



Interagency Linkage Agreement for Victim Advocacy Services

This sample linkage agreement is created to serve as a resource for CACs. Please note this is intended as a SAMPLE and should be carefully reviewed by the CAC Board of Directors or other governing entity so that it accurately reflects YOUR partnership with community agencies.

_____ Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) and _____ (victim advocacy provider) agree to collaboratively provide victim advocacy services to child victims of sexual and severe physical abuse for all children and their non-offending families. This linkage agreement outlines the following:

1. CAC staff _____ are responsible for notifying victim advocacy provider _____ of the case information, time & location of the forensic interview.
2. CAC staff _____ is responsible for making the initial referral to the non-offending parent/guardian for victim advocacy services for the child and non-offending family members.
3. The victim advocacy provider agrees to prioritize CAC referrals by placing these referrals at the top of waiting lists when they exist, and when no waiting list exists efforts will be made to schedule an appointment within a reasonable amount of time.
4. The victim advocacy provider agrees to protect confidentiality of their patients as outlined in their own agency policies and procedures.
5. The victim advocacy provider confirms that the advocates have 24-hour training on the following topics, and provide documentation to the CAC:
 - Dynamics of abuse
 - Trauma-informed services
 - Crisis assessment and intervention
 - Risk assessment and safety planning
 - Professional ethics and boundaries
 - Understanding the coordinated multidisciplinary response
 - Assistance in accessing/obtaining victims' rights as outlined by law
 - Court education, support and accompaniment
 - Assistance with access to treatment and other services, including protective orders, housing, public assistance, domestic violence intervention, transportation, financial assistance, interpreters, among others as determined for individual clients. (National Children's Alliance • Standards for Accredited Members • 2017 Edition)
6. The victim advocacy provider confirms that the advocates providing treatment to child victims of sexual and physical abuse and their families complete continuing education in the field of child abuse consisting of a minimum of 8 contact hours every two years.
7. The victim advocacy provider confirms the following constellation of services are provided:
 - Crisis assessment and intervention, risk assessment and safety planning and support for children and family members at all stages of involvement with CAC
 - Assessment of individual needs, cultural considerations for child/family and ensure those needs are addressed



Presence at CAC during the forensic interview to participate in information sharing, inform and support family about the coordinated, multidisciplinary response, and assess needs of child and non-offending caregiver

- Provision of education and access to victim's rights and crime victim's compensation,
 - Assistance in procuring concrete services (housing, protective orders, domestic violence intervention, food, transportation, public assistance etc.)
 - Provision of referrals for trauma focused, evidence-supported mental health and specialized medical treatment, if not provided at the CAC
 - Access to transportation to interviews, court, treatment and other case-related meetings
 - Engagement in the child's/family's response regarding participation in the investigation/prosecution
 - Participation in case review to: communicate and discuss the unique needs of the child and family and associated support services planning; ensure the seamless coordination of services; and, ensure the child and family's concerns are heard and addressed
 - Provision of updates to the family on case status, continuances, dispositions, sentencing, inmate status notification (including offender release from custody)
 - Provision of court education & courthouse/courtroom tours, support, and court accompaniment
 - Coordinated case management meetings with all individuals providing victim advocacy services (National Children's Alliance • Standards for Accredited Members • 2017 Edition)
8. The victim advocacy provider confirms that advocacy services are available and accessible to all CAC clients regardless of ability to pay.
9. The CAC will work with the victim advocacy provider to provide information about victim compensation.
10. As mandated reporters, the victim advocacy providers agree to report all suspected cases of child sexual and severe physical abuse to state/local office of child protection.
11. The CAC staff is responsible for notifying the victim advocacy provider or designee of regularly scheduled Case Review meetings. The victim advocacy provider or designee shall attend scheduled Case Review in order to provide consultation, expertise and input on victim advocacy issues to the MDT and to discuss (*or not discuss*) specific case information.

The CAC believes in protecting the client's right to confidentiality. To that end the CAC and _____ agree that all victim advocacy records are the property of the victim advocacy provider, records are maintained inside the victim advocacy provider's offices, and records can only be accessed via authorized release of information signed by the child's parent/guardian or by court order.

Children's Advocacy Center

Date

Victim Advocacy Provider

Date

SAMPLE

