Once you have been issued the court order that requires you to utilize supervised visitation services, you generally need to obtain your own provider. If you are required to find your own provider, shop around! The family law courts in many California counties keep lists of providers. You can ask your family law attorney for referrals. You can look for agencies where supervised visitation is provided, sometimes on a reduced cost scale. (See resources page in this website.) Finally, you can search the internet for professional providers.

In California, there are two types of supervised visitation providers, professional and nonprofessional. The court determines whether to use a professional or nonprofessional provider based on the best interest of the child/ren. Nonprofessional providers are usually family members or friends of the person requiring supervision and are not paid. Professional providers undergo training and are paid. Information in this website only pertains to professional providers of supervised visitation services, not nonprofessional providers. In California, a professional provider must be trained in Standard 5.20, the Uniform Standards of Practice.

Once you have a list of providers, contact those of interest and ask them all the questions you might have about their services. Some providers have offices or work in private homes and others use community locations such as parks, restaurants, recreation venues, etc. Some providers hold visits via video-chat. Providers will likely ask you questions about your child/ren, your court orders relative to supervised visitation, and your goals in undertaking supervised visitation.

Ask about fees and policies. Most providers charge by the hour. Ask what the fees include. Some providers charge separately for all their services and some providers bundle their services together or charge set fees. Typical charges are made for: intake meetings, orientations, travel costs, excessive email/phone costs, entry fees into venues where the visits will occur, report writing fees, court costs, etc. Once you know what is included in the fees, it is easier to compare the providers’ total costs. Many providers require fees to be paid in advance of services.

Use the conversations between you and the providers, and the discussion of fees and policies, to help get a feel for how comfortable you are with each provider. Your comfort level with your provider is very important for you and your child/ren. Please ask as many questions as you feel you need to help you determine who will be a good provider for you.