



SSCC Client Services Provider Manual
South Central & Hill Country Region

sjrcbelong.org

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1.0 Introduction

Community-Based Care (CBC) is a new way of providing foster care and case management services. It is a community-based approach to meeting the individual and unique needs of children, youth, and families. Within a geographic service area, a single contractor (officially a Single Source Continuum Contractor or SSCC) is responsible for finding foster homes or other living arrangements for children in state care and providing them a full continuum of services.

In April of 2021, DFPS began a contract with Belong, a division of SJRC, Texas, Inc. to provide community-based care in the South Central and Hill Country region. Belong has been providing a continuum of services and care for children in the Texas foster care system in South Central and Hill Country region since of April 2021.

CBC Stage II begins in October of 2022. As in Stage I, Belong will continue to be responsible for finding foster homes or other living arrangements for children in state care and providing them a full continuum of services. In addition to Stage I responsibilities, Belong will provide Case Management and Client Services that enable children to safely achieve permanency in their own home, with relatives, or through adoption.

Throughout Stage I of the CBC contract, Belong has worked together with Residential Providers throughout South Central and Hill Country region to evaluate current service offerings and to expand capacity as necessary to create a full array of placement services, creating an integrated and full continuum of care.

In Stage II of CBC, Belong has developed a Network of Service Providers to deliver a broad array of services to meet the various needs of families involved in the Texas child welfare system. To become a Belong Services Network Provider, an agency or individual must complete an application and have a fully executed Belong Services Provider Agreement and Addendums. The Belong Services Provider Manual will give the Provider guidance on specific issues, expectations, and protocols not covered in the contract or addendum. If you have any questions regarding any part of this manual, please contact the Quality Assurance and Contracts Department at qabelong@sjrctexas.org.

Services Network Providers will be invited to participate in the Service Provider Network Meetings. The Services Network Provider Meetings will be scheduled on a regular basis to provide the Network and

Belong an opportunity to work together to identify gaps in services, starting new services, expanding services into rural areas, and improving communication and quality of services.

Any changes to Policy and Procedures will be posted on the Belong provider portal website <https://sjrcbelong.org/providerportal/>. It is the Provider's responsibility to routinely check for updates to the Belong Services Provider.

2.0 Substance Abuse Assessment and Counseling

Belong seeks to contract with qualified providers to assist Belong Permanency specialists in achieving program purpose and objectives by providing Substance Abuse Services (SAS). Belong does not guarantee any minimum level of utilization or specific number of referrals. Utilization rate will vary according to the needs of staff, individual client needs, and regional allocations. The final decision for use, partial use, and nonuse of these professional services lies within the authority of Belong.

2.1: Eligible Population

Individual adults referred directly by Belong are eligible for services; Belong determines eligibility. Provider must serve all clients properly referred by Belong consistent with their capacity and program aims.

2.2: Client Characteristics

Due to the nature of Belong's responsibilities, the Provider must be prepared to serve individuals with characteristics including, but not limited to:

- Involuntary clients;
- Parents or caregivers who are responsible for the care of abused and neglected children and need these services as a means of preventing future abuse or neglect;
- Person(s) to whom a court has ordered Belong to provide services;
- Person(s) who have been or are currently involved in the criminal justice system: or
- Person(s) with limited English language proficiency.

2.3: Minimum Service Provider Qualifications

Service Providers and staff responsible for their supervision and clinical decisions must be an individual(s) who is appropriately licensed by the State of Texas to perform the service. Interns are not approved to provide services to clients under this Contract.

Provider will assign only qualified personnel to this Contract. The Service Provider must be licensed by the State of Texas as a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC) to provide LCDC Services and maintain licensure throughout the life of this contract.

2.4: Trauma Informed Care Child Welfare Practices

An understanding of Trauma-Informed Care Child Welfare Practices is critical to the process of addressing therapeutic needs of families involved with substance abuse. Provider's personnel who work directly with clients must complete at least two hours of Trauma Informed Care training. Existing personnel must complete this training within 30 calendar days of contract execution. New personnel must complete this training within 30 calendar days of hire.

The Provider must maintain a copy of the Certificate of Completion of Trauma-Informed Care Training in the personnel record.

2.5: Service Authorization and Referral

Clients will be referred via a Service Authorization Form and a referral packet. Services must be authorized on a valid Service Authorization Form prior to services being rendered. The individual case record must include, and the Provider must follow the specifics addressed in the form, including but not limited to:

- The provision of services within the time frames specified;
- Discontinuing services at the earliest date, based on when one of these events occurs:
- The number of units specified on the authorization form have been delivered; or
- The request for service is withdrawn by Belong.

2.5.1: Additional Referral Information

In addition, the referral packet may include:

- Copies of previous psychological testing reports or other assessments;
- A Family Plan of Service; and
- Other information pertinent to the referral for services.

2.6: Initial Contact

The Provider must begin the delivery of services within 10 business days of contact by the referred client to set up an appointment.

2.7: Emergency

It is anticipated that emergency situations may occur requiring a need for expedited services. Provider must work closely with Belong to expedite service delivery as requested.

2.8: Missed or Cancelled Appointments

2.8.1: Missed by Client

The Provider must notify the Belong Permanency Specialist within 3 business days of the missed appointment via email.

When two consecutive appointments are missed, Provider must obtain the Belong Permanency Specialist's instructions on how to proceed. Further appointments must not be scheduled unless instructed by Belong to schedule additional appointments.

A maximum of two missed appointments may be billed to Belong. Belong will pay the provider at the half the full rate for the specific service which would have been provided per the fee schedule for the first two missed appointments per client. If the services are reauthorized for said client any future missed appointments will not be paid to the provider.

2.8.2: Canceled by Provider

The Provider is responsible for a 24-hour notification to clients when a session must be canceled. Provider must maintain documentation of notification and contacts in each client record regarding cancellations. Services cancelled by the provider are not billable.

2.9: Major Service Deliverables

Belong purchases Substance Abuse Services to assess individual service needs and meet identified need for treatment, as appropriate for clients who abuse alcohol or engage in the abuse of, improper use of, or dependency on illegal or legal drugs. Major service deliverables include any individual or combination of the following:

- Substance abuse assessments;
- Substance abuse treatment;
- Court related services; and
- Case specific diagnostic consultation.

2.10: Substance Abuse Assessment

An assessment is used to determine the severity of a client's substance abuse disorder and to identify their treatment needs. The assessment process consists of two main tasks:

- Intake, to include the gathering and compilation of, but not limited to:
 - Basic demographics;
 - Reason for referral;
 - Drug of choice; and
 - To some extent, a brief summation of the client's expectations regarding the proposed services.

2.10.1: Assessment Tool

- The administration and the written results of a substance abuse assessment tool is required. The assessment tool must identify problems associated with substance use including but not limited to the following minimum requirements:
 - The issues identified in the Belong client referral information;
 - The identification of the parent/caregiver's strengths, diminished protective capacities and unmet needs of the child(ren);

- The parent/caregivers' perception of family problems, to include how the parent/caregivers' substance use poses a threat to child safety, risk and why the child is in care or involved with CPS;
- The parent/caregivers' ability to protect the child(ren) from abuse or neglect;
- The parent/caregivers' ability to problem solve and utilize resources;
- The family's support system and/or extended family;
- Substance abuse;
- Family violence issues;
- Parent/Caregivers' ability to function as a provider for the family;
- Evaluation of safety threats and continued risk to the child; and
- Specific recommendations for further treatment.

2.10.2: Documentation of Assessment

Documentation of the assessment must be maintained in the client's record.

2.10.3: Assessment Due Date

Assessment is due to Belong no later than ten business days following the face-to-face meeting with referred client.

2.11: Substance Abuse Treatment

- Substance abuse treatment services must be provided:
- Face to face;
- In a suitable location other than the home of the client; and
- Within the Scope of Practice and guidelines consistent with generally acceptable standards of treatment.

Belong may authorize two types of counseling treatment: Group Counseling and/or Individual Counseling.

2.11.1 Group Counseling

Group counseling is the preferred service modality. It must be designed to equip clients with skills needed to understand the disease concept and maintain sobriety.

2.11.1.1: Group Requirements

The following are requirements for the provision of group services:

Group content must be designed for complete delivery within a series of group sessions and must be limited to no less than eight and no more than 24 total participant hours.

The group must be designed to allow clients to enter a series of sessions at any time they are referred, rather than having to wait for a new series to begin. Participants must be scheduled to prevent repeating a session topic.

The size of groups must be at least two (unrelated individuals), but no more than 12 total participants.

The Provider will be responsible for providing the site for the group. The site may be a Belong office site upon approval of Belong. The room must be appropriately furnished and large enough for the group.

2.11.2: Individual Counseling

Individual counseling consists of private, face-to-face counseling between a client and a counselor or therapist, to help the client meet his or her treatment goals.

If issues are identified through the participation in group counseling or other means, Belong may authorize individual counseling.

2.12: Communications with Belong

The Provider is expected to communicate significant information such as missed appointments, relapses, and drug testing results to the Permanency Specialist by phone followed by a written report that must be sent by email within 24 hours of the appointment.

2.13: Treatment Plan

Individual substance abuse treatment services require documentation to support the necessity of the service rendered. The client's written treatment plan is therefore required and must be developed, distributed, and maintained within the requirements outlined below throughout the course of treatment.

2.13.1: Initial Treatment Plan

The Provider's initial treatment plan shall identify the issues, intervention strategies, and goals of treatment. The initial treatment plan is due to the Permanency Specialist no later than 21 business days following the initial referral for treatment.

2.13.2: Treatment Plan Minimum Requirements

A treatment plan and supporting documentation must include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Identification and rank of issues to be addressed based on the client's assessment, including those identified in the Belong referral and any child safety threats;
- Defined goals;
- Written objectives for each goal;
- Identified strategies/interventions;
- Recommended projected length of services and frequency;
- Dated signature of participating client;
- Dated Service Provider's signature;
- Drug testing method and frequency of testing, if appropriate;
- A Relapse Prevention Safety Plan; and
- Date and way the plan was submitted to the Permanency Specialist.

2.13.3: Updates to Treatment Plan

Treatment plans must be updated every 90 days.

2.14: Monthly Summary Notes

Monthly summary notes must be provided to the Belong Permanency Specialist detailing the approach and progress or lack of progress by the 10th day of the month following the month of service. Notes must include enough information to keep the Permanency Specialist updated. At a minimum, the notes must address:

- Name of the client;
- Date(s) served, location, and type of service provided;
- Group session topic(s), level of participation, engagement, and changes in client's behaviors and conditions that demonstrate that problems contributing to risk have been, or are in the process of being satisfactorily addressed;
- Progress, or lack thereof, toward treatment goals; and
- Number of substance abuse tests, if any, and results.

2.15: Discharge Plan

The purpose of a Discharge Plan is to document and report closure of treatment services case due to either completion or termination. Provider must provide a Discharge Plan to Belong no later than ten business days after closure. A Discharge Plan must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Name of client(s) served;
- Summary with detail to support the client's participation and progress, or lack thereof, in meeting goals identified in the Treatment Plan, as applicable;
- Reason for case closure;
- Dated service provider's signature;
- Any recommended protective measures.

