

# TELE-FORENSIC INTERVIEW SERVICES PROTOCOL

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## TELE-FORENSIC SERVICES CRITERIA

A tele-forensic Interview may be considered as a possible option only if the case meets the criteria for P1/ Emergency or P2/Urgent cases AND:

- The child is 10 years of age or older if all parties are onsite at DCAC. In cases where all parties are not onsite, special consideration will be made.
- The child has no access to the AP AND the child is in the custody of a protective caregiver
- The child is in a verified controlled environment
  - o Police station, CPI/CPS office or DCAC/IFAC

*\*Only in rare circumstances will it be considered to conduct an interview with child who is in their home. This will be determined on a case by case basis and must have approval from the district attorney's office who has jurisdiction over the alleged offense.*

A tele-forensic interview may be considered as an option for the following reasons:

- A child or caregiver is unable to attend an on-site forensic interview because they are under quarantine for a presumptive positive or positive COVID-19 diagnosis
- A child, caregiver or household member is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms but has not been tested
- A child or caregiver refuses to attend a face to face meeting at DCAC due to COVID-19 exposure fear
- The child or child's caregiver is willing to come to DCAC for the FI but would prefer to be in a different room from the FI for social distancing reasons
- The FI is willing to come to DCAC for the FI but would prefer to be in a different room from the child for social distancing reasons
- The requesting law enforcement agency has been given directives which prevent a detective from attending meetings outside of their PD
- Implemented national, state or local social distancing restrictions that no longer allow for face to face FI

A tele-forensic can occur in one of three scenarios:

- Both the child and the FI are at DCAC/IFAC but in different rooms
- The child is in a verified controlled environment and the FI is working from a secure location at home
  - o Note that in this scenario, an alternative hardware solution than the one described in Using Teams will be needed. Depending on the circumstance, this may need to be determined on a case-by-case basis.
  - o For further details, see sections ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – CHILD NOT ONSITE AT DCAC, ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – OBSERVERS NOT ONSITE AT DCAC, and ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – INTERVIEWER NOT ONSITE AT DCAC
- The child is in a verified controlled environment and the FI is working at DCAC for safety reasons
  - o For further details, see sections ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – CHILD NOT ONSITE AT DCAC, ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – OBSERVERS NOT ONSITE AT DCAC, and ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – INTERVIEWER NOT ONSITE AT DCAC

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## PLATFORM

- Microsoft Teams will be used in all tele-forensic Services Provided
- Microsoft Teams is HIPAA compliant and DCAC has a signed Business Associate Agreement in place with Microsoft
- Microsoft Teams has a recording function
- Microsoft Teams has functionality for observers to be in the session but be hidden from view and muted

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## OBSERVERS

- Interviewer will coordinate with closest observer or protective caregiver to make available to the child:
  - o Pen and paper in case writing is needed
  - o Body drawings (Observers only)
- Interviewer may pre-staff the interview via teams meeting if child, interviewer, family advocate or observer is working remotely
- Interviewer will secure contact information for a caregiver of the child in the event of technical difficulties or crisis
- Interviewer will share caregiver contact information with a family advocate so they can assist if there were to be a crisis
- The interviewer will have observing partners sign into meeting before the child to test audio and video
- Interviewer will give observers instructions on what to do if there are technical difficulties (how to re-join the meeting)
- Interviewer will then have all observers turn off their camera and mute their microphone
- Interviewer will begin recording the meeting before the child signs in

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## CHILD

- Once child signs in, interviewer will:
  - o Explain the platform being used
  - o Explain that the interview is being conducted in this manner due to COVID-19 concerns so as to ensure that everyone is safe and healthy
  - o Give the child instructions on what to do if there are technical difficulties (how to re-join the meeting)
  - o Test video and audio for both themselves and the child
- Interviewer will then proceed with the interview following standard CACTX Interviewing Protocol
- Interviewer will clarify body parts and positioning verbally whenever possible
- Interviewer will have child utilize writing when needed and have them publish to the camera anything written
- Interviewer may arrange for partners to take in body drawings to the child on a break only if absolutely necessary and if child is in an Environment where this is possible
- All written materials will be collected by observer who assisted child with set-up
- Recordings will be made available to all observers as per usual

