



Service visits

Dear services and providers

With the most recent stay-at-home orders across NSW, the Department of Education has limited face-to-face visits to minimise health risks in services. This email outlines details about the recommencement of visits by Authorised Officers from the Department of Education and the launch of virtual visits to support services in areas where lockdown advice continues.

In the areas where lockdown restrictions have been lifted, the department has recommenced some face to face visits and these will continue to be scheduled over the coming weeks and months.

Where stay-at-home orders remain in place, the department has commenced virtual visits with services to ensure continuity of support and compliance in services across New South Wales. The aim of these visits is to support the sector through direct conversations with Authorised Officers. This is an interim measure to ensure services are connected and have a point of reference within the department as they start to return to pre-lockdown operations.

Some services have already been engaged in virtual visits and have found this to be a positive experience and it is hoped that other services will feel supported and connected through this approach.

How will virtual visits be coordinated?

- If your service is selected as a site for a virtual visit, an Authorised Officer will contact you to discuss a mutually agreeable time.
- Virtual visits will be undertaken using Zoom or Microsoft Teams technology. Our Officers will work with you to find out what will work best and to provide you with assistance in setting this up.
- Virtual visits will be approximately 30 minutes in duration but at times might be a little longer.

What do I need to prepare if I am scheduled for a virtual visit?

- To support the conversation, you might be asked to email records or information in advance of the virtual visit.
- Where you have been requested to provide documents, please have these available as a point of discussion
- Share information with your team about the virtual visit and that you may do a walk-through of the service with the officer using technology.
- Consider if there is someone else in your service/organisation that might attend this
- At this stage you will be contacted prior to any visit except where there are urgent or serious issues to investigate.

My service has a scheduled Assessment and Rating visit

- In some areas, Assessment and Rating visits have been scheduled or re-scheduled.
- It is important to note that due to ongoing restrictions, these visits will not be able to occur at all locations during this time, however, planning may occur for visits in the coming months.
- If you have already received your notice of Assessment and Rating and the visit has not yet been conducted due to the stay-at-home orders, an Authorised Officer will be in contact with your service to discuss plans for the visit.

- Authorised Officers will work with your service to determine the approach with consideration of your service's individual circumstance.
- To reduce our time in your service, the Authorised Officer may conduct a Zoom/Teams meeting with you and your nominated staff prior to the face-to-face Assessment and Rating visit.

Safety and the return to face-to-face visits

- All authorised officers follow best practice hygiene and current health advice. You can view the [guidelines for Authorised Officers visiting services on our website.](#)
- Like ECE staff in services, all Authorised Officers, as a condition of their employment with the NSW Department of Education, must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 by the 8 November 2021.
- The department has put safeguards in place to ensure that any officer attending your service either prior to or following this date will be fully vaccinated prior to the visit.

Please ensure that you continue to notify the department if there is a positive COVID link to your service. [Our COVID support teams will be able to assist your service](#) if you are impacted by a positive case. The department will continue to provide regular COVID-19 information updates by email to all services and providers.

For more information, please contact the Information and Enquiries team on 1800 619 113 or by emailing ececd@det.nsw.edu.au.



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Sent to all services and providers in NSW

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