Parenting Time Center

PARENT HANDBOOK
Policies, Procedures, and Contract for Services

June 2018
1. All Participants will utilize Secure Cases Database at https://ptc.securecases.net/
   
   **Your Username is:**
   
   **Your Password is:**
   
   Secure Cases is a database which all Parenting Time Center services are scheduled, cancelled, billed, and documented through. All participants must agree to use Secure Cases to access services through Someplace Safe Parenting Time Center.
   
2. When there is a court order, referral, or parenting time agreement requiring Parenting Time Center services, a copy must be provided before the first scheduled service, preferably at the initial intake appointment. When there is not a written agreement, both participants must agree to terms of service.
   
3. Fees will be assessed using the most recent Fee Schedule. All fees are to be paid before or at the time the service is provided. Fees may be paid in cash, check, money order, or credit card. Credit card fee of $2.50 is charged per transaction.
   
4. Parenting Time Center has a strict **NO CONTACT POLICY** which is enforced by staggered arrival and departure times between parties utilizing services. Individuals attempting to make contact with the other participant, whether inside or outside the building, will be deemed to be in violation of this policy.
   
5. Parenting Time Center has a **ZERO-TOLERANCE** policy on alcohol, drugs and weapons at all Someplace Safe locations, regardless of participant’s legal right to carry.
   
6. Any participant appearing to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs is not allowed to pick up, deliver or participate in any service provided by Parenting Time Center. If any alcohol or drug use is suspected by Parenting Time Center the scheduled service will be canceled and reported to the appropriate agencies (i.e. social services, law enforcement, the court, etc.) A violation may result in drug/alcohol screening being required prior to any additional services being provided.
   
7. You are required to contact Parenting Time Center prior to arriving for services if you have reason to believe you or your children have a contagious or communicable disease. Parenting Time Center will determine if services should be canceled for health reasoning.
8. All medications/prescriptions passed during exchanges must be in the original containers with appropriate labeling. No medication (prescribed or over the counter) should be taken by any party while at Parenting Time Center. In the event that a prescription is required to be taken at Parenting Time Center, a doctor’s note must be provided prior to any medication being used. Medication required in an emergency (insulin, epinephrine, heart medication) is permitted.

9. Unless specifically preauthorized, the use of technological devices such as cell phones, handheld games, video and audio recording devices are prohibited during Parenting Time Center services.

10. Pets are not allowed at Parenting Time Center; certified service animals are allowed. Participants are responsible for indoor and outdoor clean-up of certified service animals.

11. All packages, bags, and luggage are subject to inspection by Parenting Time Center. Gifts may be exchanged with prior approval of Parenting Time Center. No wrapped gifts are allowed to be passed or opened. Use gift bags.

12. No harsh, offensive or hostile language will be tolerated. All communications must be respectful toward children, staff, volunteers, or other persons on site. All communication must be understandable and heard by staff (no whispering).

13. Parenting Time Center will arrange for an interpreter as requested.

14. Physical discipline or emotional abuse will not be tolerated. Time outs are the approved method of discipline.

15. All staff and volunteers are Mandated Reporters and are legally required to report any apparent child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.

16. Parenting Time Center will encourage a reluctant child to participate in services, but will not force them to participate.

17. **Participants will not:**
   a. talk about the other party in a negative manner while using services.
   b. ask child(ren) inappropriate questions regarding the other party.
   c. talk about issues such as court proceedings or visitation with the child(ren)
   d. make promises about future living arrangements or changes in visitation plans.

   If Parenting Time Center observes this behavior, a request will be made to stop the conversation immediately. If the behavior persists the service will be stopped.
18. Parenting Time Center will cancel services should the child(ren) become distressed or Parenting Time Center deem the child(ren) to be emotionally or physically at risk.

19. Each participant is to respect the privacy of other clients using Parenting Time Center services. Do not share the names or identifying information of individuals you may see at the center or who you may see entering or exiting the building.

**SUSPENSION AND REFUSAL OF SERVICES**

Someplace Safe Parenting Time Center has the right to refuse, suspend, or terminate services when:

1. risk factors are deemed to be too high and safety or other issues cannot be effectively managed;
2. a conflict of interest exists between participants or with staff;
3. delinquent or nonpayment of fees by either party exists;
4. terms of service would place undue demand on Parenting Time Center or agency resources;
5. violence or abuse is threatened or used;
6. significant violations of Parenting Time Center Handbook, policy, procedure or contract occur.

