# Professional Boundaries

*Rule references: 7.708.65 C(5)*

*For Professionals*: It’s important to have as much communication as possible between the agency, foster family and professional teams (CASA, Guardian ad Litem and Caseworker). In an effort to prevent duplication of messages and information, please try to include Kerri in any emailed communications that you may have with members of the team. If possible, avoid texting information, as this is difficult to keep track of and can easily take an informal turn, which isn’t always helpful in child welfare cases.

Remember that all emailed and texted communication can be retained and even presented in a court of law. Please keep communications concise, respectful, and factual- don’t write anything that you wouldn’t want on the front page of the newspaper!

If at all possible, please notify Kerri of any upcoming GAL, CASA or Caseworker visits scheduled at your home. Kerri will try to be present at as many of these face-to-face meetings as possible. It’s helpful to have as much ‘face time’ as we can, to establish trust and rapport. Also, please notify Kerri of any scheduled VOICES meetings, TDMs (team decision making), FEMs (family engagement meetings) or ARD (administrative review) meetings. Sometimes the agency is not given notice of these meetings, and it is always a good idea to have the agency represent you as the foster family if possible.

In cases where you may have a complaint about a professional or concern about the children in your care, or if you are intending to give a 30 day notice on a foster child, please notify Kerri first, so she can guide you through the proper channels of expressing yourself, and to see if there are any interventions that we may try first as an agency to ameliorate the situation.

*For biological parents/relatives of children in care*: Always get permission from caseworker, in writing, if possible, before contacting any family member of children in care. Also obtain permission before sending pictures of children or allowing the child to have any sort of conversations with the family members outside of supervised visits. Please seek prior approval from Caseworker before giving gifts to family members. It is generally not acceptable to provide transportation or money to family members of our children in care. If in doubt, please ask the Caseworker and include Kerri in the request.

*With foster children:* Because the nature of what we do is so unpredictable, we must be careful to not make any promises to our children about reunification, adoption, permanency, visitation, or what their family members will or won’t do. The truth is, we don’t know what will happen until it is put into effect in a courtroom. Remember to be honest with your children that only the judge can make these decisions, and that when we know something for sure, we will share that information with them.

I have read this document and understand: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_