

Stafford County Children's Service Act Program Parent Guide:

Children and families may be eligible for assistance through the Virginia Children's Services Act (CSA) Program for At-Risk Youth and Families if your child meets the following guidelines:

"The child or youth has emotional or behavior problems that:"

"Have persisted over a significant period of time or, though only in evidence for a short period of time, are of such a critical nature that intervention is warranted;"

"Are significantly disabling and are present in several community settings such as at home, in school or with peers; and"

"Require services or resources that are unavailable or inaccessible or that are beyond normal agency services or routine collaborative processes across agencies or require coordinated interventions by at least two agencies."

"The child or youth has emotional or behavior problems, or both, and currently is in, or is at imminent risk of entering, purchased residential care. In addition, the child or youth requires services or resources that are beyond normal agency services or routine collaborative processes across agencies, and requires coordinated services by at least two agencies."

"The child or youth requires placement for purposes of special education in approved private school educational programs."

"Wrap Around Services for Students with Disabilities" (*Adopted January 10, 2011*) SEC Policy 4.1.3

The special education mandate cited in COV§ 2.2-5211(B)(1) may be utilized to fund non-residential services in the home and community for a student with a disability when the needs associated with his/her disability extend beyond the school setting and threaten the student's ability to be maintained in the home, community, or school setting.

" The child or youth requires foster care services as defined in [COV§ 63.2-905](#)

"For purposes of determining eligibility for the state pool of funds, "child" or "youth" means (i) a person less than eighteen years of age and (ii) any individual through twenty-one years of age who is otherwise eligible for mandated services of the participating state agencies including special education and foster care services." [COV § 2.2-5212 B.](#)

What is the Children's Services Act?

In 1993, the Virginia General Assembly passed the Children's Services Act for At-Risk Youth and Families. Created to improve efforts to meet the needs of families and youth who have, or are at risk of having, serious emotional or behavioral difficulties, the goal of the CSA is to keep families together and provide services within the child's home and community whenever possible. Through teams mandated by the CSA, state and local agencies are brought together to provide services that are intended to:

- Preserve and strengthen families.
- Identify needs and help families as early as possible.
- Provide services in the least restrictive setting possible.
- Develop service plans to meet the specific needs of children and families.
- Increase the communication between families and county agencies.
- Encourage public-private partnerships in serving families.
- Provide more community control and flexibility in the use of funding.

Who receives services under the CSA?

Youth who may be eligible to receive services fall into one of two groups*:

Mandated: Youth for whom services are mandated by the law include: Youth in foster care and those determined to be imminently at-risk for placement into foster care, youth who have been identified by the Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT) as requiring placement in a residential treatment facility outside of the community and have entered into a parental agreement for placement, youth who are special education eligible and the youth's Individual Education Plan (IEP) requires that the youth receive education in a private day or residential school setting or their IEP needs extend into the community.

Non-mandated: Youth for whom services may not be mandated by law include: Youth served through the Juvenile Court, Community Services Board, public schools and other county/city human services agencies who require assistance through the family's or public agencies' resources. CSA non-mandated funds must be available in the community; otherwise these youth may be put on a waiting list for consideration of funding.

What are the responsibilities that CSA has to me?

Most importantly, you have the right to understand the local CSA process:

- You should receive information on the local CSA process and timelines for receiving referrals
- Your FAPT needs to notify you before your child is assessed for services
- You should be able to understand the information you receive and it should be delivered in your preferred language, if possible
- You should consent to and agree in writing before beginning any services, except when ordered by the court
- You may have the opportunity to read records, challenge information, give permission for release of records and be provided a written copy of the records unless ordered otherwise by the court
- You have the ability to receive assistance from your Case Manager as well as members of your family, friends, advocates or support persons
- You will have the opportunity to review the assessment and service plan
- You can disagree with the assessment and service plan, or any part of the service plan, and you can place your concerns in writing to the FAPT and/or CPMT
- You have the right to participate and be present for the entire FAPT meeting and discuss your child and family strengths and needs and to participate in decisions that apply to you and your family

The Stafford County CSA Program has two teams that work together to implement and guide the CSA Program. These teams are:

- Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT)
- Community Policy and Management Team (CPMT)

FAPT

The FAPT is a team formed to help you and your family explore services, financial resources and plan for the changing needs of your child and family. The Stafford County FAPT meets twice a month on Wednesday's. Along with the Team members other individuals present at the meeting include; the case manager, you and your child (if appropriate), and sometimes an intern from one of the agencies represented. You may also have anyone that you feel would be a support to you and your family in attendance. All individuals present at the meeting will sign a confidentiality statement. Your FAPT meeting will last approximately 45 minutes. The case manager will present any information they have, written and verbal, in order for the Team to gain an understanding of your child and family. You will also have an opportunity to discuss your concerns and add any information you think is relevant to the process. The Team may ask you, the case manager, or any family members in attendance questions about some of the information that was presented. Decisions are made by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached a vote is taken by the members. Majority vote will determine the services approved.