Depending on the severity of the incident, failure to follow the Handbook, policies, procedures, or contract may result in a suspension or termination of Parenting Time Center services. Someplace Safe Parenting Time Center will report incidents to the proper authorities (including Social Services, Law Enforcement or the Court), as they occur. Participants involved will be informed of any violations of policies and procedures that occur.

The terminated participant must submit a request in writing to the Director of Parenting Time Centers should they wish to be reinstated following a termination of services. Parenting Time Center will inform the participant of the actions required for reinstatement.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS**

1. Each participant has the responsibility to maintain accurate participant forms and is required to update information on Secure Cases as changes occur. Services may be suspended if Parenting Time Center is unable to reach you by phone or through Secure Cases.

2. It is the participant’s responsibility to prepare the child(ren) for Parenting Time Center services. It is important to talk with the child(ren) prior to arriving, explaining what they should expect and who they are going to see. The child(ren) should be reassured that
staff will be present at all times and allow them to ask any questions or express any concerns they have. This is especially important if the (child)ren have not seen the other party for a long time. We encourage you and the child(ren) to visit to the Parenting Time Center prior to the first service to familiarize them with the center’s surroundings.

3. All participants must arrive on time, whether picking up, visiting on site, or dropping the child(ren) off. Should the participant fail to notify Parenting Time Center of late arrivals the scheduled service will be canceled and appropriate fees will be imposed. If the participant bringing the child(ren) is repeatedly late the referring agent (i.e. child protective services, human services, etc.) will be notified.

4. **If you know you are going to be even a few minutes late, notify Parenting Time Center so your service is not canceled.** Fergus Falls call 218-739-3132. Perham call 218-298-1501. Morris call 218-321-5149. Glenwood call 320-424-2301. Ortonville call 320-305-1400. If there is no answer, you must leave a message to ensure Parenting Time Center is notified of your reason for calling and/or to receive a return call.

5. Participants providing transportation are responsible for providing it safely for child(ren) receiving services; this includes a current driver’s license; weight and age appropriate car seats, and seat belts for the child(ren). Law enforcement will be notified if a party is known to be in violation of safe transportation laws.

6. Advance notification must be given to Parenting Time Center if a substitute driver will be used to drop off or pick up the child(ren) at Parenting Time Center. Parenting Time Center reserves the right to deny any substitute drivers. If approved, photocopies of the substitute driver’s license are required to be on file. It is the responsibility of the requesting participant to make sure that their substitute drivers abide by Parenting Time Center policy and procedures. Should a substitute driver violate any policies or procedures it will be considered to be the requesting participant’s violation.

7. Each participant is responsible for providing items such as seasonally appropriate clothing, comfort items, nutritious food, etc. during the scheduled service. When a supervised parenting time is scheduled over a mealtime a meal or snacks will be provided by the visiting party.

8. A request for a visitor must be made at least 48 hours prior to a scheduled service. Parenting Time Center reserves the right to deny visitors at any time.

9. While participants are responsible for the child(ren) while at Parenting Time Center, spanking (including birthday spankings), hitting, or emotional abuse is prohibited. Physical restraint is allowed only if the child(ren) is endangering him/herself or others.

10. Participants are responsible for cleaning the facility after each service. This is critical to the safety and health of all parents and children using services.
11. Parenting Time Center may pre-approve photography but reserves the right to review and delete any photos taken during the service.

12. Any photos brought must be reviewed by Parenting Time Center prior to showing them to the children. Parenting Time Center reserves the right to deny showing of any photos.

13. Staff must be informed if participants need to use the restroom. Staff may escort children to the restroom.

14. Parenting Time Center will transfer written messages from one participant to another that pertain only to the immediate welfare of the child(ren). All messages must be read and approved by Parenting Time Center. Copies of all messages will be placed on Secure Cases.

15. If there is a No Contact Order, Protective Order, or Domestic Abuse No Contact Order in place, only items regarding the child(ren)’s immediate welfare may be passed by Parenting Time Center (i.e. medication or health concerns). This information should be shared with staff who will then relay it to the other participant during services. The content of information passed will be placed on Secure Cases.