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## CAREGIVER

- Effort will be made to have the caregiver complete the Forensic Interview Acknowledgement form and HIPAA form prior to the forensic interview

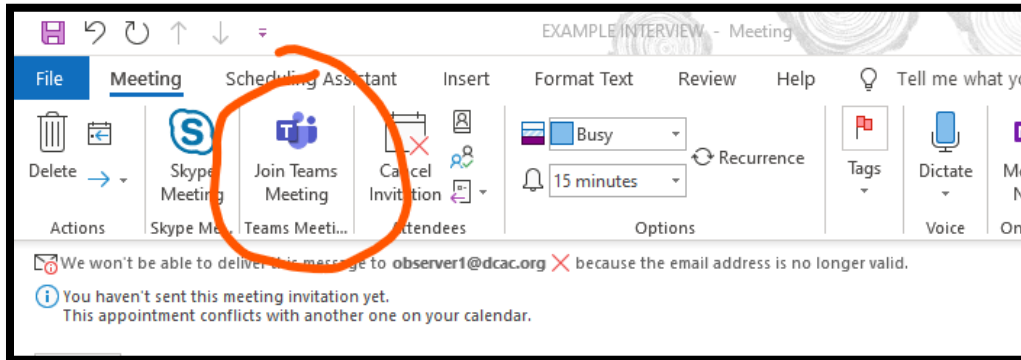
## RESOURCES

*These are links to resources on SharePoint.*

- English Acknowledgement
- Spanish Acknowledgement
- Distance Services Emergency Contact - For use in the case that a child must be interviewed from their home.
- [Interview account @ dcac.org]  
Password: [Password]
- [Observer account @ dcac.org]  
Password: [Password]