2.16: Substance Abuse and Alcohol Testing

Substance abuse and alcohol testing is not payable as a separate expense. It is expected that, if the Provider's

treatment plan requires testing, the Provider will have a method for testing as needed for treatment services.

2.16.1: Positive Test Result/Client Admission

Belong considers a client's admission of current drug use or abuse of alcohol as a "positive" test result. Client's denial of drug use should not be considered a negative test result.

2.16.2: Documentation

Provider must communicate and document the client's self-reporting or the positive test result to the Permanency Specialist within 24 hours, including:

- Substances tested; and
- Cut off levels.

2.17: Court Related Services

Belong purchases court related services when legally necessary and appropriate for the well-being, safety, or permanency of the child. This service is not optional and is an allowable charge to the contract only when authorized by Belong. Belong will, upon authorization, pay a total equal to three units of service for court testimony.

2.17.1: Preparation

The Provider and its representatives must ensure that they and the applicable service providers have personal knowledge of the matters to be discussed and are adequately prepared to provide the service.

2.17.2: Attendance

The Provider must ensure and require all requested or subpoenaed parties to attend depositions and court appearances at the times requested by Belong.

2.17.3: Court Related Documentation

The following information must be maintained in the client record:

- A copy of the completed Court Related Services Case Note, and
- Subpoena, if applicable.

2.18: Case Specific Diagnostic Consultation

Belong purchases diagnostic consultation services to obtain professional recommendations and opinions about a specific client. Diagnostic Consultation is participation in a formal meeting or staffing, initiated by Belong, to discuss a specific case. Informal telephone conversations and meetings are not billable.

2.18.1: Preparation

The Provider and its representatives must ensure that they are prepared to discuss relevant information at the case specific diagnostic consultation.

2.18.2: Attendance

The Provider is required and must ensure the service providers are available as requested by Belong to provide case specific diagnostic consultation services, including attendance at case staffing.

2.18.3: Documentation

A case note dated (month/day/year) and signed by the performing Provider to the appropriate and specific file is required. Case notes must include:

- Name of client;

- Date; start and end time of consultation;
- Location of consultation;
- Purpose of diagnostic consultation;
- Summary of case information shared at consultation; and
- Summary of any recommendations made by LCDC.

Other case specific diagnostic consultation documentation may also be included.

2.18.4: Developing, Managing, and Maintaining Quality

Quality Services Delivered to Belong: The Provider is responsible for implementing and maintaining quality assurance to ensure the services satisfy the requirements of this contract and clients benefit from services provided.

Timely Product Delivered to Belong: Provider must manage referrals to ensure timeframes and quality expectations can be met.

Provide Feedback to Belong Staff: At the request of Belong the Provider must provide informal information on the status and progress of referrals. The informal information will be at no charge to Belong.

2.19: Subcontract Requirements

Subcontractors providing services under the Contract must meet the same requirements as specified in this contract as the Belong Services Provider. No subcontract under the Contract shall relieve the Provider of the responsibility for ensuring the requested services are provided in compliance with the Belong Services Provider Agreement.

3.0 Evaluation and Treatment Services

A Permanency Specialist will authorize evaluation and treatment services on a Service Authorization Form. Eligible clients will be children and their family members in open CPS cases referred by the Permanency Specialist.

Individual or family counseling may be provided in the home. Policies on waiting times and missed appointments must be addressed as if the incidents had occurred in the office.

Belong seeks to contract with qualified providers for Evaluation and Treatment Services to assist in achieving the following program purpose and objectives:

- Provide Evaluation and Treatment Services to families and caregivers who are in CPS conservatorship to enhance protective factors in the family and prevent child maltreatment.
- Aid children in the development of skills to manage and overcome trauma resulting from incidents of abuse and/or neglect.

- Assess the parental actions of parents/caregivers to provide clinically guided behavioral health care services to overcome trauma, re-establish healthy relationships, and to ensure child safety and basic and developmental needs are met.
- Provide clinically guided behavioral health care services that address parent/caregiver actions that are imperative to child safety and the developmental/emotional needs of children.
- Provide clinically guided behavioral health care services to aid children and youth toward developing skills to overcome trauma and re-establish healthy relationships with parents/caregivers and others (siblings, other relatives, teachers, etc.).
- Provide domestic violence assessment and Battering Intervention services to the domestic violence perpetrator to move towards a non-violent, non-coercive family structure, establish skill sets to prevent future violence, and increase the safety of victims.

3.1: Contracted Evaluation and Treatment Services

Belong purchases the following direct client services to meet the individual need for evaluation and treatment:

- Evaluation Services:
 - Psychosocial Assessment (A psychosocial assessment is required to provide treatment services)
 - Psychological Services (Evaluation & Testing)
- Treatment Services:
 - Individual Counseling/therapy
 - Group Counseling/therapy
 - Family Counseling/therapy

3.2: Missed or Canceled Appointments

3.2.1: Missed by Client

The Provider must notify the Permanency Specialist within 24 hours of the missed appointment via email.

When two consecutive appointments are missed, Provider must obtain the Permanency Specialist's instructions on how to proceed. Further appointments must not be scheduled unless instructed by Belong to schedule additional appointments.

A maximum of two missed appointments may be billed to Belong. Belong will pay the provider at the half of the full rate for the specific service which would have been provided per the fee schedule for the first two missed appointments per client. If the services are reauthorized for said client any future missed appointments will not be paid to the provider.

3.2.2: Canceled by Provider

The Provider is responsible for a 24-hour notification to clients when a session must be canceled. Provider must maintain documentation of notification and contacts in each client record regarding cancellations.

3.3: Monthly Summary Notes

For all treatment services, monthly summary notes must be provided to the Permanency Specialist detailing the approach and progress, or lack of progress, by the 10th day of the month following the month of service. Notes must include enough information to keep the Permanency Specialist updated. At a minimum, the notes must address:

- Name of the client;
- Date(s) served, location and type of service provided;
- Group session topic(s), level of participation, engagement, and changes in client's behaviors and conditions that demonstrate that problems contributing to risk have been, or are in the process of being, satisfactorily addressed; and
- Progress or lack thereof, toward treatment goals.

3.4: Battering Intervention and Prevention Program (BIPP)

- Domestic Violence (DV) Assessment - DV assessment is required to determine if Battering Intervention and Prevention Program (BIPP) is appropriate for the domestic violence perpetrator.
- Group – Battering Intervention and Prevention Program (BIPP)

3.5: Court Related Services

Belong purchases court related services when legally necessary and appropriate for the well-being, safety, or permanency of the child. This service is not optional and is an allowable charge to the contract only when authorized by Belong. Belong will, upon authorization, pay a total equal to three units of service for court testimony.

3.5.1: Preparation

The Provider and its representatives must ensure that they and the applicable service providers have personal knowledge of the matters to be discussed and are adequately prepared to provide the service.

3.5.2: Attendance

The Provider must ensure and require all requested or subpoenaed parties to attend depositions and court appearances at the times requested by Belong.

3.5.3: Court Related Documentation

The following information must be maintained in the client file:

- A copy of the completed Court Related Services Case Note, and
- Subpoena, if applicable.

4.0 BIPP (Battering Intervention and Prevention Program)

Belong seeks to contract with qualified Providers to assist Belong in providing BIPP services. Through BIPP services, Belong seeks to increase the safety of victims and their children by reducing or eliminating the emotional, physical, and psychological trauma caused by domestic violence.

BIPP services will provide battering intervention services to the Person Using Violence (PUV) and assist PUVs and their family move towards a non-violent and non-coercive family structure, establish skill sets to prevent future violence, and increase the safety of family violence victims. Domestic Violence (DV) Assessments and Group Intervention Sessions are integral components of BIPP services.

Eligible clients include individuals and families referred directly by Belong or by a court that has ordered Belong to provide services.

4.1: Client Characteristics

Provider must be prepared to serve individuals, parents, or caregivers who are responsible for the care of abused and neglected children and need these services as a means of preventing future abuse or neglect.

4.2: Service Hours and Locations

Service hours must be flexible and include afternoon, evening, and weekend hours to accommodate working clients.

The Provider is required to coordinate a safe and therapeutic location for services. These services require that the Provider can substantiate and provide a therapeutic environment for specific goals and objectives. The following are acceptable and billable locations:

- In-Office services - delivered at the Provider's primary or satellite office.
- Out-of-Office services - at a location other than the Provider's primary or satellite office and must be requested in writing prior to services being rendered by the Belong caseworker in the Service Authorization Form or in a referral information received from Belong staff.
- Telehealth services - Involve direct face-to-face interactive video communication between the client and the Provider and if they choose to provide telehealth services.

4.3: Service Authorization and Referral Process

Clients who receive services under this contract will be referred through a Service Authorization Form.

4.3.1: Authorization Form

Only services authorized on a Service Authorization Form may be billed. Prior to services being rendered, the Service Authorization Form must be received and maintained in each client's record as a basis for payment from Belong.

4.3.2: Referral Information

Client background information must be received prior to service delivery. Additional background information can be shared in a variety of documents, including but not limited to a child plan, family plan, court report, prior reports, or assessments. Additional information may be obtained verbally from the referring party. Provider must follow any case specific instruction provided in the Service Authorization or in the referral documents.

4.3.3: Initiating Services

Provider must make initial contact within 72 hours of receipt of the Service Authorization Form. If this timeframe cannot be met, the Provider must notify the Belong caseworker within ten business days and document in the client's record why initial contact was not made. The documentation must include, but is not limited to:

- If a service location, date, and time cannot be agreed upon; or
- If a client is non-cooperative or non-responsive.

Provider must provide the authorized service(s) within ten business days of receipt of the Service Authorization Form.

It is anticipated that emergencies may occur requiring a need for immediate services. Provider must work closely with Belong to expedite service delivery as requested at no additional cost to Belong or the client.

In some cases, the information provided at referral may have changed. If unable to reach the client for any reason, the Provider must:

- Document in the client's file each contact attempt including the method of contact used; and
- Contact the Belong caseworker to obtain alternate or updated client contact information and document this request in the client's file.

4.4: Provider Qualifications

To provide services, the Provider's BIPP programs and DV assessments must be conducted by a Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Community Justice Assistance Division (TDCJ-CJAD) accredited BIPP provider with a current and valid license to operate in the State of Texas:

- Must hold one of the license types identified below:
 - Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC);
 - Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW);
 - Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW); or
 - Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), or
- Be a TDCJ-CJAD funded BIPP.

Provider must consistently adhere to the BIPP accreditation guidelines of TDCJ-CJAD for all experience and training requirements as well as all other guidelines.

Referrals for individual counseling must meet the standard clinician requirements as set forth for Treatment Providers.

Provider must submit a copy to Belong of the TDCJ-CJAD BIPP Accreditation Certificate for BIPP facilitators at the time of contract enrollment and application submission.

4.5: Training Requirements

Providers must adhere to all TDCJ-CJAD training requirements needed to maintain accreditation and must also complete at minimum, but not limited to:

- All Provider personnel who provide direct delivery of group sessions must complete the Trauma Informed Care Child Welfare Practices computer-based training (CBT) prior to working with clients and entering into a contract with Belong. The training is located through the DFPS provider training portal.
- Provider personnel includes non-contracted co-facilitators who are former PUVs.
- The Provider must submit a copy of the Certificate of Completion of Child Welfare Trauma Informed Care Training at the time of enrollment and maintain a copy in the personnel file.

