



Judicial Council of California

Federally Funded Dependency Representation Program (FFDRP) Eligible Activities¹ for Social Workers, Investigators, and Peer Partners

Updated August 1, 2025

Providers must ensure that the person performing each activity has the required qualifications and training to perform the activity and has documentation in the event of an audit.

	Activity	Parent	Child
CASE PREPARATION			
1.	Assist and advise attorney in case strategy and management.	✓	✓
2.	Assist attorney in conducting further investigation deemed “reasonably necessary to ascertain the facts” (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 317).	✓	✓
3.	Prepare written reports for the client file and assist the attorney in formulating recommendations for the court. These reports are considered attorney work product and contain investigative findings of the social worker, investigator, or peer partner, comprehensive assessments of the child’s or parent’s legal needs, and recommendations as to the various legal stages of a case, including jurisdiction, disposition, reunification, and termination of parental rights.	✓	✓
4.	Conduct client interviews (from the legal perspective) to ascertain the facts and understand the client’s position.	✓	✓
5.	Meet with/contact the client (telephonically, electronically, and in person). ²	✓	✓
6.	Identify potential law and expert witnesses. This could include consultation with experts and assessment of witnesses needed for trial, including medical professionals, collaterals who may hold relevant information, relatives, and county social workers.	✓	✓
7.	Interview witnesses; assist attorneys in preparing witnesses for trial.	✓	✓
8.	Obtain discovery (confidential medical or educational psychotherapy records and social histories, etc.), including waivers or authorizations to release client records.	✓	✓
9.	Prepare service of legal process, including subpoenas and subpoenas duces tecum.	✓	✓
10.	Assist the client with preparation of restraining orders. ³	✓	✓

¹ FFDRP eligible activities are limited to activities in support of dependency foster care legal proceedings.

² Out-of-state travel expenses are ineligible for reimbursement. Time spent meeting with the client during out-of-state travel is eligible. Virtual meetings with out-of-state clients are eligible.

³ See FAQ C-12. The restraining order must further the objectives of the client’s case plan.

	Activity	Parent	Child
CASE PREPARATION			
11.	Assist the attorney in preparing the client for trial or other child welfare hearings related to the specific case, including explaining the nature, purposes and processes of the hearings and helping the client understand what to expect.	✓	✓
12.	Prepare or arrange for appearances or claims/responses in other legal matters, i.e., civil, criminal, immigration, health insurance access.		
13.	Assist the client in understanding what his or her their responsibilities are in the dependency process.	✓	✓
14.	Provide in-court testimony.	✓	✓
15.	Provide opposing or alternative opinion on psychosocial and risk assessments included in county social worker report (from child and parent perspective). Information gathering, case preparation and advising of the attorney to prepare disposition and placement recommendations based on independent observation and assessment of the child, which may or may not be consistent with the county social worker recommendations.	✓	✓
16.	Assist the attorney in submitting court filings.	✓	✓
17.	Notarize documents (if in possession of the requisite notary certification).		
18.	For very young (under age 6), preverbal, or developmentally delayed children and youth for which a standard interviewing procedure is impracticable: • Conduct observations of the child or youth; • Interview caregivers and relatives; • Obtain medical histories (interviews with the treating physician, psychotherapists, occupational therapists, etc.) This information is important to the attorneys' legal representation of the client when substituted judgement is required because the client is unable to participate or assist the attorney in developing case strategy or expressing a position or stated interest.		✓
19.	In Welfare and Institutions Code section 241.1 crossover matters: • Extensively review the minor's entire social history and dependency file; • Gather information from the delinquency attorney to inform dependency advocacy; • Work with dependency attorney to advocate for the child in the dependency foster care proceedings; and • Prepare in-depth written analyses and recommendations regarding the court system that would best serve the youth.		✓
20.	Assist the attorney in reviewing a form JV-220 application and seeking the necessary input from the client regarding a position on the medication request. For children, this work would also include contacting the caregivers about the child's behavior at home and school. For children and parents' representation, this work would include speaking to the treating psychiatrist if there is a concern or question about the recommended medication.	✓	✓