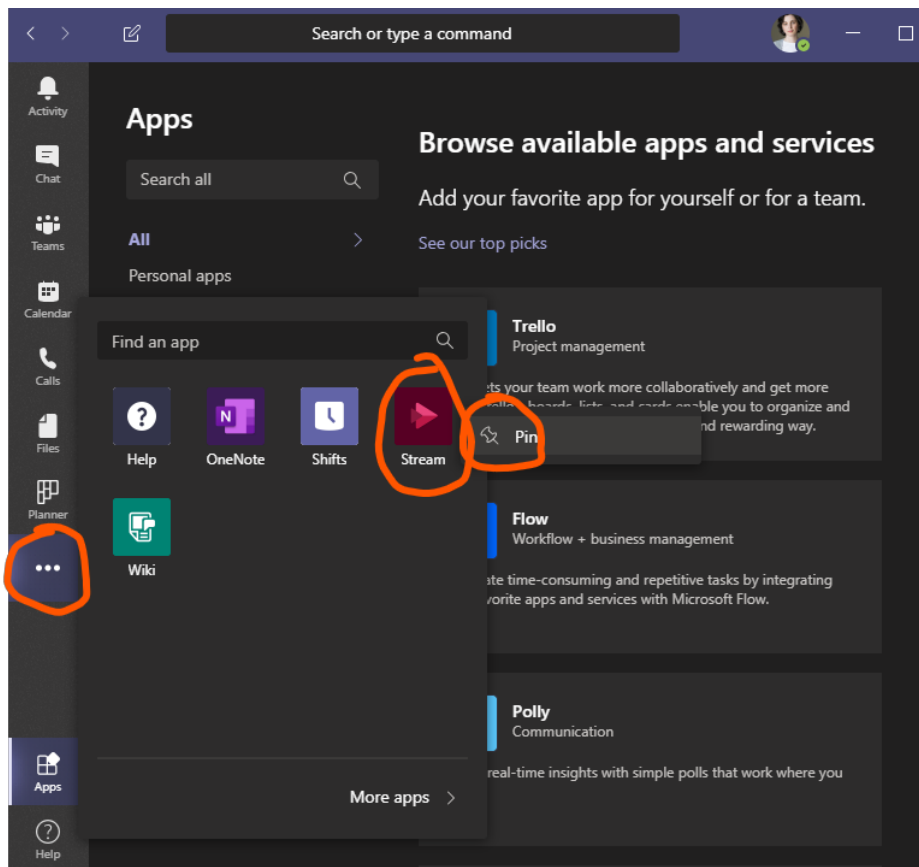
### SCHEDULING A CALL

1. In the Outlook calendar item for a scheduled interview, invite the accounts [Observer Account @ dcac.org] and [Interview Account @ dcac.org] (Please note that in future, [Observer Account 2 @ dcac.org] and [Interview Account 2 @ dcac.org] may be available, based on the need).
2. In the Outlook calendar item for a scheduled interview, hit the Teams Meeting button to create a Teams meeting and add invite information to the body of the message.



## HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE SETUP

- Accounts named [Interview Account @ dca.org] and [Observer Account @ dca.org] are created for this purpose. [Interview Account 2 @ dca.org] and [Observer Account 2 @ dca.org] may be created later, depending on need.
- Child to be interviewed is given a charged (or plugged into power supply) laptop connected to the internet in the interview room. The laptop is logged into the account [Interview Account @ dca.org] and is running Microsoft Teams.
- Child's laptop will be accompanied by a pair of earbuds with a built-in mic.
- Observer(s) will be stationed in the FI Conference Room. They are given a charged (or plugged into a power supply) laptop connected to the internet. The laptop is logged into the account [Observer Account @ dca.org] and is running Microsoft Teams.
- These laptops (for [Interview Account @ dca.org] and [Observer Account @ dca.org]) are stored in the FI area when not in use.
- The Interviewer is stationed in the Monitoring room on their work-issued laptop, running Microsoft Teams.
- The Interviewer has pinned the app Stream to their Microsoft Teams client. To do this, right click the icon for the Streams App and select Pin.



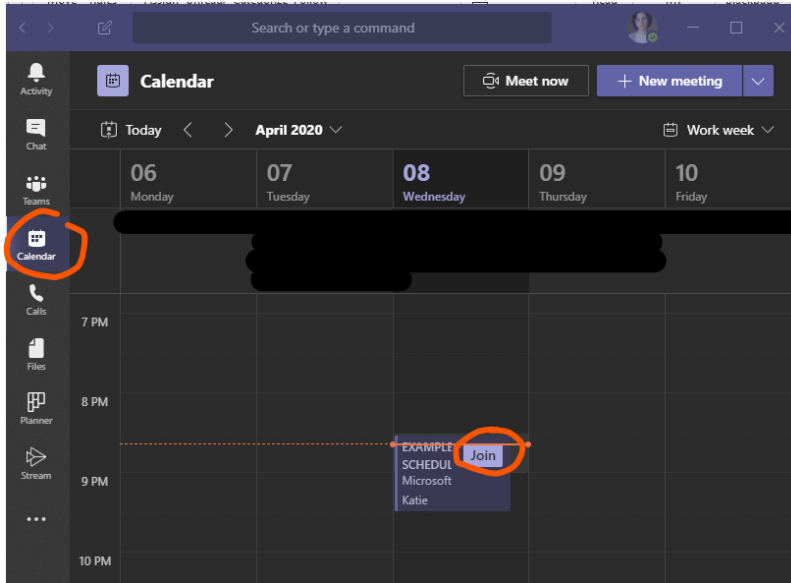
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## INTERVIEWER PREPARATION FOR A CALL