4.6: Staff Requirements

The Provider will comply with the following:

- Background checks must be completed on all individuals who have direct contract with Belong clients prior to client contact and background checks must be renewed every two years. Required background checks apply to providers, co-facilitators, mentors, and volunteers.
- Provider must additionally comply with TDCJ-CJAD BIPP background check requirements.
- Provider must submit a copy of the Contracting Entity and List of Staff, Subcontractors and Volunteers at the initial application process and prior to access to clients, as well as any changes to personnel, to inform Belong of who is working on this contract.

4.7: Intake

Intake is completed at the onset of the PUV's first face-to-face meeting with the provider. The intake gathers information pertinent to the PUV's strengths, diminished protective actions, worries, and concerns. The Provider's intake procedures and techniques must be sufficient to respond to the presenting issues and provide appropriate substantiation for the resulting conclusions and recommendations used to develop the DV Assessment Report.

The adult victim may be a resource of information and should be invited for a voluntary interview if the adult victim is available or willing. The Provider will ensure that the adult victim knows that the PUV will not be present at the interview and that, as much as possible, the adult victim will not be identified to the PUV as the source of the information.

4.7.1: Intake Requirements

Upon intake, the Provider must obtain the following information from the PUV and family members:

- Domestic violence issues identified in the Belong client Referral Form;

- Information gathered from the DV Assessment questionnaire/checklist that was approved by the TDCJ-CJAD BIPP Program;
- Information gathered from the DV Assessment Report; and
- Any other documents provided by Belong and information gathered during the interview with the PUV.

4.8: Domestic Violence Assessment

A Domestic Violence (DV) Assessment is a face-to-face, one-on-one assessment of a PUV, which focuses on determining the nature of the PUV's use of violence, holding him/her accountable for his/her abusive behaviors and violence, and keeping victims safe.

This assessment must be conducted by a TDCJ-CJAD accredited BIPP provider who is either a LPC, LMSW, LCSW, or LMFT, with a current and valid license to operate in the state of Texas or a TDCJ-CJAD funded BIPP.

A DV Assessment is required to refer Belong clients who are using DV to BIPP intervention services. The BIPP provider must adhere to the accreditation guidelines of TDCJ-CJAD as well as the child welfare specific requirements identified in this section when serving all Belong clients.

The DV Assessment must be generated from the information gathered during the intake, initial assessment, referral documents, and other documents provided by the Belong caseworker. The BIPP provider will determine the PUV's appropriateness for program participation and will recommend the possible need for referral to concurrent or prerequisite substance abuse, mental health, sex offender, or other applicable assessments.

DV Assessments identify cognitive-behavioral issues that interfere with the adult victim's protective actions to provide child/children safety and will include the identification of the cognitive and behavioral effects of child abuse and trauma caused by domestic violence on the child/children and adult victim/parent within the family.

In addition, DV Assessments must include the identification of interventions needed to assist the PUVs and their families in moving towards a non-violent, non-coercive family structure, to increase safety within households, and to establish skill sets to prevent future violence.

4.9: Domestic Violence (DV) Assessment Report

The Provider must provide to the Belong caseworker a copy of the DV Assessment Report that was completed with the client and accompanied with a copy of the client completed TDCJ-CJAD DV Assessment within ten business days of the client's initial appointment.

The Provider must use the DV Assessment, which has been previously approved by the TDCJ-CJAD BIPP Program. This form is often a checklist or questionnaire completed by the PUV.

Additionally, the Provider must complete and submit the Belong DV Assessment Report. This DV Assessment Report includes an intake and assessment, which pertains to the parent-child-victim relationship. This form will gather basic information, which addresses the PUV's understanding of the impact of the child's exposure to violence and violence directed towards the child.

The individual BIPP provider who sees the PUV must not be the same individual who provides services to the adult victim. If the Family Violence Program provides services to both the victim and the PUV, the shelter/agency must ensure separation of services for safety of the adult victim.

4.10: Individualized Plan

The individual plan is a living document that assesses a client's needs and outlines goals and plan of action for group participation. The individualized plan must:

- Be initiated by no later than the second group meeting;
- Include goals created for the PUV by both the PUV and facilitator, expectations that the PUV has regarding BIPP, and concepts that the PUV has learned from the BIPP;
- Recommendations to discuss victim safety and strategies the PUV will use for risk reduction; and
- Include information on the mentor relationship, which is initiated during BIPP and may continue as support after completion of the BIPP program. Bringing support people into the family increases protective factors. To increase protective factors, Provider must help the PUV identify and facilitate a mentor relationship to provide support and reinforcement of non-violent behavior.

PUV's who have unresolved traumas or other issues that interfere with BIPP engagement must be supported through a referral to individual counseling concurrently with BIPP attendance or after as deemed appropriate.

Couples counseling is not appropriate during BIPP attendance but may be recommended upon successful completion of the BIPP program.

Provider must be available for consultation regarding issues such as supervised visitation, family safety issues, and other Belong related concerns. Forms of consultation may include phone conversations, diagnostic consultation, family group decision-making conference, safety network meeting, or other Belong request.

Provider will incorporate Belong requests from consultation into the PUVs individualized plan.

Homework in BIPP groups is assigned to assist with reinforcement and internalization of course objectives. When assigning homework based on TDCJ guideline #13, child welfare topics must be included.

4.11: BIPP Group Requirements

Group content must be organized and designed for complete delivery within a series of group sessions and content must contain TDCJ-CJAD approved BIPP program topics. Provider must ensure that group sessions provide support group member entry to any series within the sessions at any time and facilitate completion of all sessions.

4.11.1: Orientation

This is a process to prepare clients for group sessions and will not count as one of the required 36 hours of BIPP. Orientation must include at minimum, but is not limited to the following:

- An overview of the 18-week curriculum;
- Explanation of the rules and attendance policy regarding excused and unexcused absences;
- Clarification that monthly progress reports and a final closure summary on client performance will be submitted to Belong caseworker;
- Description of the confidentiality policy;
- Discussion that occasional homework may be required;
- Discussion that the client will be required to report his threats or acts of violence to the BIPP provider and develop an Accountability Plan. This plan will be developed by the client with input from the provider and group members regarding his use of threats or acts of violence;
- Discussion of identifying mentors and their role; and
- Pre/Post Test - Administering the BIPP Client Questionnaire, (Dominance Scale, Hamby, 1996) as a performance measure pre-test at the beginning of the BIPP and the identical form as a post-test at the conclusion of BIPP.

4.11.2: Group Sessions

Group session requirements must follow the TDCJ-CJAD Guidelines and must include at the minimum, but is not limited to the following:

- Groups facilitated by a single facilitator will not have more than 15 unrelated individuals;
- Groups that are co-facilitated will not have more than 20 unrelated individuals. Belong prefers co-facilitators who are of different genders regardless of group size. For groups that are co-facilitated, at least one facilitator must be a LPC, LMSW, LCSW, or LMFT and the other co-facilitator(s) may include the following:
 - Volunteers; or
 - Individuals who are training to be a facilitator;
 - Former PUVs will not be a sole facilitator for Belong BIPP groups. However, former PUVs who want to work directly with PUVs to gain additional experience may assist as a co-facilitator of BIPP groups under BIPP provider supervision. Providers may select former PUVs to be co-facilitators who meet the following requirements:
- Successfully completed a BIPP program;
- Committed to not using violence;
- Have not used violence or coercive control for two years;

- Willing to complete the Child Welfare Trauma Informed CBT identified above; and
- Seek a volunteer opportunity for practice and reinforcement of BIPP skills.
- Group intervention consists of group services provided simultaneously to at least two unrelated individuals to help meet individualized treatment goals.
- Each group session must be two hours long and the program must be structured to be 18 weeks long;
- Each PUV must complete a total of 36 hours of BIPP sessions in addition to Orientation;
- The Provider must provide the site for the group;
- The Provider must maintain a legible participant sign-in log;
- The Provider must document all cancelled groups and include the following in the documentation:
 - Reason for cancellation; and
 - Date, time, and method of cancellation notification.

4.11.3: Specialized Groups

Provider must provide BIPP services to Belong clients in a non-discriminatory manner, which includes providing women and male same-sex groups.

- Women's Groups
 - Provider must place females attending BIPP in a women's only group. Provider must not place female same-sex partners/spouses in the same group with female heterosexual BIPP groups.
 - Provider must not place a female victim voluntarily requesting to receive BIPP intervention services in a female PUV mandated group. Programs or providers must screen victims voluntarily requesting to receive BIPP intervention services to ensure that coercion is not taking place.
 - Provider must provide victims with appropriate referral information for victim services.
 - If the program or provider does not have enough PUVs to constitute a group for female same-sex PUVs, the program or provider will provide individual sessions.
- Male Groups
 - Provider must place males attending BIPP in a men's only group. Provider must not place male same-sex partners/spouses in male heterosexual BIPP groups.
 - If the program or provider does not have enough PUVs to constitute a group for same-sex PUVs, the program or provider will provide individual sessions.

4.12: Curricula

Provider must use TDCJ-CJAD approved curriculum. Provider must also include a Child Welfare Component in the curriculum that covers:

- Information to ensure the PUV addresses the impact exposure to violence has on child(ren). Simply removing a child from a trauma-inducing situation does not take away the impact the trauma has made on the child, who often continues to live in fear and anxiety.
- Because resistance is often lessened by the sixth to eighth group session, the Provider must incorporate the impact of child exposure to violence during this time and use the "Lisa 911" audio clip located at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_ht2vAYPoc

- The following topics are to enhance existing modules to address the child welfare component and fatherhood:
- Awareness of the impact of witnessing violence or being aware of violence has on a child's development (i.e., emotional, physical and view of future relationships);
- Explore experiences and perceptions the PUV had growing up and how it contributes to their current parenting;
- Develop the PUV's capacity to engage in healthy parent-child relationships by discussion of expectations of a parent;
- Discuss the importance of a respectful and positive co-parenting relationship with the other parent;
- Reduce the PUV's self-centeredness and understand child self-centeredness;
- Discuss how to rebuild trust with the child and family unit after the use of abuse; and
- Discuss a plan for creating a safe place for the child and family.

4.13: Reporting Requirements

4.13.1: Safety Concerns

Provider must report any known law violations by PUVs, incidents of physical violence disclosed by PUVs, and/or termination from the BIPP within five (5) business days to the referring Belong caseworker.

4.13.2: Monthly Progress Report:

A Monthly Progress Report must provide information directly related to client's participation or lack thereof established by intervention goals and objectives. Belong will use the information provided in this report to assess child safety and/or report client progress to the court.

