



**CALGARY
FAMILY
THERAPY
CENTRE**

SERVICE • EDUCATION • RESEARCH

**One Executive Place
600, 1816 Crowchild Trail NW
Calgary, Alberta T2M 3Y7
Phone: (403) 802-1680
Fax: (403) 270-7446
www.familytherapy.org
e-mail: cftc@familytherapy.org**

CFTC Limits to Involvement with Legal Affairs Policy

CFTC has developed a written policy to define the parameters of or limits placed upon the role of personnel in the legal affairs of a person served.

Definitions

“Worker” or “CFTC staff” is any person who works at CFTC including employees, students, contractors, and volunteers.

“Client” are people who receive professional services, which normally includes a person under the age of 19 and their family or people they live with.

“Formal Assessment” is a form assessment that is understood as the main goal of the professional involvement, and typically results in a written report that a CFTC staff shares with a client. It includes but it is not limited to formal sociopsychological assessments and parenting assessments.

“Personal Directive” is a legal document under provincial legislation that allows an individual to name person(s) to make decisions on their behalf should they lose mental capacity, and also lists the areas in which the person(s) listed have decision-making authority (e.g., health care, residential issues).

“Guardianship” is a legal relationship created by a court between a guardian and their ward, either a minor child or an incapacitated adult.

Responsibilities

The Calgary Family Therapy Centre (CFTC) is a provincial non-profit organization devoted to providing high-quality family therapy to all Albertan families who have children with emotional and/or behavioral problems. To optimize conditions for family wellness and fulfill its mission, CFTC staff working within the Family Therapy Program:

- Do not interfere nor intervene in legal proceedings.
- Do not engage in performing formal assessments, nor managing custody and access issues.
- Do not engage in writing formal reports.
- Do not accept participation in Personal Directives or Guardianship with clients.
- Are authorized to extend letters confirming attendance.
- Are authorized to extend any documents to the client that they would document as part of a professional intervention in the context of the family therapy program (e.g., “therapeutic letters”), clarifying that the document is not a formal assessment.

Rationale

The main principles informing this non-involvement in legal responsibilities rule is to create optimal conditions for family therapy work, to advocate for the best interest of the most vulnerable (typically minors), and to prevent doing more harm than good. Exceptions to this general rule, but not to the principles, may be authorised by the Executive Director, which includes but is not limited to allowing CFTC workers to comply with their legal obligations (see CFTC Response to Legal Issues Policy).



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Compliance

Non-compliance with the policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. This policy does not discourage a worker from exercising the worker's right under any other law, including the Alberta Human Rights Act.

Joaquin Gaete-Silva
JOAQUIN GAETE-SILVA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
January 15, 2024