



CSA FAQ For Families

What is CSA?

The Children's Services Act (CSA) is a Virginia state law designed to coordinate care and provide funding to support eligible at-risk youth and their families. CSA is guided by state laws and policies and implemented at the local level. State and local funds, are managed by local interagency teams who plan and oversee CSA services. Services are provided by various public and private agencies/programs.

Why would I need CSA?

CSA provides an opportunity to interact with child-serving agencies in your community. Meeting with your local CSA can provide information about local community resources and services. For eligible youth and families, CSA can provide funding for certain services and supports.

What does CSA look like?

There are two different local CSA teams, FAPT and CPMT.

The FAPT (Family Assessment and Planning Team) is responsible for some assessments, determining eligibility for CSA and making service recommendations. FAPT members include representatives from the local Department of Social Services, schools, Court Services Unit, and the Community Services Board. FAPT will also have a parent representative and may have other members such as the health department or a service provider.

CPMT (Community Policy Management Team) has local directors from the same agencies, the health department, a parent representative, a service provider and a representative of local county/city government. CPMT is responsible for developing local policies and procedures and approving funding for CSA services.

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What does eligible for CSA mean?

In 1993, when CSA was created, certain agencies combined funds to create the state pool. The youth served by those funding streams became the targeted population for CSA. Eligibility for CSA is determined by the Code of Virginia, and local CSA teams have policies for how they determine eligibility.

All eligibility for CSA is determined at the local level, specifically by FAPT. In general, a youth that is potentially eligible for CSA would come before the FAPT. The FAPT hears about the needs of the child and the family, and determines eligibility. The FAPT can then recommend services and supports to address these needs. If eligible for CSA, recommended services and expenditures would then go onto the CPMT for review and approval.

How do I get to FAPT?

A child can be referred to FAPT through a local agency such as the school, social services or the CSB, or they can be referred by court. All localities must also have a parental referral process. This means you don't have to wait for an agency to suggest CSA, you can take the initiative! For more information on how to access CSA in your community, please visit the [CSA Web Site](#) to find your local CSA Coordinator.

If you become aware that an agency (DSS, DJJ, School, CSB/BHA) is bringing your child to FAPT, then you should request that a representative from that agency explain the process to you. If you have contacted your local CSA Coordinator to pursue a parental referral to FAPT, then ask the CSA Coordinator to explain the local process in detail.

What does a FAPT meeting look like?

The parent (and child if appropriate) should attend the FAPT meeting. A FAPT meeting can feel intimidating when you walk in. Often, there are multiple people (approximately 4-7) sitting around a conference table waiting for you to enter. These people represent the agencies mentioned above. They bring

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different forms of information and are there to help ensure the planning for children and families is coordinated. Everyone around the table should introduce themselves to you and they should be able to clearly explain their role at the meeting.

At FAPT, you should be given an opportunity to discuss your experience and the challenges that are currently happening with your child. The discussion at times may feel negative (talk about all the things not going well); however, this is in effort to determine the appropriate level of care and services that your child and your family may need and be eligible for through the Children's Services Act. FAPT should ask for your input on the services recommended. You will be asked to sign releases of information so that care can be coordinated and you will be asked to sign the Service Plan.

If there are services recommended by FAPT and funds approved by CPMT, then you will be asked to return to the FAPT from time to time. During subsequent meetings, there should be discussions around your family's needs. FAPT will evaluate the need to continue the services, and if they are not being effective what other services or resources they may be able to connect you with.

FAPT should also ask about the strengths of your child and family. While the FAPT recommends services to meet needs, it should also be building upon the strengths and interests of your family.

How should I prepare for FAPT?

In preparation for FAPT, it is a good idea to gather important records regarding your child's history (things like treatment reports or assessments). Organizing these documents and bringing them to FAPT will help the team to understand your child and family's history and current needs.



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Will I have to pay for services provided by CSA?

The Code of Virginia requires that each CPMT develop a local policy for assessing parental contribution for services provided (except when prohibited by law, such as educational services in an IEP). This occurs through the establishment of a sliding scale. The CSA Coordinator in your community can explain the local parental co-pay policy.

What if I have additional questions?

Because CSA is a local process, no FAPT and CPMT will look exactly alike. Your local CSA Coordinator should be your contact point for questions or concerns.

The [CSA Web Site](#) provides more detailed information about CSA law and operations.