with the children through the entirety of the exchange. A note will be made that the exchange took place and any significant incidents documented. **The party who is receiving the children pays the fee for that exchange at the time of the exchange, unless otherwise stated by the court order. Exchange fees are a flat \$30.00 per exchange.** We offer a sliding scale fee, which can be discussed at intake.

### **Supervised Parenting Time**

For supervised parenting time, the visiting party will spend 60 or 90 minutes with the child(ren) at the 4 the Children office, and the visits will be supervised by a staff member or trained volunteer. The parties have a staggered arrival and departure times to avoid any conflict and crossover of protected parties (for example, if the visit is scheduled for 2:00, the bringing party arrives with the children at 1:45 and the visiting party arrives at the time of the visit).

**Our volunteers receive training in the areas of safety, diversity, child development, domestic violence, child sexual abuse, mental health, and other pertinent issues.** They observe parent/child interactions. They make every effort to maintain a safe and neutral environment for family visits.

**A supervised parenting time summary is completed during visitation** which contains a neutral and observational account of what occurred during the visitation. The supervised parenting time summary is an account of what occurred between the child(ren) and the visiting parent. **4 the Children does not change, alter, or ammend notes after the visit has been completed.**

**The visit supervisor will ask the children and the parent to begin to clean up and say goodbyes 10 to 15 minutes prior to the end of the visit.** Goodbyes can be hard, therefore we ask you to keep them short and leave quickly. When the visit is over, the visiting party leaves the premises and the children stay with the visit supervisor/volunteer until the bringing party arrives for pick up fifteen minutes after the visiting party has left the visit.

**The fee for 60 minutes visits is \$56 and the fee for 90 minutes visits is \$83.** We offer a sliding scale fee, which can be discussed at intake. **Payment is due at the beginning of the visit.** Please present payment at the arrival of your visit. We take cash or check. Fees are paid by the visiting party unless dictated otherwise by court order or by mutual party agreement.

**Both the bringing and visiting parents may receive copies of the visit summaries by email.** All parties and/or their attorneys are entitled to copies of visit summaries; extra copies will be charged at \$1.00 per page.

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### **REASONS YOUR VISITS COULD BE CANCELLED, SUSPENDED OR TERMINATED**

Failure to follow the rules will be documented and included in the visit notes. Specific reasons may include:

- a) Being under the influence of any mind-altering substance (includes doctor prescribed)
- b) Bringing any item that can be considered a weapon as outlined in SEPT Policy 2014-2022
- c) Yelling/disrespectful communication with SEPT Volunteer, children and any other parties involved or present
- d) Failure to comply with SEPT procedures
- e) Failure to comply with intake procedures
- f) Violation of court and protection orders
- g) Inappropriate conversations/actions with the child
- h) Non-payment for services rendered when due
- i) Not following time schedules
- j) Not keeping personal information updated
- k) Disputes between attorneys for the parties that SEPT determines to be detrimental to the quality or quantity of parenting time or to the children.

SEPT requires a **24-hour cancellation notice for non-emergency reasons.** Failure to give a 24-hour notice will result in a charge for the scheduled visitation time, potential loss of privileges in the SEPT program and/or possible termination/suspension of services. 4 the Children will consider the circumstances and determine whether or not it is an emergency. **Regardless of the agreed upon payment, if there is a no-show or cancelled visit, the party who no-shows or cancels for non-emergency reasons will be responsible for full payment.**

If you need to cancel a visit or have a last minute emergency, please contact the 4 the Children at 970-403-6606 or 970-259-0310 or via email at [sept@4thechild.org](mailto:sept@4thechild.org). If you leave a message, speak slowly and clearly leave your first and last name, time/date you are calling, the date of the cancellation and the reason for the cancellation.

## SEPT POLICIES FOR ALL PARTIES

### Personal Property Searches

We reserve the right to search any property brought into the building. This includes purses, backpacks, jackets, baskets, boxes, activities, toys, diaper bags, car seats, or any other item brought into the facility. Please leave your personal items in the car or at home.

