



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS DIVISION
CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN & THE COURTS

Federally Funded Dependency Representation Program (FFDRP)

Eligible Activities¹ for Social Workers/Investigators *Updated July 16, 2021*

	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, 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).	✓	✓
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.		

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

	Activity	Parent	Child
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 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 		✓

	Activity	Parent	Child
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.	✓	✓
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 (e.g., assisting in maintaining compliance with AB 12 requirements or assisting the client with managing a housing crisis, which could affect the attorney's ability to advocate for reunification of the family).		

	Activity	Parent	Child
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.	✓	✓
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 and develop legal strategy for the case.	✓	
36.	Provide additional referrals to community services to supplement those provided by the county worker, when needed.		
ADMINISTRATION			
37.	Manage case files (including maintaining an updated and accurate billing-time log of activities and other records reflecting work done on the case).	✓	✓
38.	Reimburse for mileage and other travel expenses (in state) that relate to client contacts, meetings, and court hearings.	✓	✓
39.	Perform conflict checks.	✓	✓
40.	Supervision of FFDRP eligible social worker activities.	✓	✓