

Definitions of Direct Services Provided By Children’s Advocacy Centers

Child

In order to be eligible to be counted for purposes of the FNCAC, a “child” is defined as an unmarried person under the age of 18 who has been alleged to be abused or neglected, and who receives one of the following services at a child advocacy center: case management and advocacy services, medical evaluation, forensic or specialized interview, psychological evaluation, crisis intervention or therapy. If it is subsequently determined that the child is not a victim of abuse or neglect, further services may be provided to the child, but such services may not be billed to FNCAC.

Victim Support and Advocacy

- ***Case management and advocacy services*** are services described in this subsection that are provided to a child who has been referred to the child advocacy center as a result of a report of alleged abuse or neglect to the Florida Abuse Hotline, or to a child who has been referred to the child advocacy center by law enforcement as an alleged victim of abuse or neglect. Case management and advocacy services are defined to mean the provision of activities, based upon an assessment conducted after an interview, that work to improve the child’s or child’s family’s way of life and/or meet needs that, when met, enhance the therapeutic process. This includes services to arrange and coordinate access to services for abused or neglected children and their families. These services will include, for example, the personal advocacy, information and referral, and follow-up contact. Written documentation must exist to support all case management and advocacy activities. For purposes of reporting, one case management service is counted per child, regardless of the actual number of case management/advocacy services provided. Therefore, the number of case management/advocacy services cannot exceed the number of unduplicated children reported. The minimum qualifications for staff providing case management and advocacy services are a Bachelor’s degree or two years’ experience providing case management and advocacy services. Case management and advocacy services may be billed to the FNCAC at \$30 per unduplicated child to be billed only once.

- ***Crisis intervention services*** are defined to mean a short-term collaboration in a crisis situation between crisis worker and client to restore pre-crisis equilibrium. After conducting a brief assessment, the crisis worker generates short-term plans to ensure client safety and promote client functioning. Crisis intervention is a time-limited approach, employed by professionals who are specifically trained in crisis intervention techniques. Documentation of this service must note specifically what crisis intervention services were provided. Examples would be information and referral to address a specific crisis, administration of Trauma Symptom Checklist, provision of psycho-education about abuse dynamics, and obtained a licensed therapist to assist a distraught client. Written documentation must exist to support the crisis intervention services. Crisis Intervention will be billed at \$40 per hour not to exceed 3 hours per case/family.

Mental health services:

- **Individual therapy services** are defined to mean one-on-one client therapy with a therapist that is designed to meet the unique needs of the child victim. Therapy services will be counted by session by the hour, an individual therapy session for a child victim of one hour is one session. If the session last 15 minutes, it will be counted as a ¼ of a service. One hour of therapy is billed at \$125 per hour
- **Group therapy services** are defined to mean therapy services provided to two or more children with similar needs in a therapeutic group led by a therapist. Group therapy sessions will be counted by child by the hour. If there are three children in the group and the session lasts one hour, it will be counted as three sessions. If the session lasts in more than one hour, each 15 minutes of additional time will be counted as a ¼ of a service for each child participating in the group. Group therapy sessions will be billed at a rate of \$50 per hour per group participant.
- **Family Therapy services** are defined to mean therapy services provided to two or more family members, including the child, in a therapeutic setting led by a therapist. These will be counted by the hour. Each 15 minutes over will be counted as ¼ of the service or if session lasts only 45 minutes then it is ¾ of a session. Family therapy sessions will be billed at a rate of \$62 per hour per person.
- **Psychological testing, interpretation, evaluation** is defined as a psychological service provided by a psychologist to child victims and their non-offending family members to develop a viable treatment plan for the child and to determine child safety. Appropriate tests and evaluative tools will be used as determined by the licensed psychologist. Psychological evaluations include the interpretation of an individual's psychological testing, history, clinical interviews, behavioral symptoms, and observations. The licensed psychologist must see the children or parents face-to-face. Each evaluation will be billed at a rate of \$750 and a family shall not exceed \$1,900.

Forensic and specialized interviews conducted in the CAC:

- A **forensic interview** is defined to mean a developmental and age appropriate interview conducted by staff trained by a nationally-recognized training program designed to collect factual information from a child to determine if that child was the victim of a crime or witnessed a crime against another person. The forensic interview is conducted in a manner that is legally sound, of a neutral fact finding nature, and is coordinated to avoid duplicative interviewing. This is billed at a rate of \$150 per forensic interview.
- A **specialized interview** is defined to mean an interview conducted by staff trained by a nationally-recognized training program with a child or a member of the child's family for the purpose of gathering clinical data, family functioning, family history, or other information for assisting with the assessment of alleged child maltreatment. Specialized interviews are information gathering in nature, and include the development of a risk assessment, and may be more flexible, not following an interview protocol. The primary purpose of a specialized interview is not for a legal purpose. This is billed at a rate of \$100 per specialized interview.

Medical evaluations:

- All children who are suspected victims of child abuse should be assessed to determine the need for a medical evaluation.
- A **medical evaluation (exam or consultation)** is conducted by a qualified medical provider with pediatric experience and child abuse expertise to:
 1. Help ensure the health, safety and well-being of the child;
 2. Diagnose, document, and address medical conditions resulting from abuse;
 3. Differentiate medical findings that are indicative of abuse from those which may be explained by other medical conditions;
 4. Diagnose, document, and address medical conditions unrelated to abuse; and
 5. Assess the child for any developmental, emotional, or behavioral problems needing further evaluation and treatment and make referrals as necessary.
- Medical evaluations are routinely made available on-site or through linkage agreements with other appropriate agencies or providers.
- A medical consultation is provided to render a medical opinion regarding abuse/neglect on a child that already has been evaluated by a qualified medical provider. Consultation should not be a substitute for a medical examination, nor does it exclude the need for other assessments. A medical consultation must result in a prepared report that references all the pertinent history, examination findings and laboratory/imaging studies used to reach the medical conclusions. The medical record must include copies of the relevant records and reports used to arrive at the medical opinion.
- Medical examinations and medical consultations may be billed at a rate of \$250.00 per examination or consultation.