### Weapons

Weapons or firearms of any kinds, including concealed carry, **are not permitted on 4 the Children Property**. If you bring a weapon of any kind at any time, your visits will be cancelled indefinitely.

### Policies

- 1) In order to support an authentic parenting role, the non-custodial parent must bring necessities that the child might need during the visit. This includes diapers, wipes, a snack or meal if the visit is scheduled at a typical meal time, and any other items required.
- 2) SEPT staff/volunteers will not deliver mail, money, child support or messages between parties.  
**Children may not be permitted to deliver messages or items between the parties, this includes other child(ren) as well.**
- 3) The SEPT visit monitor has the authority to make decisions about what areas of the facility are able to be accessed during the visit.
- 4) **Personal contact forms must be updated at all times so SEPT staff know how to contact you in the case of an emergency or last minute cancellation.**
- 5) **Physical or harsh discipline including spanking and yelling at children is not allowed during the visit.** If discipline is needed, please use redirection or time-outs. If you are unsure of how to appropriately redirect your child during a visit you may ask the visit monitor for help. The visit monitor will not parent for you but may offer suggestions for appropriate strategies for you to try.
- 6) Please cancel the visit if you are contagious with an illness or if your child is contagious with an illness. Two or more cancelled visits due to a child's illness will require a doctors letter stating the illness and the length of time the child will be contagious.
- 7) Appropriate attire is required. Appropriate attire includes shoes for all adults and children who are able to walk and clothing that completely covers all parts of the body generally considered "private".
- 8) In order to minimize stress for children, visiting parents are **not allowed to make promises to child(ren)** during SEPT visits. (Examples: I will see you unsupervised soon, after this is over you will come live with me, I am going to buy you a \_\_\_ for your birthday, etc.)
- 9) **Visiting parents are not allowed to talk about the court case or to coach the child(ren)** to say certain things to the custodial parent, visit monitor, Judge, therapist, advocate etc.
- 10) **Visiting parents are not allowed to ask the child(ren) interrogative style questions**, any direct questions about the other party, or make any negative comments about them. (Examples: Where do you live, what is your new number, what school do you go to, does your mom have a new boyfriend, does she have a new job? This is all your mom's fault etc.)
- 11) **After the visit children may not be interrogated about the visit** or made to feel bad about having attended the visit.

**Permission from the SEPT Coordinator must be obtained before any of the following occur:**

*\*This permission may need to include caseworker/attorney contact, so please ensure you've made the request at least 48 hours prior to the day of the visit.*

- 1) **Gifts** – brought by the visiting party for specific occasions or any other reason. A portable activity may be brought to each visit and taken back with the visiting party, however, any gifts given to a child must be communicated in advance and shall be the child's to take home with them.
- 2) **Visitors** – family members and/or family friends attending visitations with the non-custodial party. Visitors outside of the court ordered family member must be approved in advance. This includes over the phone or over Facetime or video chat.
- 3) **“Junk” Food** – quantity and quality of snacks/meals brought for children (if the child has a restricted diet a copy of the doctors' orders restricting that diet must be supplied to SEPT Program Manager). SEPT **does not** allow candy, soda or dark colored drinks (red, orange, purple) at the visitation.
- 4) **Technology/electronic toys** – use of cell phone or any other handheld device for games/activities/videos/movies and picture taking. Social media is a confidentiality issue. **Nothing from visitation, including pictures, may be posted on social media.** Breaking this rule results in loss of privileges.

**Necessities for Visitation**

The visiting party shall provide any needed food, drinks, diapers, and necessities for their children unless otherwise ordered or agreed to by the parties. **SEPT will not provide any materials and/or any of the necessities needed during a visit (plates, silverware, cups, napkins, diapers, wipes, etc.). The visiting party is responsible for cleaning up their area of visitation/exchange before the end of the visit.** We encourage this to be a family activity. All food and drink must stay off of soft furniture and on the table. **No knives, lighters, or matches.** Any and all uneaten food and all used diapers must be packed out of visitation center by the visiting party.