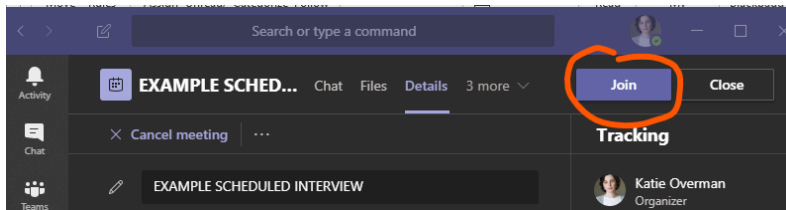
- Close other applications running in the background.
- Make sure your computer is fully charged or plugged into a power source.
- Make sure your computer is connected to the internet.
- Use a white noise machine, if needed, to limit distracting sounds and ensure privacy on your end.
- If you plan to share documents, have the documents open ahead of time.
- 
- Have a safety plan accessible just in case.
- “Arrive” 15 minutes prior to session and mute microphone.
- Turn on your camera and assess the background and lighting in the room you are using.
- The background used should be free of distractions and appropriate for all clients.
- Be mindful of the glare from natural and artificial light sources.
- Display a professional image.
- Look presentable.
- Remove clutter in the background.
- Look directly at the camera.
- Use earbuds with a mic to reduce feedback and background interruption.

## RUNNING A CALL

1. Interviewer will set up the call with the Observer first. Interviewer and Observers should plan to be ready for the call to begin 15 minutes early. This allows for time to adjust for any technical difficulties.
  - The Interviewer will **Join** the call first (see step 2 below) from their own account.
  - Assist Observers in joining the call (see step 2 for details)
  - Cover any pre-interview discussion needed (if this wasn't done in person, observing 6-ft distance)
2. Observer navigates to Calendar in Microsoft Teams, select the scheduled interview. If it is very close to the meeting time, a **Join** button appears. Click to join the video call.



Alternatively, you can click **Join** inside the meeting invite.



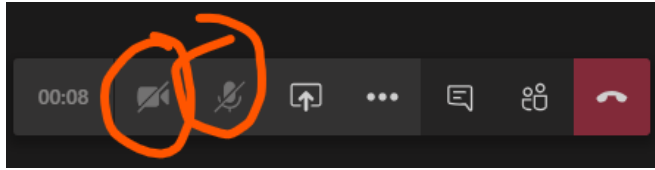
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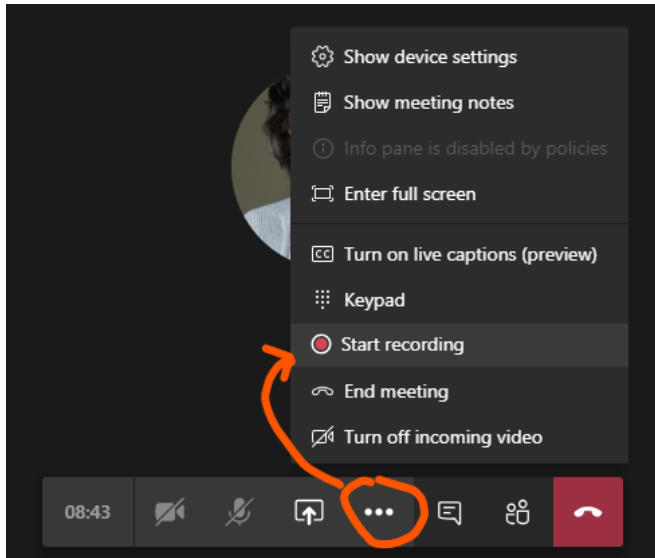
4. Before setting up the child's laptop, ensure that the Observer(s) have muted themselves and turned off their video feed.

This is also a good time to give instructions about dealing with dropped calls and describing how to re-join the meeting if needed.

The Interviewer can also mute others by hovering over another caller's tile and selecting mute from the "... " menu that appears.

