

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency
HEALTHCARE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE
Initial Evaluation of Children's Health



It is the policy of Child and Family Services (CFSA) to ensure timely healthcare screenings and assessments, including physical, dental, mental, behavioral, and developmental healthcare for children entering out-of-home care. For purposes of this quick reference guide, the term "child" includes both infants and youth, as applicable.

Contact the CFSA Clinical and Health Services Administration (CHSA) On-Call Information Line at 202.498.8456, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Each child entering or re-entering out-of-home care receives a medical screening at the Healthy Horizons Assessment Center (HHAC) prior to an initial entry, re-entry, or change in placement, including changes in placement between foster homes within the same agency.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Social Worker: Initial Screening and Comprehension Evaluation

1. The accompanying adult or the social worker escorts the child throughout the duration of the appointment.
2. At the time of placement, the assigned social worker provides the foster parent(s), guardian, or facility director with a copy of the Cleared for Placement Authorization Form, which is completed and signed by the HHAC nurse practitioner.
3. If the child is already enrolled in Medicaid, the assigned social worker provides the caregiver with the child's Medicaid number within 5 days of placement. Social workers should discuss plans for ongoing health care of the child with the caregiver.

Initial Medical/Pre-Placement Screening

1. When a child receives a medico-legal examination (i.e., an examination specific to physical and sexual abuse, which may be used as evidence in a criminal case), the child must be brought to HHAC for a pre-placement screening.
2. For children who are currently in care when being discharged from a hospital, a pre-placement screening at HHAC is not needed.
3. HHAC provides the CPS or assigned social worker two copies of the initial screening documentation; the social worker must place one copy in the placement folder and one copy in the child's case file.
4. CHSA enters all pre-placement medical information in FACES.NET. Data entry is completed by HHAC.

Comprehensive Medical Evaluation

1. To obtain a full understanding of the child's health, a comprehensive medical evaluation takes place within 30 days of the child's initial entry into out-of-home care.
2. The HHAC medical assistant makes the appointment for the child's comprehensive medical evaluation.

3. For youth in residential facilities, a comprehensive medical and dental examination is conducted by a licensed physician for each resident within 14 calendar days of admission into the facility unless there is provided (or available) a written report of such examinations within the timeframes recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
4. For follow-up visits and referrals, the caregiver makes the appointment and accompanies the child to the appointment. Results of all appointments must be documented in FACES.NET by the social worker.

Initial Dental Examination

1. DC HealthCheck* guidelines require dental screenings for children as early as 6 months of age. An initial dental examination must be conducted within 30 days of placement. (See DC HealthCheck and Dental Periodicity schedules attached to the policy on the [Initial Evaluation of Children's Health](#).)
2. DC HealthCheck is the District of Columbia's provider education system.
3. It is the right of every child enrolled in Medicaid to see the dentist every 6 months.

Initial Mental Health/Behavioral Health Screening

1. The HealthCheck program requires an assessment of mental health development for all Medicaid eligible children.
2. The initial mental and behavioral health screening occurs within 30 days of the child coming into care.
3. All children ages 1 year and older receive a standardized mental health screening administered by the Department of Mental Health Specialist co-located at CFSA. Depending on the age of the child, participation by the birth mother and father is required.
4. For children who are newly entering care and whose initial placement is in an out-of-home facility (e.g., group home, shelter, or emergency care facility), a preliminary mental health screening is conducted by a qualified mental health practitioner within 3 business days of admission.

Initial Developmental Screening and Assessment

1. An initial developmental screening is conducted during the comprehensive evaluation for children ages 6 and under.
2. All children under the age of 36 months are referred through CHSA to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education for a developmental assessment.
3. All children aged 3 to 5 years old appear to have developmental or learning delays are referred through CHSA to the DC Public Schools Early Stages for screening and assessment.

To read this online policy in its entirety, click on [Initial Evaluation of Children's Health](#) or visit CFSA's online policy manual at <http://cfsa.dc.gov/>.