

Topic 5: Child Protection Centers

Link to [CPS Assessment Procedure](#)

The Department contracts with several “child protection centers” throughout the state to assist the Department child protection workers in assessing reports of child abuse.

In most cases, these centers provide medical evaluations and psychosocial assessments of the victim when there are allegations of sexual abuse. Child protection centers can assist in conducting child abuse assessments. However, taking reasonable measures to address the safety of the child remains the child protective worker’s responsibility.

A protocol establishes procedures between the child protection center and the Department. Provisions relevant to the expectations of the Department child protection workers are summarized as follows:

- ◆ **Referrals.** When you make a referral to a child protection center, there should be allegations of sexual abuse or physical abuse with bodily injury. Provide:
 - The child’s name, sex, birth date, and location.
 - The parent’s names, address, and phone number.
 - The names of the people accompanying the child to the child protection center.
 - Your name and phone number.
 - The law enforcement officer’s name, legal jurisdiction, identification number, and phone number.
- ◆ **Scheduling.** Try to schedule interviews and examinations during the center’s regular hours.
- ◆ **Source of payment.** Determine the source of payment on the telephone at the time of scheduling, if possible.
- ◆ **Consents.** If no parent or guardian will be accompanying the child to the child protection center, secure a consent or court order to examine the child. Provide this to the center at the time of the appointment, or provide verification that the Department has obtained emergency custody.
- ◆ **Registration and intake.** At the time of the appointment, ensure that necessary consent forms and authorizations are signed. Be prepared to brief the child protection center’s interviewer, in coordination with law enforcement, on the circumstances of the assault or existing allegations.
- ◆ **Interview.** When staff at a child protection center interviews a child, you may use that interview in place of an interview you conduct. This prevents the child from having to repeat the history of abuse. Be present in the observation room to monitor the interview of the child.

- ◆ **Team meeting.** After the interview and physical examination, you will participate in a team meeting to determine the appropriate plan of action, based on the findings of the interview and examination.

The team consists of the child protective worker, the law enforcement officer, the physician, and the interviewer. It may include other staff of the child protection center. Consultation with the county attorney's office may be needed for decision-making.

- ◆ **Documentation of center services.** The center will provide written reports to you. Incorporate relevant information from the center's report into the *Child Protective Services Assessment Summary*, form 470-3240. Keep the center's written documentation in the case file.

Videotapes the center makes during the course of the interview are also considered to be part of the assessment case record and are maintained according to Iowa Code Chapter 235A. If a subject of a report requests a copy of the child protection center's report or videotape, arrange to have it provided.

Provide the child protection center with a notice that the assessment has been completed and whether the incident has been placed on the Central Abuse Registry.