**Scheduling**

Supervised Exchange and Parenting Time is held at the SEPT visitation center. Hours of operation vary based on staffing availability and the needs of the children/families participating. SEPT staff will attempt to communicate with each party regarding the limitations of service we are able to provide. If we have a limited number of times available for contact, we will split our resources in order to give cases equal access to their children. SEPT will be closed and no Supervised Parenting Time or Exchanges will be scheduled: *New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day.* **Holiday schedules will be communicated to families in a timely manner.** Other holiday closures will be communicated to families as they occur due to limited number of staff. These closures will be communicated to families in a timely manner.

**Snow/Emergency Closure**

4 the Children and the SEPT Program follow all School District 9-R school closure guidelines for snow or emergency closures.

**SEPT staff and 4 the Children reserves the right to refuse or terminate services at any time.** Refusal of services may be due to a lack of adequate security at the SEPT visitation site, staff not adequately trained in a required skill set for the family requiring services, lack of availability for scheduling visits as ordered, the behavior of either visiting or bringing parties, the behavior of third parties involved, etc.

**4 the Children also reserves the right to establish and/or revise all policies at any time pertaining to but not limited to the following:**

- a) Disrespectful communication with any party involved with SEPT/4 the Children including unscheduled drop-in visits to the SEPT/4 the Children office
  - b) Disregard of rules and terms
  - c) Visit locations and their appropriateness for each case
  - d) How and by whom children may be transported
  - e) How the drop off and pickups will be handled
  - f) When and how a case moves to a less restrictive level
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### **Court Proceedings**

The Purpose of the SEPT program is to provide an opportunity for children and parents to maintain connections and positive relationships. SEPT staff and volunteers do not testify in court on behalf of one party. **SEPT staff and volunteers will not testify to anything outside of the visit notes**, for which each party will be provided a copy each week when visits have taken place. If a SEPT staff member or volunteer is delivered a subpoena to testify in court, **a fee must be paid prior to the court date.**

- a) Waiting & Testifying – \$100.00/hour (2 Hour minimum charge)
- b) Additional time for Court Appearance by Staff Members/volunteers – \$100.00/hour
- c) In the event the Staff Member or volunteer is released from the subpoena, the \$100 fee will not be refunded.

### **Confidentiality**

Clients waive any right of confidentiality she/he and/or her/his child(ren) may otherwise have to the extent necessary to make adequate use of the services provided by SEPT. This includes, but is not limited to, a waiver of confidentiality to permit the SEPT Coordinator to: (1) assign a volunteer supervisor to the case, and (2) to allow the CASA Executive Director, and/or legal representative of any of the above, to review any files, inner office documented telephone or in-person conversations, and to discuss the facts of the case with each other. It is specifically understood and agreed that periodic reports concerning supervised visitations and exchanges may be generated and copies provided to all counsel of record, the Department of Human Services or other identified parties.

### **Indemnification**

To waive any claim of the Party and/or her/his child(ren), real or imagined, known or unknown, against the SEPT Staff, 4 the Children, and CASA of the Southwest. (including their officers, directors, employees, and volunteers) for negligence (other than gross negligence or willful misconduct) related to or in any way arising out of the use by Parties and/or her/his child(ren), of SEPT facilities and/or services.

For the consideration described in this Agreement, the parties on behalf of themselves, their heirs, administrators, executors, conservators, personal representatives, agents, representatives, assigns and attorneys, do hereby hold harmless, indemnify, defend, release, acquit and forever discharge CASA of the Southwest, 4 the Children their predecessors, successors, parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, divisions, officers, directors, trustees, agents, employees, shareholders, partners, representatives, assigns, insurers and attorneys, and each of them from any and all claims, causes of action, suits and demand for damages, costs, expenses, compensation, liabilities, attorney's fees, and consequential damages, which they have had, now have, or may have in the future on account of or arising out of any matter, thing, or event, whether known or unknown, which has happened, developed, or occurred, or may occur in the future, in respect to anything related, in any way whatsoever, directly or indirectly, to the exchange or supervision provided by SEPT, 4 the Children, CASA of the Southwest herein.