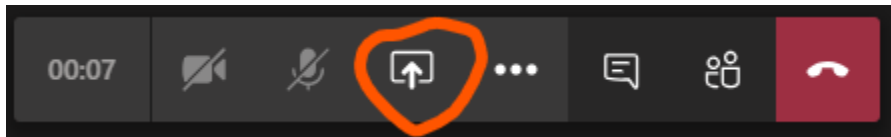


5. Interviewer will prepare the child's laptop in the interview room.
  - The child's laptop should be turned on with Teams running and no other programs open.
  - The child's laptop should be charged and connected to the internet.
  - A pair of earbuds with a mic should be plugged into the headphone jack.
  - In Teams, the Interviewer should have the child's account **Join** the call.
  - Once joined, **Pin** the Interviewer's video feed in the call using the "... " menu on the Interviewer's video feed, so that it is the main focus on the call screen.
  - The child's laptop should be appropriately disinfected as the last step to setup.
  - If any materials may be shared (as developmentally appropriate), like handouts, they can be placed in a manila folder and left in the room for later access by the child (as directed by the Interviewer).
6. The Interviewer begins recording the call by selecting the "... " menu and selecting **Start recording**. Please note that all other participants on the call will be notified that the call is being recorded via a bar across the top of their call screen.

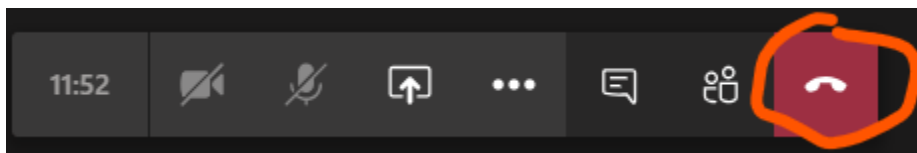


After all these steps are completed, the child may be brought into the Interview room. At this time, the call has been started and all three accounts have joined. Recording has already begun, so that part of the recording is the child entering the room and sitting down in front of the video feed.

7. Once the interview begins, the Interviewer will:
  - Explain the platform being used
  - Explain that the interview is being conducted in this manner due to COVID-19 concerns so as to ensure that everyone is safe and healthy
  - Give the child instructions on what to do if there are technical difficulties (how to re-join the meeting)
  - Test video and audio for both themselves and the child
  
8. During the interview:
  - Interviewer will then proceed with the interview following standard CACTX Interviewing Protocol
  - Interviewer will clarify body parts and positioning verbally whenever possible
  - Interviewer will have child utilize writing when needed and have them publish to the camera anything written
  - Interviewer may arrange for partners to take in body drawings to the child on a break only if absolutely necessary and if child is in an Environment where this is possible
  - All written materials will be collected by observer who assisted child with set-up
  - Recordings will be made available to all observers as per usual
  
