

RIGHT TO A FORENSIC INTERVIEW



Public Act 102-0477 – Right to a Forensic Interview:

Effective 1/1/22, this law provides that every child reported to the Department of Children and Family Services or law enforcement as a victim of sexual assault or sexual abuse has a right to a forensic interview conducted by an accredited children's advocacy center.

What is a Forensic Interview?

A Forensic Interview is a legally justifiable, fact-finding interview with a child conducted by a specially trained professional at the request of law enforcement or DCFS. Forensic Interviews are designed to provide children the opportunity to disclose abuse to a neutral party in a child-friendly setting. Forensic interviewers are specially trained in the areas of child development, linguistics, civil and criminal offenses, child protection concerns, memory, suggestibility and disclosure. Forensic interviews are recorded in order to minimize the number of times a victim must detail their trauma. The recording also increases the accuracy of information provided to professionals investigating the case, particularly law enforcement. All interviews are viewed in real time by DCFS investigators and law enforcement detectives to increase the collaboration and efficiency of the investigation. This interview is utilized by the multi-disciplinary team as part of the criminal investigation and must meet certain legal criteria.