A typewritten Monthly Progress Report is required for clients participating in one or more BIPP group sessions. The Belong caseworker must receive the Monthly Progress report by the tenth business day of the month following the month of service. The report must include but is not limited to the following components:

- Name of client;
- Dates of session(s);
- Location of session(s);
- Type of service(s) provided (group and group education);
- Dates of missed appointments and reasons;
- Current goals of intervention including a detailed summary describing client's progress/participation or lack thereof in meeting goals identified in the individual plan;
- As appropriate, recommendation for closure, early termination, or extension of services;
- Whether client is engaging in the BIPP group, how the PUV has internalized BIPP intervention and prevention information and efforts, which indicate a demonstrated behavior change, if any and any input from the mentor indicating progress or concerns;

- Concerns of the PUV, facilitators, the Caseworkers, the mentor, any family, or team members, and what the client plans to focus on in the following month;
- Ongoing safety concerns for victim(s) and child(ren);
- Date and way the report was submitted to the Belong caseworker; and
- Summary of any contact with the victim or child(ren) by the BIPP provider during this time.

Additional reporting requirements for BIPP Group Sessions must include:

- Attendance dates and session topic;
- Detailed summary of client's participation;
- A detailed description of the client's ability to process and implement new information;
- Changes in client's behaviors and conditions that demonstrate enhanced or diminished protective actions contributing to child safety; and
- Any significant occurrences must be reported, such as disruptive behaviors, inattentiveness, or other information useful in case planning.

4.13.3: Closure Summary Report:

This report describes a discharge from BIPP Services that has been discussed in advance with client and the Belong caseworker. Agreement is preferred, and recommendations are noted in the report.

Provider must describe the client's progress towards satisfactory completion of BIPP, which also requires demonstration of the following behaviors by the PUV:

- Recognize and identify behaviors that are harmful to others and progressively reduce patterns of power and control behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of entitlement;
- Responsibility for his/her own behavior and demonstrates awareness the decision to use violence is his/hers and not predicated on the behavior of victims;
- Re-education that includes meaningful participation in the BIPP classes as well as homework assignments, and demonstrates an understanding of responsible co-parenting;
- Restitution in the form of making amends for use of violence to the adult and child victims, which may include community service; and
- Restoration to be an individual who can be trusted to respect others and practice non-violence.

Provider must submit a typewritten Closure Summary Report for each client indicating service will not continue in the following month. The Belong caseworker must receive the Closure Summary Report

within ten business days following the month of service. The report must include but is not limited to the following components:

- Name of client;
- A detailed summary describing client's participation or lack thereof in meeting intervention goals identified in current Individual Plan(s);
- Reason for case closure and recommendations. Additional conditions regarding safety and contact;
- Date, signature, and credential(s) of the performing provider; and
- Date and manner that the Closure Summary Report is submitted to the Belong caseworker.

4.14: Client Record Documentation Requirements

The following information must be maintained in the client's file:

- Beginning and ending time supporting the unit(s) of service billed. The units of service consist of the length of time spent conducting the BIPP group session;
- A typewritten, comprehensive, individualized summary to include the group topic, DV Assessment identifying progress, obstacles, recommendations, and plans for the next scheduled session to include the date/time of next session;
- Communication log of contacts with other professionals regarding each client, not limited to Belong, parole, probation, community referrals such as crisis shelters or other as applicable to client maintained in the client record. At a minimum the log must contain the date, person contacted, and purpose of the contact. Log must be provided to Belong upon request; and
- Copies of BIPP Coordination and Releases of Information, made on behalf of the client for additional support services. Copies of these documents must also be provided to Belong caseworker within ten days of completion.

4.15: Support Services

Support Services are an array of services that aid in ensuring child safety, well-being, and permanency. The Provider, upon request by Belong, must provide the following support services:

4.15.1: Court Related Services

This involves testimony in judicial and administrative proceedings only at the request of Belong. To the extent possible, Provider must also assist Belong in locating Provider's past employees, agents, volunteers, consultants, or subcontractors when Belong requires them to appear and testify.

4.15.2: Diagnostic Consultation

A Diagnostic Consultation is participation in a formal meeting or staffing, initiated by Belong, to discuss a specific case. Belong purchases case specific Diagnostic Consultation Services to obtain an analysis of a

specific Belong case to identify the cause or nature of a condition, situation, or problem, and provide advice, opinions, and recommendations to Belong.

4.16: Translator and Interpreter Services

When a referral is received for a client that has limited English proficiency or communication impairment, translator or interpreter services must be arranged by the Provider.

4.17: Missed or Canceled Services

4.17.1: Services Missed or Canceled by Client

Missed or canceled appointments are when time agreed to by the Provider and the client is attempted but is unable to be completed because the client's uncooperativeness, inability to participate at the scheduled time, or the client not being present. When this occurs, the Provider must contact the Belong caseworker by 5:00 p.m. on the business day following any missed or cancelled appointment.

Missed appointments are not billable or reimbursed as part of BIPP services. The expectation is that clients will attend all modules and will make up missed sessions to receive a completion certificate.

When two consecutive appointments are missed or canceled, the Provider must notify the Belong caseworker or supervisor and obtain instructions on how to proceed. Provider will not schedule further appointments unless instructed by Belong to do so.

4.17.2: Canceled Appointments by Provider

Canceled appointments are when time agreed to by the Provider and the client are canceled by the Provider. The Provider must provide at least a 24-hour notification to clients when a session must be canceled. If the 24-hour notification cannot be met due to unforeseen circumstances such as acts of nature, notification to the Belong caseworker must occur by the next workday following the canceled session. Provider must maintain documentation of notification and contacts with each client and Belong caseworker regarding cancellation of any session. Services canceled by the Provider are not billable.

5.0 Psychological Evaluation/Psychosocial Assessment

A Permanency Specialist may authorize psychological testing or a Psychosocial assessment if:

- The Permanency Specialist suspects the presence of a mental, behavioral, or intellectual and developmental disability;
- A licensed clinician who has conducted a psychosocial assessment or a psychiatrist who has conducted a psychiatric evaluation and recommends psychological testing;
- A copy of a current psychosocial assessment, psychological testing, or psychiatric evaluation (conducted within the past 14 months) is not available;
- There is no other source of payment, such as Medicaid, private insurance, or a community resource; or
- The court orders psychological testing.

Eligible clients include:

- Parents or caregivers in open Belong cases;
- Kinship, and prospective adoptive parents (when this service helps to determine or maintain appropriate placement).

The Provider will provide quality care with the focus on safety, permanency, and well-being for children and youth in CPS conservatorship so that they can move into a least restrictive and more permanent, family- like setting.

5.1: Missed or Cancelled Appointments 5.1.1: Missed by Client

The Provider must notify the Permanency Specialist within 1 business day of the missed appointment via email.

5.1.2: Canceled by Provider

The Provider is responsible for a 24-hour notification to clients when a session must be canceled. Provider must maintain documentation of notification and contacts in each client record regarding cancellations.

6.0 Drug Testing

6.1: Missed or Canceled Appointments

Belong may authorize the screening of a client's urine specimen to test for the existence of a drug.

A drug screening confirms only the existence of the drug in a specimen; it does not confirm whether a client used the drug or whether a positive result is due to secondary exposure.

A diluted sample indicates that a client drank a large amount of water at some time before the drug test.

When the lab indicates that a sample is diluted, the Permanency Specialist can take one the following actions to arrive at a conclusion about the client's use:

- Have the client retested;
- Request a different type of testing, such as requesting a hair follicle test instead of a urine test;
- Rely on credible evidence obtained through observation, information from collateral sources (such as a teacher, neighbor, or family doctor), and the case history.

6.2: Oral Fluids

Belong staff may authorize an instant test; that is, an oral swab of a client's oral fluids performed by Belong staff. The test results may be required to be confirmed by a laboratory test.

6.3: Hair Testing

A Permanency Specialist may authorize the testing of a client's hair sample to establish the client's use of a drug over a longer time span.

Hair testing does not detect the recent use of drugs; rather, it detects drug use that took place at least weeks or even months before the test.

6.4: Drug Test Confirmation – All Types

A Permanency Specialist may authorize a test confirming the results of a drug test.

A specimen is collected from the client to measure whether the client's body has metabolized the drug. If the drug is present in the client's body at levels high enough to be metabolized, the possibility of accidental or second-hand exposure is ruled out. Confirmation tests are also used to rule out false-positive results.

7.0 Translator and Interpreter Services

This is not an optional service. When a referral is received for a client that has limited English proficiency or communication impairment, translator or interpreter services must be arranged by the Provider.

Translator and interpreter services are only reimbursable when provided by a subcontracted translator or interpreter that is approved to provide contracted services. Translator and interpreter services provided under subcontract include, but are not limited to:

- Provision of information and services in a manner understandable to the client using interpreters, translators, or other identified methods;
- Use of auxiliary aids to ensure effective communication for clients with hearing, vision, speech, or other communication impairments. The Provider must identify the service provider and the compensation rate and secure prior approval from Belong contract staff.

7.1: Service Requirements

When a client's ability to communicate is diminished due to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or some other communication disability, Belong reimburses for translator and interpreter services when provided by the Provider. Provider must ensure that communications with clients who have communication impairments are as effective as communications with other clients, and that clients understand all significant actions as fully as possible.

8.0 Court Related Services

Belong may request one or more of the court-related services listed below, when it is legally necessary and appropriate for the well-being, safety, or permanency of the child. Available court-related services include, but are not limited to:

- The serving of citations (local or out-of-state; by publication or other means);
- The reproduction of records (such as, birth certificates and medical);
- The costs of a court reporter for depositions;
- The costs of a court reporter for transcripts;
- Fees for a provider witness testifying at a trial, deposition, or mediation. (For example, a therapist who provides therapy to a child or the child's parents under a contract with Belong);
- The costs of out-of-area travel for a provider witness;
- The cost of an expert witness testifying at a trial, deposition, or mediation; and
- The travel costs for an expert witness.

8.1: Service Requirements

8.1.1: Preparation

The Provider and its representatives must ensure applicable service providers have personal knowledge of the matters to be discussed and are adequately prepared to provide case-specific testimony.

8.1.2: Attendance

The Provider must ensure that requested or subpoenaed parties attend depositions and court appearances at the times requested by Belong.

8.2: Court Related Documentation

The following information must be maintained in the client file:

- A copy of the completed Court Related Services Case Note, and
- Subpoena, if applicable.

9.0 Supervised Visitation

A Belong Permanency Specialist may authorize supervised visitation if visits between a child in DFPS conservatorship and the child's parents or other caregivers require it.

Clients are eligible for this service when:

- Staff determine that the service is needed;
- The opinion and possible testimony of a trained third-party regarding the parent-child relationship is desired/requested; or
- Supervised visitation is court-ordered.

Supervised visits must take place in a safe and appropriate setting. The supervised visitation services available by contract must include:

- Observation of the parent's or caregiver's interaction with the child during a visit, including but not limited to:
 - Behavior management and alternatives to physical discipline;
 - The parent-child relationship, including attachment and communication skills;
 - Nurturance of children; and
 - The child's reaction to the parent or caregiver.
 - Preparation of notes about the visit;
 - Contact with the child's worker about the visit (at least monthly);
 - Appear in court to provide testimony when needed; and
 - Participation in staffing for case planning, as needed.

9.1: Need for Service

Belong seeks to contract with qualified providers to assist Belong in achieving program purpose and objectives by providing Supervised Visitation Services. Belong does not guarantee any minimum level of utilization or specific number of referrals. Utilization rate will vary according to the needs of staff, individual client needs and regional allocations. The final decision for use, partial use, and non-use of these professional services lies within the authority of Belong.