**OFF-SITE SUPERVISED VISITS**

The following criteria must be met prior to off-site supervised parenting time services being considered:

1. Have used the facility for a minimum of 6 months without incident reports.
2. There have been no abduction threats posed to the child(ren) by either party.
3. No safety/stalking issue posed for the participant or child(ren).
4. A written agreement has been provided by the custodial participant.
5. Both participants have signed the Parenting Time Center Exemption of Liability Form.
6. Approval of Someplace Safe Director of Parenting Time Center has been received.

To maintain the no contact policy, a Parenting Time Center staff will meet the child(ren) at an approved location and bring them to the visiting party. Following the visit, the custodial participant will pick up the child(ren) at an approved location at a designated time. No transportation of the child(ren) is required from the visiting participant.

**ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

1. When there have been allegations of physical or sexual abuse, (as determined by court order, child protection investigation, Guardian Ad Litem, or other sources as determined
by Director of Parenting Time Centers), there will be absolutely no discussions about the alleged abuse between the child(ren) and the designated participant. If the participant begins talking about any of the allegations or court proceedings, the service will end immediately. If the child(ren) brings the subject up the party MAY NOT deny the allegations, nor comment on them and the discussion MUST end immediately. If the child(ren) continues to question the allegations Parenting Time Center will intervene and may end the visit.

2. When there have been **allegations of sexual abuse** the visiting participant may not initiate any physical contact with the child(ren). This includes requesting the child(ren) to sit on the client’s lap, hugs, kisses, tickling, or any other physical contact. If the child(ren) initiates physical contact the participant may briefly reciprocate in an appropriate manner.

### SCHEDULING OF SERVICES

1. Scheduling for participants is done through Secure Cases. Parenting Time Center will try to accommodate requests; however, due to scheduling limitations, it is impossible to honor all requests for specific times, including times specified on court orders. Participants are responsible for requesting and/or accepting appointment times through Secure Cases.

2. Changes to the schedule must be approved by both participants. Someplace Safe Parenting Time Center will not function as an arbitrator. If an agreement cannot be reached the participants may need to return to court.

3. Parenting Time Center reserves a right to charge a fee up to $25 for expedited services.

### CANCELLATIONS

If you need to cancel a scheduled service more than 48 hours before the service, you are required to log into Secure Cases and cancel the scheduled service. If your service is scheduled in less than 48 hours, you are required to call Parenting Time Center and cancel. There is no guarantee that a service will be rescheduled. If you fail to arrive for a service, it is considered a **No Call/No Show**. If you fail to call to cancel a service at least 24 hours in advance, it is considered a **Late Cancellation**. Any combination of **three** No Call/No Show and/or Late Cancellations may result in termination of services.

All No Calls/No Shows and Late Cancellations are billed per the Fee Schedule. No Call/No Show fees and Late Cancellation fees are applicable to all parties, regardless of regular costs for services.
WEATHER / STORM POLICY

Someplace Safe Parenting Time Centers will close due to severe weather conditions. If your service is cancelled due to bad weather, Parenting Time Center cannot guarantee that services will be rescheduled. Parenting Time Center will be closed if the local school district closes due to severe weather. Please call Parenting Time Center if you question any weather conditions.

RECORDS, COPIES AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All activities and records will be kept confidential. Parenting Time Center will document facts and observations, not opinions. If Parenting Time Center feels an incident warrants a report, a copy will be placed in the file. All actions and comments of parties are subject to documentation and placement in the file.

The following procedures are to be followed when seeking records or testimony from the Someplace Safe Parenting Time Center:

1. An appropriate subpoena must be issued in order for the Director of Parenting Time Center to testify or produce documents.

2. The subpoena must be served on the Custodian of the Records. The Custodian of Records is the Director of Parenting Time Center: 1402 East Bancroft Ave, Fergus Falls, MN 56537.

3. A $50.00 deposit is required prior to a subpoena appearance or request for documents. This deposit will be applied to any invoiced subpoena fees.

4. A person who is not a named party in the court proceedings must serve all subpoenas.

5. Subpoenas must be served at least 10 business days before the request for documents or verbal testimony is required. If the subpoena is not served 10 business days before, a fee of $100 will be charged, if Parenting Time Center is able to accommodate the subpoena.