Once the Team has recommended the services and authorized funding you will have a chance to agree or disagree to the IFSP developed by signing the corresponding line on the plan; you will receive a copy of the plan before you leave. If the plan is not signed, either in agreement or disagreement by the parent/guardian by the close of the meeting the service recommendation cannot be implemented. The parent/guardian can appeal the FAPT decision should they determine that they did not agree with the plan as developed.

As everyone has a role in the FAPT process the following explains the responsibilities of those members:

Case Manager Responsibility:

- Explain the FAPT process to the family
- Schedule your FAPT meeting and coordinate with all necessary parties
- Complete the necessary paperwork to include the financial contribution with family assistance
- Present your case to the FAPT
- Assist with the coordination of services approved
- Schedule review (if needed)

Parent Responsibility:

- Work with your child's case manager to complete the paperwork and provide information needed for FAPT to include a consent to allow the Human Services Office, FAPT and the Provider's ability to case plan, implement services and complete the financial process with the Provider
- Actively participate in the FAPT meeting and any services recommended/approved
- Provide as much information as you can with regards to the situation affecting your child/family
- Inform your child/family case manager if you feel the services are not helpful, there are issues with the services being provided to your family, services are not being provided to your expectations or you are unable to participate in the services for other reasons
- Pay the monthly assessed co-payment

FAPT Member responsibility:

- Carefully review all documents provided
- Ask clarifying questions as needed
- Allow all parties the opportunity to speak and provide information
- Ensure that all parties are treated respectfully and fair
- Develop a plan that is strength-based and fits with the needs of the child and family

How is an Individual Family Service Plan Reviewed?

The FAPT approves services in approximately 3-month increments***. If a family would like to request a continuation of services, the case manager will need to request a FAPT review prior to the service end date for continuity of services. During that review the Team would meet with you and the service provider to discuss what progress has occurred on the goals set forth in the IFSP.

What happens if you don't agree with the FAPT's decision?

The FAPT's recommendation will be outlined on the Individual and Family Service Plan (IFSP), a formal document signed by all members of the team. As the parent/guardian of the youth you will have the option of agreeing or disagreeing with the IFSP.

If you disagree with the FAPT recommendations you may submit a written letter of appeal no later than 10 days following the receipt of the FAPT decision. FAPT appeals are heard by the Stafford County Community Policy Management Team All letters of appeal should be submitted to:

Stafford County CPMT
c/o Stafford County Human Services Office
PO Box 339
Stafford, VA 22555

Fax number: 540-658-1097

CPMT

This is a policy-making and management team that oversees the implementation of the CSA program. The CPMT develops local policies and procedures for CSA coordinates long-range community-wide planning for resources and services needed by children and families in its community, oversees the management of the CSA budget, helps agencies work together, hears FAPT decisions, and performs other management duties. The CPMT is also responsible for implementing new legislation affecting the CSA program.

Members of the CPMT are mandated by the State of Virginia to represent their agency. The parent representative as well as the private provider representative are appointed by the Stafford County Board of Supervisors. Members include:

- Executive Director, Rappahannock Area Community Services Board
- Director, Stafford County Social Services

- Director, Court Services Unit
- Representative, Stafford County Board of Supervisors
- Representative, Stafford County Department of Health
- Representative, Stafford County Schools
- Private Services Provider
- Parent Representative

*Eligibility for CSA funding is determined by various laws (in education, juvenile justice, and social services) and by the Stafford County Community Policy and Management Team.

**CSA funds are limited for non-mandated youth and are not always immediately available for FAPT approved services. If funds are not immediately available, your child will be placed on a waiting list and your case manager will keep you updated on the availability of funds. The FAPT may suggest alternative services while you wait for the requested funding to become available.

**The Team will sometimes approve less than 3 months in order to review the case earlier to make sure that services are effective and that child/family is benefiting from these services.