9.2: Accessibility

Services must be available seven days a week, including evening and holidays as necessary. Service hours must be flexible and include morning, afternoon, and evening to accommodate the schedules of employed participants. The Provider must accommodate school age children by scheduling services at times that do not interfere with school attendance and participation in school activities.

9.3: Provider Secured Location

The Provider must obtain prior written approval from the Belong program liaison or designee for visitation services delivered in locations other than the Provider's primary or satellite office.

9.4: Travel

Time or travel to and from any site of service is not billable.

9.5: Eligible Population

Individual adults referred directly by Belong are eligible for services. Belong determines eligibility; the Provider must serve all clients properly referred by Belong.

9.6: Client Characteristics

Due to the nature of Belong responsibilities, the Provider must be prepared to serve individuals with varied characteristics.

Characteristics of children may include, but are not limited to:

- Exhibiting a pattern of impulsivity;
- Exhibiting poor or insecure attachment to parents;
- Exhibiting separation anxiety;
- Having a history of temper tantrums;
- Having chronic illness or health problems;
- Having experienced probable neglect, physical abuse or substantiated sexual abuse;
- Having witnessed violence between parental figures;
- Being easily distractible or has attention deficits;
- Being hyperactive;
- Being irritable; or
- Being the recipient of special education services.

Characteristics of families may include, but are not limited to:

- Family may exhibit chronic unresolved conflicts between parental figures and or child,
- One or more parental figures may:
 - Have a history of chemical abuse or are currently exhibiting chemical abuse;
 - Have engaged in probable or adjudicated criminal activity;
 - Have had previous mental illness treatment; or
 - Exhibit poor or inconsistent monitoring of the child's behavior.

9.7: Missed Appointments

Clients will be provided the necessary information to be able to contact the Provider in at least two of the following methods for the purpose of notifying the Provider of the need to cancel an appointment: phone number, email, or a number to text a message.

9.7.1: Missed by Client

A missed appointment is when a client fails to notify the Provider within 24 hours of the scheduled appointment and fails to present themselves for the scheduled visitation.

The Provider must document the time and date of any missed appointment. The Provider must obtain the signatures of those present and email the Permanency Specialist by 5 p.m. on the business day following a missed appointment.

When two consecutive appointments are missed, the Provider must notify the Permanency Specialist for instructions on how to proceed. Further appointments must not be scheduled unless instructed by Belong to schedule additional appointments. When a client has missed two appointments for supervised visitation the handling of any future visitations will be transferred back to the Permanency Specialist to

arrange and manage. No further authorizations will be issued to the provider until a determination is made by the Permanency Specialist and their supervisor.

Appointments scheduled without this authorization will not be billable to Belong as visitation or missed appointments.

9.7.2: Delay in Beginning the Visitation

It is possible that the parent or the child may be late arriving at the visitation. The Provider must be prepared to begin the visit at the time both parties arrive up through the time the visitation was scheduled to end or the length of time necessary to comply with court orders, as applicable.

9.7.3: Canceled by Provider

The Provider is responsible for a 24-hour notification to clients and the Permanency Specialist when a visit must be canceled. The Provider must maintain documentation of notification and contacts in each client record regarding cancellation. The documentation must include:

- The reason for cancellation;
- The date, time, and manner of contact with each client, notifying them of the cancellation; and
- Documentation of the time, date, and manner used to notify the Permanency Specialist of the canceled visit, as well as the name of the Permanency Specialist that was notified.

9.8: Major Service Deliverables

Major Service deliverables include:

- Preparation for Supervised Visits;
- Pre-visitation Activities;
- Monitor the visit;
- Document the visit; and
- Provide court related services.

9.9: Preparation for Supervised Visits

The Provider is responsible for all activities necessary for each supervised visit and must take actions as required and appropriate to prepare to oversee each supervised visit, including but not limited to:

- Taking actions necessary to comply with all Belong referral instructions and Belong Contract requirements;
- Confirming the visitation schedule;
- Confirming who may participate in the visitation;
- Ensuring visit participants will be allotted their full time for a visit;

- Obtaining the necessary approval for the site location;
- Securing an appropriate visitation site to include the following;
- Has an environment that is safe and non-threatening;
- Is age appropriate;
- Is family friendly;
- Is fully equipped with age-appropriate items that will allow the family to participate in activities and interact;
- Will allow flexibility to accommodate the physical needs of the participants such as meals and snacks and accessibility; and
- Is convenient to the family.

9.10: Pre-Visitation Activities

The Provider staff must meet with the adult participants prior to the children being present and immediately before the first supervised visit begins for the purpose of preparing the adults to ensure a productive supervised visit. The pre-visitation meeting will serve to:

- Provide an explanation of the Supervised Visitation Rules for Caregivers and Adult Participant(s) to ensure all adult participants understand the rules; and
- Finalize the Visitation Plan that includes the visitation schedule clearly stating the frequency, length of the visits to include the begin and end times and dates, who may visit and place of visit.

The Provider must obtain the agreement of every adult participant, documented by the signature of each such participant on a copy of the Supervised Visitation Rules for Caregivers and Adult Participant(s), prior to the beginning of the initial visit.

Note: If any adult participant refuses to sign the Supervised Visitation Rules for Caregivers and Adult Participant(s), the Provider must document the reasons for such refusal and notify the Permanency Specialist by 5 p.m. on the business day following the refusal for instructions on how to proceed.

The Provider must ensure the visitation site is prepared and equipped to facilitate the visit and to meet the needs of the participants.

9.11: Monitoring the Visit

The Provider must monitor the visit. The Observer must observe and be present for the entire visit and be attentive to the interactions of the participants. To ensure the safety of the child(ren), monitoring should include but not be limited to the following activities:

- Ensuring all adult participants at the visit sign a Sign-In Log;
- Ensuring only individuals who have been pre-approved by Belong participate in the visit;
- Ensuring the visit is monitored at all times by observers;

- Ending the visit at any time the child(ren) is fearful of continuing the visit;
- Ending the visit at any time there are safety concerns;
- Allowing only persons authorized by Belong to remove the child(ren) from the visit; and
- Ensuring that the caregivers and all approved adult visitors comply with the visitation rules.

The participants must be allowed to communicate effectively which may include conversing in the language of their choice. The Provider must ensure the Observer that is monitoring the visit is able to understand and as necessary, effectively communicate with the participants.

9.11.1: Documentation During the Visit

The Observer must document observations of the parent's or caregiver's interactions with the child(ren) during the visit or interactions and observations between siblings during sibling visits.

9.11.2: Visit Observations

Observation notes for parent or caregiver and child(ren) visits must be documented using the Visitation Record and Observation Checklist. Copies of all visitation records and observation forms must be sent to the Permanency Specialist monthly. Ideally this would be submitted at the same time as monthly billing.

An Observer may only observe one visitation at a time.

9.12: Court-Related Services

Belong purchases court related services when legally necessary and appropriate for the well-being, safety, or permanency of the child. Court related services are not optional.

9.12.1: Preparation

The Provider and its representatives must ensure that they have personal knowledge of the matters to be discussed at the Deposition or Court Appearance and are adequately prepared to do so.

10.0 Home Studies

10.1: Service Requirements

10.1.1: Foster/Adoptive (FAD) Home Screening

A study of prospective FAD families to assess a parent's or potential Caregiver's past and present levels of functioning to determine their ability to foster or adopt and that meets HHS Child Care Regulations (CCR) Minimum Standards for Child Placing Agencies (CPA) (Minimum Standards), Belong will authorize the following types of FAD Studies:

- Adoptive Home Study;
- Foster Home Study;
- FAD Home Study; and/or

- FAD Home Study with Kinship.

10.1.2: Kinship Caregiver Home Assessment (KCHA)

Studies a household of a Child that is related to this household and is in DFPS managing Conservatorship. A KCHA is done when Belong intends to place a Child in the home with a relative or a person with a long- standing relationship with the Child in accordance with Texas Family Code Section 264.754, Investigation of Proposed Placement, and CPS Policy Handbook CPS Policy 6623 - Completing a Risk Assessment, and a Written Home Assessment of the Kinship Caregiver.

10.1.3: Health, Social, Educational, and Genetic History (HSEGH) Report

Summarizes the review of a Child's records and interviews, as applicable, with staff, caregivers, and family members. A HSEGH is also required to meet Minimum Standards for Child Placing Agencies (CPA) Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 749.3391 and Texas Family Code Sections 162.005 - 008.

10.1.4: Court Related Services

When required by Belong, the Provider will provide expert services in court cases or proceedings that include but are not limited to providing testimony in court or a deposition related to services.

10.2: Referrals

The Provider must develop and maintain processes to manage referrals and assignments. These processes should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Developing and maintaining a system that effectively handles referrals within the deadlines, with Provider staff working closely with Belong staff to ensure that caregivers are contacted promptly upon receipt of the referral, and that referrals are not delayed, returned, or withdrawn due to minor errors or incomplete information that is readily available from Belong;
- Be available by phone and email from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday except on holidays.
- Provider is expected to adjust schedules to accommodate the needs of caregivers and other persons as necessary to complete the home study or report within the established timeframes for the referral as described in Tables 2 and 3; and
- Prevent conflicts of interest or bias by not assigning a referral to staff who has or may have a conflict of interest based on previous familiarity with or knowledge of the caregiver assessed.

10.2.1: Initial Contact and Acknowledgement

The Provider must contact or attempt to contact the caregiver no later than 24 hours from receipt of the Service Authorization and Referral packet. This initial contact requirement does not apply to HSEGH referrals.

10.2.2: Return of Uncompleted Referral

It is expected that the Provider will ensure that all referrals are processed within the required timeframes and that any additional information, when needed or missing, is requested from Belong by e-mail. However, there are instances when a referral must be returned to Belong for one of the following reasons:

- Unable to Reach Caregiver
- If the caregiver’s contact information is invalid, notify the referring Belong staff to request additional contact information and instructions on how to proceed.
- If contact information appears to be valid but the caregiver has not responded in 24 hours of Provider's initial contact attempt, notify the referring Belong staff to request additional contact information or assistance with contacting the caregiver.
- If additional contact information is unavailable or Provider is still unable to reach the caregiver by the deadline to acknowledge receipt of referral, the Service Authorization and Referral packet may be returned to Belong.
- Document all attempts in a contact log that includes, but is not limited to date, time, and method of contact.
- Referral Packet Incomplete
 - If the referral packet is incomplete due to missing required documents or information, Provider will request missing information from the referring Belong staff within the timeframes provided above.
 - If information is not received 48 hours prior to the date the home visit is scheduled, the Provider will notify the Belong staff and supervisor listed in the referral that the referral will be returned if documentation is not received within 24 hours prior to the scheduled home visit.
- Caregiver or Household Members Unavailable
 - If the caregiver or household members are unavailable based on the timeframes listed in Table 1 below, from the date the Service Authorization and Referral packet are acknowledged, and they do not agree to reschedule for a date that is within 30 calendar days of the date the referral was received, the referral packet may be returned to Belong.

