



Making the Most of Your Home Visits Using Customer Service Strategies

Customer Service Standard: Courtesy ~ Customer Service Step: Greet in a Warm, Sincere Manner

For many child welfare workers, the customer's home is the office setting. It is just as important to maintain professional courtesy and follow customer service standards inside a home as in an office. In many cases, the home visit may be the customer's first encounter with child welfare professionals and will comprise the first impression of the agency. By using customer service strategies in home visits, relationships are formed from a foundation of trust and respect.

It is important to keep in mind that customers in child welfare are receiving visits by multiple agencies. This places additional stressors of time management on families in addition to the existing obligations of work, school and caring for children. Child welfare professionals can minimize the disruption to families by conducting joint visits when possible, planning visits well in advance and periodically reinforcing with families that unplanned visits will occur as required by statute which will require some flexibility.

Steps of Courteous Home Visits:

- Be mindful when setting appointments for planned visits such as with foster parents or relative/non-relative caregivers. Avoid last minute visit scheduling and demanding that a caregiver abandon their plans to accommodate visits.
- Be prepared for visits prior to knocking on the door. It creates a poor impression when a worker is shuffling through papers, appears unaware of the current status of the case, or does not appear to have knowledge of the family being visited. Review pertinent information regarding the case prior to the visit.
- Obey all obvious rules of the home unless there is a safety conflict. Some examples of home rules you may encounter are using sidewalks, removing shoes at the door, not taking food or drink into a home, etc.
- Provide identifying information and sign in if requested. If this is your first visit to a home, remember to: wear your name badge in an easily visible area, introduce yourself by first and last name, shake hands using a firm handshake if the recipient is willing and offer a business card to all parties to the visit including children.
- Remember to give your full attention to the family you are visiting. It is important to maintain eye contact. Limit the amount of time spent taking notes and other distractions such as cell phones during visits.



- Ask permission to sit if not already offered to sit. Remember to follow all safety precautions.
- At the end of the visit, be sure to summarize the visit and any next steps verbally and/or in writing. If possible and/or applicable set an appointment for the next visit.

PRO TIP: FOLLOWING CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS IN THE HOME SETTING IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS IN A FORMAL OFFICE SETTING.