**Complete the next 4 pages of information.** Please review the information and call the SEPT Program Coordinator to set up an orientation appointment. Bring completed paperwork and required documents to your orientation meeting. If you have any questions, please contact us at: (970) 259-0310 and ask for the SEPT Program Coordinator.

We look forward to working with you in order to promote safety and relationship building memories for you and your children.

Sincerely,  
4 The Children Staff and Volunteers

**APPLICATION**

**Fee Of \$20.00 Is Required By Each Applicant.** Applications will NOT be accepted without this fee. The fee is waived for foster parents and kinship providers. No application will be processed without ACCURATE and COMPLETE information. Applicant is responsible for keeping contact information up to date.

**Please Print**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DOB:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(MAIDEN NAME: \_\_\_\_\_)

Are you the:  
BRINGING PARTY or VISITING PARTY

**APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:** (street, house# or apt.#, city, state, zip)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT'S PHONE NUMBER:** \*okay to leave a message? Y/N  
(home) (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ /  
(cell) (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ /  
(work) (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ /

**APPLICANT'S EMAIL ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT'S:** Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Eye color \_\_\_\_\_ Hair color \_\_\_\_\_  
Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_

Your GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME (before taxes): Yearly \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or Monthly  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT'S VEHICLE:** Model/Year \_\_\_\_\_ Plate# \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Please attached vehicle registration

**COURT CASE#:** \_\_\_\_\_

**JUDGE OR MAGISTRATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT'S ATTORNEY'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**PHONE#:** \_\_\_\_\_ **EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

CHILD(REN):

<b>First &amp; Last Name</b>	<b>Lives with You?</b>  Y/N	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Gender</b>  M/F	<b>Ethnicity</b> *ethnicity is used for statistical purposes only
	/		/	
	/		/	
	/		/	
	/		/	

NAME(S) OF OTHER PARTY INVOLVED:

\_\_\_\_\_

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PARTY

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the primary reason you are using this service? (i.e. domestic violence, substance abuse, child abuse or neglect)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**\*PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS, ALLERGIES, MEDICAL CONDITIONS OR ANY OTHER SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ABOVE CHILD(REN):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever used CASA of the 6<sup>th</sup> Judicial District services before? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of, or are you currently under investigation for a sexual offense?

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*IS ANYONE WHO WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN THE VISIT INFECTED WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE? (ex. HIV, hepatitis) YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_**

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**EMERGENCY CONTACTS:**

Name: _____	Name: _____
Relationship: _____	Relationship: _____
Home Phone: _____	Home Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____	Cell Phone: _____

**If You Bring Your Children To The Visit/Exchange, Please List Other Adults Authorized To Pick Up/Drop Off Your Children If You Are Unable To:**

Name: _____	Name: _____
Relationship: _____	Relationship: _____
Home Phone: _____	Home Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____	Cell Phone: _____

*\*These individuals should be prepared to show the volunteer supervisor a photo ID.*

A COPY OF A DRIVER'S LICENSE IS REQUIRED FOR ALL PARTIES AND VALID CAR REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO TRANSPORTING

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**Please return this application with COURT ORDERS, RESTRAINING OR PROTECTION ORDER, PROOF OF INCOME, signed ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PARENT HANDBOOK, signed WAIVER OF LIABILITY, signed RELEASE OF INFORMATION, copy of DRIVER'S LICENSE/ID CARD and copy of CAR REGISTRATION. No visits or exchanges will be scheduled until this paperwork has been received for both parties, orientations have been completed and the setup fee (\$20 for each party) is paid.**

By signing below, I state that I have read and understand the 4 the Children/SEPT Program Manual and have provided all necessary documentation. I will ask staff/volunteers if I have questions pertaining to my visits or exchanges.

Client Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_