Table 1: TIMEFRAMES OF UNAVAILABILITY

Referral Type	Consecutive Calendar Days Caregiver is Unavailable
Expedited – 5 Days	2 Days
Expedited – 10 Days	4 Days
Expedited or Standard – 15 Days	5 Days
Standard - 20 Days	7 Days

10.2.3: Notification of Referral Return

Upon determination that the referral meets the criteria to be returned, Provider must notify the referring Belong staff no later than two business days. The notification must include the following information:

- Date and time of each contact attempt;
- Method of contact (phone, text, email);
- Results of contact (left message, phone number not working, etc.); and
- Date and time the referring Belong staff were notified that caregiver was unresponsive.

The Provider will not charge Belong for a returned referral packet that is sent back to Belong. A referral may not be returned due to unavailability of the Provider.

If a referral is returned and Belong chooses to submit a new one, the referral process will start over.

10.2.4: Withdrawal of Referral

Belong will allow a referral to be withdrawn if one of the following occurs:

- The caregiver provides notice in writing to the Provider or Belong that they no longer want to be considered for placement of a child;
- Belong notifies the Provider by e-mail that the referral is no longer needed;
- Belong notifies the Provider by e-mail of information that may result in the immediate rejection of the caregiver for placement of a child; or
- The caregiver is uncooperative. Belong must determine if the caregiver is uncooperative. Unanticipated delays or unexpected periods of unavailability by the caregiver or household members, identified after the initial contact are not necessarily considered uncooperative by Belong.

The referral remains active until notified otherwise by Belong, and the applicable timeframe applies to complete the home study or report. The Provider must notify the referring Belong staff by email within one business day of their knowledge of the caregiver or household's withdrawal. The Provider must complete and submit the Routing and Approval and Withdrawal Report to Belong staff making the referral for approval within three business days of the withdrawal.

10.2.5: Rescheduled Referral

There are circumstances under which a referral may be rescheduled, at no cost to Belong, and as approved and determined by Belong. All rescheduled referrals must be in writing and sent to the Belong staff and supervisor listed in the referral.

A referral may be rescheduled when the caregiver notifies the Provider or Belong that they are unavailable within the deadlines in Table 1 and agree to a home visit appointment date that is within 30 calendar days of the date the referral was received by the Provider. A referral may be rescheduled in other situations, with prior approval by Belong in writing.

The request to reschedule, including the reason for rescheduling and the date the home visit is to be conducted, must be submitted to Belong staff making the referral within one business day from the date notified by the caregiver. The Provider must include in the notification the minimum required information below:

- Date of initial contact;
- Name of Caregiver contacted;
- Reason for the unavailability and period of unavailability; and
- Date of availability.

If a referral is rescheduled, the rescheduled date must be within 30 calendar days of the date the referral was received by the Provider. The approved rescheduled date must be noted on the appropriate Routing and Approval Form with a copy of the email from Belong approving the request to reschedule. The rescheduled appointment date becomes the new Referral date for due date calculations and does not include two additional Business Days for acknowledgement to the rescheduled appointment date. Provider will maintain all documentation for the rescheduled referral and verify with the caregiver that there have been no changes prior to the rescheduled home visit date. Belong will not resubmit the referral packet.

The referral remains active until notified otherwise by Belong, and the applicable deadline must continue to apply to completing the home study. The deadline can be found in Tables 2 and 3.

10.3: Recording Interviews

The Provider is not allowed to record an interview as part of services under the contract. If a family wants to record an interview for their own personal reasons, Belong will not preclude it.

10.4: Screening and Reporting Requirements

Providers must download all forms and guides needed to conduct screenings, reports, and assessments. Providers must ensure they are utilizing the current version of the forms and guides required. At the request of, and at no cost to Belong, the Provider must provide Belong information on the status and progress of referrals.

10.5: FAD Home Screening Requirements

After receiving the referral, the Provider must:

- Conduct required interviews that comply with the Minimum Standards Sections 749.2449 and 749.3625.
- Obtain Belong prior approval for any exceptions to the Minimum Standards noted above. Belong has sole authority to approve exceptions to Minimum Standards applicable to Provider.
- Have a face-to-face interview with all members of the Caregiver's household, who are at least three years of age and older. The Provider must observe children three years old

and under in the home and must document their health and interaction with other household members.

- Ensure that at least one of the interviews takes place in the caregiver's home when all household members are present.
- Notify Belong immediately, by e-mail, if any household member is unavailable for face-to-face interview and obtain instructions on whether to proceed with the referral.
- Compile the home study in the format provided in FAD Home Screening Form and comply with FAD Home Screening Instructions.
- Submit completed home study and all applicable signed agreements to give information forms, by email unless otherwise specified by Belong and include:
 - Electronic file with signature section separate from all the other sections to keep the signature page intact so that it will print on one page;
 - Electronic files of no more than ten digital photos that sufficiently portray the condition or appearance of the following:
 - Outside and inside of home, including backyard and bathroom(s);
 - Identified areas of concern or safety issues;
 - Where Children will sleep; and
 - Cleanliness of home.
- A hard copy signature page with original handwritten ink signatures must be maintained in the Provider's record and provided to Belong upon request. Belong may request the hard copy signature page for an FBI individual referral, or for all referrals within a specific county or region;
- An electronic copy of the signed signature page in PDF format identifiable by title that contains the caregiver's first initial and last name;
- Completed home studies must be sent by e-mail identifying the caregiver's first initial and last name in the 'subject' line; and
- Provider must maintain documentation of the method of delivery of the work product, such as a copy of the email verifying the date and time sent.

10.6: FAD with Kinship Home Screening Requirements

This is a FAD Screening that uses information contained in a KCHA that was previously completed within the past one-year. The Provider will comply with all applicable requirements for completing a FAD Screening as noted above.

The Service Provider or CPM staff must conduct all contacts (including Face-to-Face) as required in Minimum Standards. Provider may not use previous contacts completed for the KCHA to meet requirements above.

The Provider must complete the home study in the format provided in FAD Home Screening with Kinship Guide Form (Form 6588) and instructions corresponding to the home study.

If the Provider was not the original creator of the KCHA, a FAD with Kinship is not to be completed. Provider will notify the Belong staff making the referral within the timeframe stated in an e- mail.

10.7: HSEGH Report Requirements

The Provider must:

- Review official case records, related documents and information provided to Provider by Belong;
- Contact individuals identified in HSEGH Referral Form, who may be able to provide additional information not in the Belong file as provided in the instructions;
- At Belong request, conduct a face-to-face interview with the child or their biological family;
- Compile the report for submission to Belong in the format provided in Health, Social, Educational, and Genetic History Form and comply with HSEGH Report Instructions for Provider Form;
- Submit the completed HSEGH reports by email unless otherwise specified.
- Ensure the report meets the requirements above.

10.8: KCHA Requirements

The Provider must:

- For anyone 18 years of age or older, ensure that a signed Kinship Release of Information and Acknowledgements Form is obtained from any other household members if not identified in the referral packet;
- Ensure that a Risk Assessment Form is completed;
- Have one face-to-face interview with all household members;
- Notify Belong immediately if any household member is unavailable for face-to-face interview and obtain instructions on how to proceed with the referral.
- Interview at least five references provided by the caregiver. Three of the references must be from non-Relatives and two from relatives;
- Deliver a Kinship Profile Questionnaire to the Caregiver;
- Deliver a Kinship Manual in the Caregiver's preferred language (with the exception of children placed from out-of-state), which can be delivered electronically if the service provider verifies that the household has a working computer and internet access. The Kinship Manual is not provided to the caregiver of a child who is in the conservatorship of another state;
- Compile the home study for submission to Belong in the format and instructions provided in the Kinship Caregiver Home Assessment Template Form;

- Submit completed home studies by email unless otherwise specified; and
- Ensure home studies meet the requirements.

10.9: Effective Communication with Caregivers

The Provider is expected to communicate effectively with the caregiver, which may require them to use a translator or interpreter. The Provider may not utilize a translator or interpreter paid through any Belong contract. The Provider may not refuse a referral based on the need for a translator or interpreter. Translators and interpreters must not be alone with caregiver or household members. The Provider must ensure the availability of auxiliary aids when required to communicate with referred individuals with hearing, vision, speech, or other communication impairments.

10.10: Review of Completed Home Studies and Reports

The Provider must develop and manage a system by which Provider staff will review completed home studies and reports before they are sent to Belong for approval to ensure they comply the requirements in the contract. Belong must be able to use the submitted home study or report for its intended purpose. The review must ensure that the home study or report:

- Is complete, clear, concise, accurate, and free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors;
- Has addressed concerns in referral and preliminary study or report;
- Has addressed all required Minimum Standards with specific wording that clearly indicates that the Minimum Standards have been met; and
- Has clearly identified relationships between each person identified in the home study or report.

This system of review must operate within the timeframes established herein.

10.11: Completed Referral Submission Deadlines

Unless the Provider is authorized by Belong to perform a home study or report within an expedited timeframe, the Provider must deliver to Belong home studies and reports in accordance with the standard deadline.

The first day of the deadline's timeframe is the earlier of one of the following:

- The business day after the Provider sends Belong the required e-mail acknowledging Provider's receipt of the referral; or
- Two business days after the Provider received the Service Authorization and Referral packet.

Completed Documents must be received during Belong regular business hours on the date due. If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the email must be received by 5:00 pm CST on the following business day. If the Provider does not submit a completed home study or report by the deadline, the Provider will receive a reduced fee, as long as it can still be used by Belong for its intended purpose.

If Belong requires revisions to a home study or report submitted and the revisions cannot be made within the applicable timeframe, as described in tables below, then the Provider will receive the reduced unit rate for the revised and accepted home study or report, as long as Belong can use the home study or report for its intended purpose.

There is no specified timeframe for Belong to complete the review of the study or report and determine if it has been accepted.

TABLE 2: Belong Standard Deadline for Delivery of Completed Home Studies and Reports

Service Type	Deadline
FAD Home Screening	20 Calendar Days from Referral Acknowledgement Date
HSEGH Report	20 Calendar Days from Referral Acknowledgement Date
KCHA	15 Calendar Days from Referral Acknowledgement Date

TABLE 3: Belong Expedited Deadlines for Delivery of Completed Home Studies and Reports

Service Type	Deadline
FAD Home Screening	15 Calendar Days from Referral Acknowledgement Date
HSEGH Report	15 Calendar Days from Referral Acknowledgement Date
KCHA – 5 Days	5 Calendar Days from Referral Acknowledgement Date
KCHA – 10 Days	10 Calendar Days from Referral Acknowledgement Date

10.12: Court Related Services

The Provider will provide court related services when required by Belong and when they have received a Service Authorization Form for these services, this includes but is not limited to court testimony, depositions, and informal mediation participation. The Provider is responsible for providing instruction on court etiquette and testifying to their staff. The Provider must:

- Ensure staff requested to perform court related services have personal knowledge of the matters to be discussed;
- Ensure that all requested or subpoenaed staff will attend Depositions and Court Appearances at appointed times and locations; and

10.13: Record-Keeping

The Provider must maintain adequate and complete records and files throughout the contract term. Belong reserves the right to require additional records and files be prepared and maintained by the Provider. The Provider must maintain individual and complete home studies and reports in a central location and the records must include, but are not limited to:

- Service Authorization and Referral packet with a clearly documented date received from Belong;
- For each service invoiced to Belong, the applicable completed and Belong approved Routing and Approval Form with documented disposition of Referral;
- Applicable Kinship Referral Form, Request for Services (Kinship), ICPC Regulation 2 Case Manager statement, or Referral for HSEGH Report with a clearly documented receipt date and its associated documents;
- A Contact Log that documents:
 - Caregiver contacts;
 - Attempts to contact;
- The agreed upon date and time for conducting the Face-to-Face visit and any subsequent rescheduling;
- Record of Belong staff notifications or other Contract-related Contacts; and
- The date, time and person contacted (title).
- Completed home study or report with required information and documentation to include the Provider's review and certification that the home study or report met the Contract's requirements;
- Documentation of date, day, and time of electronic submission of the home study or report to include PDF signature page and the method of submission to the DFPS staff contact; or if hard copy, method of submission the Provider used to deliver a hard copy of the signature page with original signatures, if requested by Belong;
- Documentation of withdrawn home study or report submitted to include a copy of the completed and submitted Withdrawal Report;
- Documentation of court related services provided;
- Documentation of translator or interpreter when used to complete a home study or report that assisted staff with communicating with the caregiver(s) or household members; and
- Copy of any other required reports or documents that relate to services provided under or the performance of this contract.

