



FAMILY SERVICES OTTAWA
SERVICES À LA FAMILLE OTTAWA

Supervised Access Program

What is Supervised Access?

The Supervised Access Program (SAP) is a province wide program, set up and funded through the Ministry of the Attorney General. When parents separate, access visits with children may be



problematic. Difficulties can arise during visits or exchanges between the custodial and non-custodial parents that may result in unpleasant interactions for those involved.

Supervised Access Centers provide a safe, child friendly, neutral setting, for children and non-custodial parents to maintain, rebuild or establish relationships through regular scheduled supervised visits or exchanges. The SAP is essentially a service for children.

SAP Service...

- Custodial and non-custodial parties have no contact with one another while participating in our service.
- Volunteers and staff supervise the visits between children and the non-custodial parent.
- The program is able to accommodate families for a one hour visit every second week on Saturdays and Sundays between 9:30am-3:45pm.



Volunteer Responsibilities...

SAP would not exist without the commitment and time given by volunteers from the community at large.

Volunteers will:

- Receive an in-person and online training to prepare them for their role with Supervised Access.
- Work closely with staff to ensure the safety and comfort of the child(ren) for the duration of the visit.
- Escort the child(ren) to and from the visit room.
- Remain within sight of the child(ren) and visiting parent at all times and close enough to hear their conversation. (Parents involved in the visit understand that they are participating in a supervised visit; volunteer and staff presence should be apparent but not obtrusive.)
- Redirect/intervene when visit guidelines are broken.
- Record detailed observation notes that provide factual information about each visit.
- Work with an interpreter on visits that take place in a language other than French or English.



Staff Responsibilities...

The coordinator will:

- Assess volunteer candidates' strengths and weaknesses.
- Observe candidates in a group situation and assess interpersonal skills, judgment, and attitudes.
- Ensure all volunteers are provided with basic standardized training and skills.
- Provide opportunities to have volunteers participate in role plays and guided discussions.
- Foster group identity and commitment to a high quality of service.

The staff will:

- Orient new volunteers to the facility and the visit rooms.
- Provide volunteers with background information on visits s/he will supervise.
- Visit each volunteer at least once during each visit to make sure all is well.
- Review volunteers' observation notes.
- Answer volunteers' questions following the visit.
- Provide support to volunteers on an as needed basis (e.g. suggestions for communicating with clients, following visit guidelines, enforcing program policy, writing observation notes, etc.)

The Application Process...

1. *Police Records Check* – You must have a valid Police check for the Vulnerable Sector from within the last year. We can provide a letter to waive the fee at the Police Station. It can take up to 8 weeks, so apply right away so there isn't a delay in you starting to volunteer.
2. *References* – Each applicant must provide 2 references (one must be either professional or academic and the other can be a personal reference).
3. *Training* – You will need to participate in an evening training session at the FSO office. It usually take place from 6:00-9:00pm on a weekday.
4. *Online Training* – Volunteers must complete a series of online training modules from the Ministry of the Attorney General.
5. *Shadow Visit* – You will get to shadow another volunteer while they supervise an actual family visit. You will make your own notes on the visit and get feedback after the visit is done.

Evaluation...

Potential volunteers will be evaluated by staff persons of the agency on an ongoing basis throughout training. If at any time SAP staff feel that a potential volunteer is not a good candidate for the program, the potential volunteer will be notified as soon as possible.

Upon completion of training, the coordinator will contact each volunteer candidate to advise him/her whether or not s/he has been selected to become a visit supervisor.



Expectations of Volunteers...

- Volunteers are expected to supervise 2 back-to-back visits (each one hour in length) every 2nd weekend. However, if needed, accommodations or exceptions can be arranged
- Due to the time it takes to recruit, train and become accustomed to the program, SAP volunteers are expected to complete at least 100 hours of service.
- Volunteers are expected to give 48 hours notice of cancelled shifts so that a replacement can be found to cover their visit.

Volunteer inquiries:
Supervised Access Program Coordinator
sap@familyservicesottawa.org
Tel: 613-725-3601, ext. 175 Fax: 613-725-5651
Family Services à la famille Ottawa
312 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa K1Y 4X5

Can't wait to have you a part of our team!