9. If the Interviewer needs to share their screen, they can do so with the **Share screen** button.



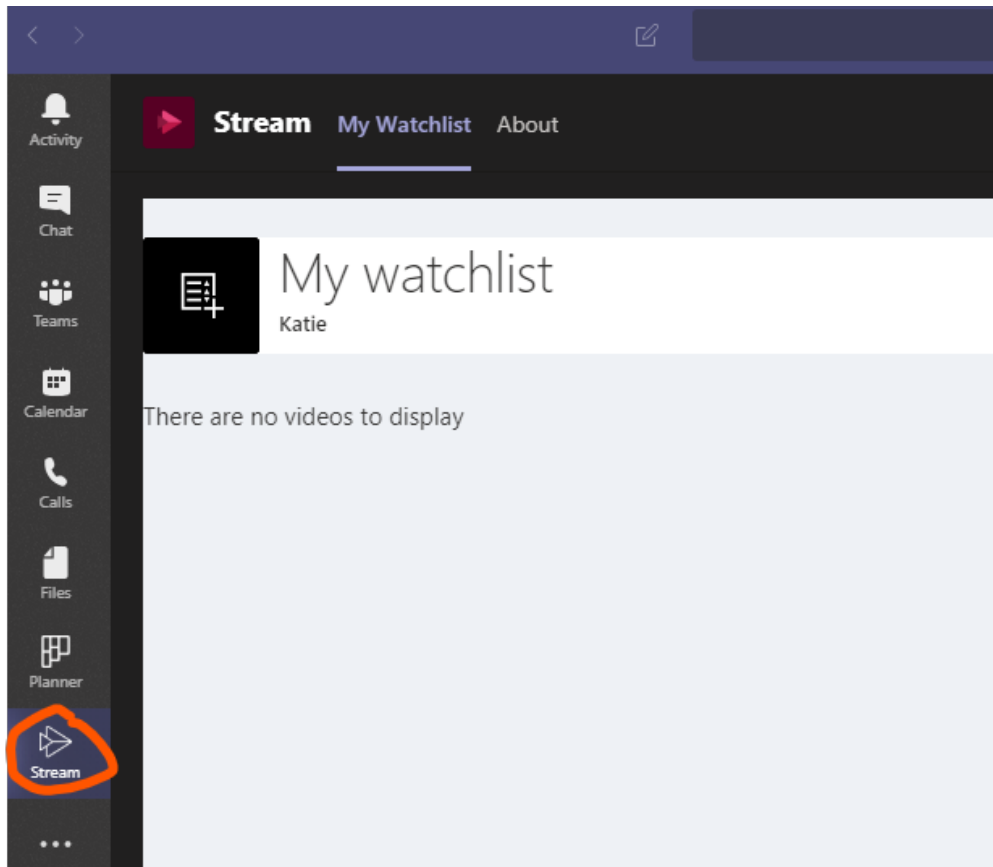
10. If the Interviewer needs to take a break in the interview to discuss with partners, they should **mute themselves and turn off their video feed** and discuss with Observers by phone.
  
11. When the interview is complete, have the child **Hang up**. The Interviewer selects “...” menu and selects **Stop recording**, just as they did to start recording.
  
12. All users end the call by selecting the red **Hang up** button. All users will be notified in the chat that the recording will be made available in Microsoft Stream once it is done rendering.



13. The Interviewer prompts PHD IT to reset the [Interview Account @ dcac.org] account by calling and submitting a ticket to [IT Ticketing System ] with the subject URGENT: FI ACCOUNT RESET. PHD also recommends calling the IT professional onsite at [Call number].

## ACCESSING RECORDED CALLS

- Once a video is complete, it will appear in the app Stream. From here, it can be saved, deleted, and transferred as needed.



- You don't have to wait in Teams for the video. When complete, you will receive an automated email alerting you that your video is ready.
- Once a video is made available, download and delete the video from Stream as promptly as possible. Once the video is burned to disc, delete it from the Downloads folder as well.

## ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – CHILD NOT ONSITE AT DCAC

### CHILD IN A SECURE LOCATION

- If a child is in the care of a partner agency, the partner agency should provide a laptop running Teams and a “dummy” account similar to [Interview Account @ dcac.org].
- In this instance, the partner agency will handle all of the “tech support” and setup managed by the Interviewer in the earlier procedure.

### CHILD AT HOME

- We expect this instance to be very rare. We will handle these interviews through Zoom on a case-by-case basis, depending on the circumstance.
- Each interview occurring under this circumstance will require the completion of the Distance Services Emergency Contact [see RESOURCES].

## ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – OBSERVERS NOT ONSITE AT DCAC

- Observers will need to install Teams before the call starts.
- Instead of inviting [Observer Account @ dcac.org], invite the Observer(s) through their normal email address. *Note that their initials will appear in view of the child during the call.*

## ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – INTERVIEWER NOT ONSITE AT DCAC

- All of the same procedures above will apply, but the Interviewer will need to coordinate with someone onsite at DCAC (or in the secure location where the child is located) to handle all of the tech support and setup items managed by the Interviewer in the above protocol.