6. A subpoena for testimony must be served on the Director of the Parenting Time Center, as only the Program Director can testify. Staff/Monitors cannot be subpoenaed or testify. A subpoena for testimony will not be accepted by anyone other than the Director of the Parenting Time Center: 1402 East Bancroft Ave, Fergus Falls, MN 56537.
7. The requesting participant must specify which documents are being requested from the case file, as case files will not be sent in entirety.

8. Any information contained within the case file that the requesting party is not legally entitled to will be redacted.

9. The participant who initiates the subpoena will be responsible for the following fees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Testimony at Court /Depositions</td>
<td>$75.00 per hour (Time begins when Director of Parenting Time Center leaves their office until they return to office)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mileage</td>
<td>Current federal rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Actual cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for testimony</td>
<td>$25.00 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying of written documents</td>
<td>$0.50 per page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>Actual postage plus a $5.00 processing fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancellation Fee</td>
<td>Fees accumulated prior to cancellation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to documentation on Secure Cases</td>
<td>$75 fee per subpoena</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Someplace Safe Parenting Time Center will not make copies for other parties unless specifically requested to do so by the participant who subpoenaed the documents.

11. Requesting participant will be invoiced for all incurred fees. Invoices are payable to Parenting Time Center and due within 10 days of receipt. A non-payment of subpoena fees is a violation of policy.

12. The observations notes taken at the visits are meant for review by adults only and are not to be given or discussed with children. Someplace Safe Parenting Time Center reserves the right to not honor requests for materials if at any point we have a reason to believe that this information is being shown to or discussed with children.

13. Parenting Time Center utilizes video and audio recording devices. These devices are for security purposes only. Any video and audio recordings are not for reviewal of services received. Participants or referring agencies are not to subject any video and audio recordings to subpoena.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

1. Any participant who has a concern with a Someplace Safe staff person, a decision made by Parenting Time Center concerning you, or you believe you have been a victim of discrimination based on race, color, economic status, religion, familial status, parenthood, national origin, place of residence, political affiliation, disability, marital
status, status with regard to public assistance, social status, gender, sexual orientation, age, or physical ability you may file a grievance with Someplace Safe. If you need help with this, an impartial volunteer can be asked to assist you. A grievance should be sent to the Director of Parenting Time Center in writing, including relevant information regarding the grievance, your contact information, and the resolution being sought. The Director of Parenting Time Center has seven working days to respond to the complaint. No action will be taken until a grievance is received in writing.

2. If the response by the Director of Parenting Time Center is unacceptable, the Director of Parenting Time Center will state the disagreement in writing with signatures from all participants involved. The written statement will then be given to the Someplace Safe Executive Director. The Someplace Safe Executive Director will review and respond to the grievance in writing within seven working days.

3. If no resolution is reached at this point, the grievance will be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Someplace Safe Board of Directors. The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors shall review the grievance at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. Final grievance decisions rest with the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

**CENTER LIABILITY**

The Someplace Safe Parenting Time Center policies, procedures, handbook, staff, and volunteers, do everything possible to make services safe for you and your child(ren). Someplace Safe, including agency staff, volunteers and the Board of Directors, will not be responsible for loss of property, injury or abduction of the child(ren).
SOMEPLACE SAFE PARENTING TIME CENTER
CONTRACT FOR SERVICES

I have read and agree to abide by the policies, procedures, and requirements contained within the Someplace Safe Parenting Time Center Handbook. Infractions of this contract may lead to temporary suspension or termination from Parenting Time Center services.

I understand that Parenting Time Center reports incidents to the proper authorities (including human services, law enforcement, the court ordering visitation and/or exchanges, etc.) as they occur.

I further understand that Parenting Time Center has the right to inform the other participant of any violations of policy, procedures, and requirements. I understand that the policies and procedures are subject to change and that I will be notified of such changes.

Someplace Safe does not discriminate based on race, color, economic status, religion, familial status, parenthood, national origin, place of residence, political affiliation, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, social status, gender, sexual orientation, age, or physical ability in all aspects of its policies, programs, practices, or operations.

______________________________________     _____________________
Participant Signature                      Date

______________________________________       ____________________
Parenting Time Center Signature                 Date

06-18