10.14: No Reimbursement by Belong

Notwithstanding any other provision in the Contract, the Provider will not be reimbursed by Belong under the following circumstances:

- When the home study or report can no longer be used for its intended purpose;
- When Belong has not issued a Service Authorization for the service;
- Services were delivered by a person who did not meet the minimum qualifications or who has not received prior Belong written approval to conduct these services;
- Service units that exceed the number of units authorized or fall outside the timeframes specified in this document.

- The Service Authorization is withdrawn by Belong before the Provider has acknowledged receipt.

11.0 Hospital Sitting

Belong needs Hospital Sitting Services for children in DFPS Conservatorship that are hospitalized because of illness or injury, and these services may also be provided at a rehabilitative or nursing home facility.

The Hospital Sitter stays with a child and provides appropriate supervision and basic childcare services when the child is hospitalized and a Belong staff person or a foster parent is not available to stay with the child.

The Provider and/or their staff may be required to provide Court and/or Case Consultation services for Belong as it relates to the services they provide under their contract with Belong.

11.1: Service Delivery Area(s)

Belong will enter one or more contract(s) per Service Delivery Area and the Provider will provide these services in any hospital, rehabilitative or nursing home facility located in the Region as provided for in their contract.

11.2: Eligible Client Population

Belong determines client eligibility. Only clients referred directly to Provider by Belong via Service Authorization Form and Referral for Hospital Sitting Services (Form 5612) are eligible for service under the Contract.

Provider will serve all Clients referred by Belong.

11.3: Eligible Client Characteristics

Provider will make reasonable efforts to provide services that meet the individual needs of the client.

Services will be provided to people of various cultures, races, ethnic backgrounds, and religions in a manner that recognizes and affirms their worth, protects and preserves their dignity, and ensures equity of service delivery.

Provider will take into consideration the intellectual functioning, literacy, level of education, and comprehension ability of each client to ensure that all information is presented in a way that meets the individual needs of each client.

Provider must be prepared to serve individuals with characteristics including, but not limited to assaultive or homicidal behaviors, pervasive developmental disorders, or physical abuse.

Provider must serve children who are hospitalized due to illness or injury. Some children may have injuries that involve major trauma.

Provider must also provide all services in the client's primary language or the language that the client is most comfortable speaking, either directly or through a translator.

11.4: Contract Requirements

11.4.1: Service Authorization and Referral Process

Belong staff will initiate referral for Hospital Sitting Services by transmitting a Service Authorization Form and Referral for Hospital Sitting Services (DFPS Form 5612) to the Provider.

The Provider must schedule and provide services as requested in the timeframes referenced in this manual, or in the timeframes as requested by Belong upon receipt of a properly completed and authorized Service Authorization and 5612. Services must be authorized on these Forms and received by the Provider before services can be provided to a referred child.

The Service Authorization and Referral forms are transmitted to the Provider by email.

11.4.2: Client Case Record

The individual client case record for the child must be maintained by Provider.

11.4.3: Non-Payment of Services

The following claims will be subject to non-payment or collection:

- Service Authorization Form that is not signed;
- Service claims that exceed the number of authorized units specified on the Service Authorization Form;
- Services provided outside the time frames specified on the Service Authorization;
- Sign-in Log (DFPS Form 5613) is not submitted; and
- One Hospital Sitter caring for more than one child.

11.5: Service Delivery Hours

Provider must be available to deliver services must be available 24 hours, seven days a week, including evening and holidays as necessary. Service hours must be flexible and include morning, afternoon, evening, and all state holidays.

11.6: Provider Requirements

Provider must provide Hospital Sitters who are available to care for a child 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with no lapse in service during a child's hospital stay.

Provider must:

- Develop and maintain a network of qualified and trained Hospital Sitters who are on call and available, as needed, throughout the term of the contract and ensure that these Sitters are always awake and observant of the child;
- Ensure that the Sitter does not work more than 12 hours in any 24-hour period;

- Provider will ensure that the Hospital Sitters provided to provide services will be trained with Trauma Informed Care Child Welfare Practices prior to sitting with children;
- Review DFPS Form 5613 and its proper completion required of Hospital Sitters;
- Inform each Hospital Sitter in writing and have it acknowledged by the Hospital Sitter by signing and dating it that they cannot leave the child unattended while providing these services;
- Ensure Hospital Sitters will not have additional persons with them (e.g., family members, acquaintances, etc.) while providing services to a client (child);
- Hospital Sitters are required to comply with the instructions provided on the Service Authorization and DFPS Form 5612;
- If anyone (e.g., family member, parent, relative, acquaintances) enters the room without consent or authorization that is on the Service Authorization Form and 5612, the Hospital Sitter must notify appropriate Belong staff immediately;
- Instruct Hospital Sitters to not provide medical or nursing care to clients;
- Arrange for a substitute Hospital Sitter, if needed, in a manner that does not interrupt continuing to provide continued services to a child;
- Instruct Hospital Sitters or other Provider staff to contact the charge nurse on duty at the hospital or facility, and Belong staff, if:
 - The Hospital Sitter will be arriving late;
 - When the scheduled Hospital Sitter will arrive; and/or
 - When the scheduled Hospital Sitter will be substituted with when the substitute Hospital Sitter will be arriving with their name and contact information.
 - The sitter must communicate this information via email or phone call; it must also be documented on DFPS Form 5613.
 - Maintain confidentiality of client-related information and records as required and in accordance with any applicable Federal and State laws.

11.7: Hospital Sitter Service Requirements

The Provider must ensure that the Hospital Sitters:

- Be in good standing with the Provider's training requirements;
- Maintain the confidentiality of client-related information and records as required;
- Meet with the charge nurse prior to the start of their shifts to get an update on the child's medical condition and needs;
- Be in the hospital room with the child and remain awake and be always observant of the child;

- Interact with the child as appropriate for the child's age and medical condition after having first discussed with and obtained approval from medical personnel or the charge nurse responsible for the child's care, which may include reading, playing board games or watching age-appropriate television programs with the child. For infants and toddlers, holding or rocking them;
- Assist with feeding the child or assist the child with meals, as needed and as age appropriateness dictates after having first discussed with and obtained approval from medical personnel or the charge nurse responsible for the child's care;
- Not provide medical or nursing care to the child;
- Report to the charge nurse on duty in the child's hospital ward or facility, or other appropriate medical personnel in the ward if the charge nurse is not available, if the condition of the child suddenly changes or appears to be progressively changing;
- Immediately report to the Provider's appropriate Management staff and appropriate Belong staff if the condition of the child changes;
- Report to the charge nurse on duty in the child's hospital ward or facility, the Provider's appropriate Management staff, and appropriate Belong staff prior to the scheduled appointment time, if the sitter will be arriving late, or will not be arriving at all, for a scheduled shift; and
- Provide appropriate documentation of delivered services to Provider's Management staff for record keeping purposes and reimbursement purposes.

11.8: Court Services

In addition to Hospital Sitting Services, the Provider will provide the following Court Services when requested by Belong on the Service Authorization Form.

If a Court Service is required, Belong will transmit a Service Authorization Form to Provider and reimburse the Provider for Depositions and Court Appearances.

Belong will not pay for Court services if the Provider or its service-provider is requested or subpoenaed to provide Court services by any party other than Belong.

- Deposition: Recorded testimony to be used in court proceedings.
- Court Appearance: Attendance at a court hearing at the request of Belong with the intent to testify and make recommendations about a Belong child whom the Provider has served, whether the testimony is provided.

Billing time for a court service begins at the time at which the Provider is requested to arrive for testimony, or actual time of arrival, whichever is later, and ends immediately upon notification that no further services are required, or the testimony is completed. Time required to travel to and from the courthouse or the site is not billable.

11.8.1: Case Consultation

Provider may be required to provide specialized knowledge or advice to Belong staff, or to another party involved in a case on Belong' behalf regarding an open case as directed by Belong to obtain Provider's recommendations and opinions about a specific client or family.

If Case Consultation Service is required, Belong will transmit a Service Authorization Form to Provider for the provision of the service.

Provider must provide case consultation with Belong staff when requested. Case consultation includes participation in relevant meetings at the request of Belong.

Reimbursement for case consultation service will only be made when it is requested and authorized by Belong. Billing time for case consultation begins at the time at which the Provider is requested to arrive for consultation, or actual time of arrival, whichever is later, and ends immediately upon notification that no further case consultation service is required. Time required to travel to and from the site of consultation is not billable, and Informal telephone conversations and meetings are not billable.

11.9: Provider Qualifications

Provider must meet the following organizational qualifications to provide hospital sitting services and as needed, Court-Related and Case Consultation services. A Hospital Sitter can only care for one child at a time and must complete DFPS Form 5613, Sign-In Log for each sitting service.

11.9.1: Minimum Organizational Qualifications

Provider must have two years of full-time service management experience that is like the services sought at the time of application is submitted by the applicant. This experience includes the following:

- Managing, overseeing, leading, or providing performance of work similar to the services being purchased;
- Project development or Management experience working on a social services-oriented project;
- Managing, overseeing, or leading the performance and work of others in a social service setting; and
- Performing under contract with a government agency providing social services to the public, or as a private business providing or contracting for this Open Enrollment's services.

11.9.2: Minimum Direct Service Staff Qualifications

Provider must have at least two staff members who will deliver direct Hospital Sitter services at the time that they submit the application. Prior to participating in the delivery of any services under the Contract, any of the Provider's Hospital Sitters must meet the minimum qualifications listed below. Hospital Sitter can also be a volunteer or intern; however, they also must meet these requirements:

- Age - Be at least 21 years of age;
- Education - Have a General Educational Development certificate, high school diploma or a higher educational degree;

- Experience - Have a minimum of one year of cumulative experience working with children;
- Background Check - Meet DFPS background check requirements;
- Training - Complete required training provided by the Provider;
- Medical Testing - Be screened for tuberculosis and show a negative result on the screening prior to contract execution (for initial direct service providers at application) and before having contact with children (for any additional direct service providers that may be added to the contract ongoing);
- In sufficient health to perform the tasks described in this contract;
- Be reliable;
- Be punctual in arriving to work;
- Be respectful and understand people of different races, cultures, and backgrounds; and
- Speak the English language or the same language as the child to be served if the child's primary language is not English.