	Activity	Parent	Child
ADVOCACY			
21.	Attend juvenile dependency mediations or other alternative resolution meetings to resolve issues in the dependency foster care proceeding and advocate for the client's interests.	✓	✓
22.	Attend critical school administrative hearings (e.g., IEP, expulsion hearings) to gather information for dependency foster care proceeding.	✓	✓
23.	Attend IEP, 504 plan meetings, and manifestation hearings to gather information for the dependency foster care proceedings. If the case requires limiting of the parent's educational rights and appointment of an education surrogate, the social worker would assist the attorney in identifying a responsible individual to appoint is needed. The social worker is a resource to the child and parent.	✓	✓
24.	Provide information and consultation for attorneys on appropriate client communication, including information on how to conduct interviews considering and reflecting the age and cognitive development of the client.	✓	✓
25.	Provide information and consultation to the attorney on issues of child development that should be considered in formulating recommendations to the court.	✓	✓
26.	Conduct staff trainings on issues affecting legal representation.	✓	✓
27.	Attend collaborative court meetings (e.g., Katie A, girls court, family drug court, wellness court) to gather information for the attorney to use in dependency foster care proceedings.	✓	✓
28.	Attend, as needed, collaborative court hearings that could affect the client's dependency case, such as criminal drug court hearings for parents or criminal hearings that require the child-client to be a witness to gather information for the attorney to use in dependency foster care proceedings.	✓	✓
29.	Perform for the client short-term case management that furthers the attorney's advocacy role. ⁴	✓	✓
30.	Participate in advocating for the client's needs at Child and Family Team meetings or any other team meetings, as appropriate.	✓	✓
31.	Identify immigration issues and assist the client with navigating the legal process as it relates to residency status (i.e., assisting the attorney with Special Immigrant Juvenile Status paperwork for the minor client and making referrals to immigration legal services for parents).		
32.	Conduct secondary educational screenings with the client and caregivers to assist the attorney in ensuring that the attorney is advocating for appropriate educational services and school placements.		
33.	Engage in cross-collaborative work, on behalf of the attorney, with other agencies to improve behavioral and placement outcomes for the child and minor parent client.	✓	✓

⁴ See FAQ C-14. The activities must extend the attorney's ability to help the client comply with the case plan.

	Activity	Parent	Child
ADVOCACY			
34.	Assist the attorney in the presumptive transfer process, including but not limited to seeking input on presumptive transfer decisions at Child and Family Team meetings and assessing the client's mental health services and gathering information regarding services available outside the county of original jurisdiction. For parents and children, this would include helping the client understand the request and seeking the party's position and input on the issue.	✓	✓
35.	Assist the client in case plan compliance to develop a support plan for the client.	✓	✓
36.	Provide additional referrals to community services to supplement those provided by the county worker, when needed.		
37.	Pre-petition advocacy. ⁵		
38.	<u>Assist an attorney in the legal representation of a child's relative caregiver who is not the child's legal guardian.</u> ⁶		
39.	<u>Assist an attorney in the legal representation of a client in civil legal proceedings necessary to carry out the requirements in the agency's title IV-E foster care plan.</u> ⁷		
ADMINISTRATION			
40.	Manage case files (including maintaining an updated and accurate billing-time log of activities and other records reflecting work done on the case).	✓	✓
41.	Reimburse for mileage and other travel expenses (in state) that relate to client contacts, meetings, and court hearings.	✓	✓
42.	Perform conflict checks.	✓	✓
43.	Supervision of FFDRP eligible social worker activities.	✓	✓
44.	Staff meetings.		

⁵ Pre-petition activities are not currently eligible for FFDRP, because the underlying funding that is the match for FFDRP is only for activities starting upon the filing of the petition.

⁶ This activity is not eligible for matching under the FFDRP program administered by the Judicial Council because it is not covered by court appointed counsel funding; the relative caregiver must be the child's legal guardian.

⁷ This activity is not eligible for matching under the FFDRP program administered by the Judicial Council because it is not covered by court appointed counsel funding.