11.9.3: Belong Provider and Staffing Approval

Belong has the sole discretion to determine whether a staff is acceptable, or an exception may be granted. Any exceptions to these requirements must be specifically approved in writing by Belong Provider Relations.

Provider must submit Contracting Entity and List of Staff, Subcontractors, and Volunteers, to Belong Contract Manager and obtain written approval prior to staff having direct access or contact with Belong records or clients.

12.0 Finance and Billing Procedures

Belong will comply with the utilization and compensation section of the Family Services Provider Service Agreement and Addendums. Questions that arise should be sent to the Belong Accounting Team at accountingbelong@sjrctexas.org.

12.1: Purchased Services Categories and Service Codes

- Drug Testing
 - o 79A - Drug Testing - Urine Analysis
 - o 79B - Drug Testing - Oral Fluids
 - o 79C - Drug Testing - Hair Testing
 - o 79D - Drug Testing - Confirm All Tests

- Substance Abuse – Assessment, Counseling, Therapy
 - o 83F - Sub Abuse - Assessment
 - o 83G - Sub Abuse - Individual Counseling/Therapy
 - o 83H - Sub Abuse - Group Counseling/Therapy
 - o 83K - Sub Abuse - Diagnostic Consult
- Non-Substance Abuse – Assessment, Counseling, Therapy
- - o 86C - Counseling/Therapy - Individual
 - o 86E - Counseling/Therapy - Group
 - o 86F - Counseling/Therapy - Family
 - o 86U - Psycho-Social Assessment
 - o 88K - Home-Based Therapy
- Psychological/Psychiatric – Evaluation and Assessment
- - o 86B - Psychiatric Evaluation
- Permanency Planning Meetings
 - o 81M - Family Group Conference (FGC)
 - o 81N - Circles of Support (COS)
 - o 81P - Permanency Conference (PC)
 - o 81Q - Transition Plan Meeting (TPM)
- Translator Services
 - o 98L - Translator Services
- Court Related Services
 - o 86H - Court Related Services
- Supervised Visitation
 - o 92L - Supervised Visitation

12.2: Initial Payment for Purchased Services

Belong will issue payment for purchased services performed for referred South Central and Hill Country region families on and after October 1, 2022, which complies with all billing requirements.

12.3: Payment Terms

- Providers will be paid for each month's services within 30 days of Belong receiving a complete and accurate invoice and any required supporting documentation from the provider. Required documentation is discussed below in section 12.4.1.

- Payment will be issued for pre-authorized services only.
- Providers are required to bill Medicaid (traditional or managed care) for Medicaid eligible services for Medicaid eligible clients.
- If referred clients are covered by private insurance, Providers are required to make every effort to bill the private insurance plan for services performed.
- Providers will be paid electronically by direct deposit. A Direct Deposit Authorization Form will be sent to Providers to complete and return once the Provider application and contract process has been completed.
- A Form W-9 will be sent to all Providers to complete and return once the Provider application and contract process has been completed.

12.4: Family Services Provider Payments

Belong will pay the Providers for pre-authorized purchased client services. The fees for these services are included in the Addendum to the Belong Services Provider Agreement for each service.

Providers will be required to send an invoice and any required documentation to the Belong Accounting Staff for Purchased Client Services. The invoice and document packet for non-Medicaid eligible services must be received within 30 days from the date of service. For Medicaid eligible services, the invoice and document packet must be received within 30 days from receiving the Medicaid denial letter.

Provider will be paid for only half the rate of two missed appointments or “no shows” per client. The provider will be paid half the rate that was originally authorized according to the fee schedule for the specific service that would have been rendered. Invoices must be clearly marked “No Show” or “Missed Appointment” when submitting the invoice. If services are reauthorized for said client, any future missed appointments will not be paid to the provider.

12.4.1: Invoice and Document Packets

Invoice and document packets are required to include:

- Invoice for services performed. Invoices must include the client’s PID, services performed, units, date of services performed, and amount owed. If the provider does not have the ability to create invoices with this information from their own internal invoicing system, they may reach out to the Belong Accounting department via email at AccountingBelong@sjrctexas.org and request an invoice template.
- For Medicaid eligible services, a Medicaid denial letter
- For group counseling, group training classes, permanency planning meetings, parent training, and supervised visitation services, a sign in log should be submitted to Belong’s Accounting department at the same time that invoices are submitted
- For psychological evaluation services, the provider must submit the evaluation to the client’s Permanency Specialist prior to invoicing for services. Invoices will not be reviewed for payment until the Belong Permanency Specialist has received this evaluation.

The invoicing requirements for drug testing and concrete services are stated in the Addendum to the Family Services Provider Service Agreement for those subcontractors.

The invoice and document packet should be sent to the Belong Accounting department via email at accountingbelong@sjrctexas.org.

Once received, the Accounting team and Belong's program team will review the document packet to ensure all documents have been received and properly completed.

12.5: Payment Reports for Providers

Upon sending the monthly payment to the Providers, the Accounting Staff will create a payment report for each Provider showing the details of the Provider's payment. The payment report shows the Provider agency name, client's names, dates of care. When the first payment is made, the Director of Accounting will contact the person that the Provider has designated as their point of contact for their Belong contract. This person will be asked to specify the contact information for who should receive these payment reports. These payment reports will be emailed to that contact going forward. Any changes to this contact information can be communicated by emailing the Accounting department at accountingbelong@sjrctexas.org. Providers will be emailed the payment report within 5 business days of direct deposit.

12.6: Payment Dispute Resolution Process

The Provider will reconcile the payment from Belong to the Provider's records. If any discrepancies are noted, the Provider will initiate the following dispute resolution process within 30 days of receiving payment.

The parties will confer, in person or by telephone/email, to resolve disputes over payment for services through the following process. To initiate this process, either party must provide the other party with written notice of its dispute about a service and/or payment issue. The provider can do this by submitting a Discrepancy Report. The email from Belong that contains the payment report will also include a blank discrepancy report. Additionally, the provider can request a Provider Payment Discrepancy Report by emailing accountingbelong@sjrctexas.org. The completed discrepancy report should be submitted by email to accountingbelong@sjrctexas.org. Please contact the Belong Accounting department with any questions at accountingbelong@sjrctexas.org.

- Staff Conferencing: Within 10 days of receipt of a written notice initiating the dispute resolution process, Belong and Provider, through representatives of their services and financial staff, will confer and attempt to reconcile any disputed payments for which Belong – based upon a good faith review of any documents submitted by the Provider and Belong's own documentation or records – does not believe it is responsible for paying. The parties shall complete the staff conferencing process described in this section within 30 days of the receipt of the written notice initiating the dispute resolution process. If the dispute is not resolved within this time period, the process will continue to DCS Conferencing.
- DCS Conferencing: For services still in dispute following the staff conferencing reconciliation process, Belong's Director of Quality Assurance and Contracts (DQAC), or their designees, shall confer to resolve, settle, or compromise the dispute. The parties shall complete the DQAC Conferencing process described in this section within thirty (30) days of the completion of the Staff Conferencing process described above.

12.6.1: Payment After Resolving Disputes

If Belong, after conferring as provided herein with the Provider about the disputed payment concludes it is responsible for paying for a service or some part of it, Belong shall make its payment to the Provider at the next available billing cycle.

In the event the Provider owes Belong for any services provided herein or pursuant to any other agreement between the parties, and such balance has been due for more than sixty (60) days from invoicing by Belong to Provider, Belong may deduct the balance amount due to Belong from any amount owed to the Provider pursuant to the Provider Services Agreement.

Belong shall take all action reasonable and necessary to comply with the requirements of the Master Contract and ensure payment for the services thereunder.

12.7: Return of Funds

If the Provider or its independent auditor discovers that an overpayment has been made by Belong, the Provider shall repay said overpayment immediately to Belong without prior notification or request from Belong. If Belong first discovers an overpayment has been made to the Provider, Belong shall notify the Provider by letter of such a finding and request repayment forthwith. Belong may unilaterally deduct overpayments made to Provider from future monies owed to Provider.

12.8: Invoice/Billing Monitoring

Belong Provider Relations Team will monitor the Purchased Services Providers to ensure that the Provider's

records and documentation justify and support the invoices that have been submitted to Belong for payment.

13.0 Quality Improvement and Contract Management

Providers are subject to an annual review to ensure that all policies, procedures, and stipulations of the Belong Services Provider Agreement and Addendums and those listed in the Belong Services Provider Manual are being upheld.

13.1: Monitoring Review

The Quality Assurance and Contracts Department will make a request to the Accounting Department for a list of services paid, in either the 1st month of Qtr. 1, the 1st month of Qtr. 2, the 1st month of Qtr. 3 or 1st month of Qtr. 4 to the Family Services Network Provider, to monitor/verify that services billed and paid were provided and evidence is in the client's record. All providers will be reviewed at least once annually according to this schedule.

The Director of Quality Assurance and Contracts will randomly select a month/quarter for each provider to be used for monitoring purposes.

Monitoring may be on-site or via electronic means. Records for clients, personnel, policies, and procedures may be requested as part of the review, to ensure compliance is maintained. On-site visits may include a walk-through tour of the physical site.

Provider Relations Coordinators will complete the Monitoring Review for each active contracted Family Services Network Provider and may request assistance from the various departments of Belong in preparation for the Monitoring Review.

Financial monitoring will be completed by the Accounting team supported by the Quality Assurance and Contracts team. Monitoring and compliance of administrative and programmatic records, and performance and quality improvement process is completed by the Provider Relations Team. The Belong Permanency Department is responsible for case reviews on an ongoing basis as they will be monitoring for Service Delivery according to their need.

Background checks for Client Service Providers and staff are conducted by Belong unless the provider also contracts with DFPS for purchased services. DFPS will complete background checks for those providers.

Quality Assurance and Contracts may give 30 days' notice prior to a monitoring review. After the review, Quality Assurance and Contracts will schedule an exit interview with the Provider's key personnel to discuss all criteria and any improvement plans needed.

14.0 Information Technology and Support

Prior to transmitting confidential information by email, Providers are responsible for ensuring that their email system utilizes Transport Layer Security (TLS) version 1.2 or above to provide an encrypted channel of communication between email servers. TLS is an attractive alternative to third-party email encryption systems, because encryption occurs at the transport layer without requiring use of third-party system to access the email. If a Provider is not certain whether their email system uses TLS, they should check with their IT professionals to verify whether the e-mails from the Provider's domain use a secure channel of communication. Belong will accept emails services from Providers that choose to use 3rd party e-mail encryption services.

Providers are also responsible for ensuring privacy of communications received by Fax. DFPS and Belong requires physical security around fax machines to prevent unauthorized access to confidential information.

If a provider suspects that electronic Protected Health Information (ePHI) Belonging to a Belong client has been accessed by an unauthorized party through a breach, they should immediately contact Belong's Quality Assurance and Contracts at gabelong@sjrctexas.org.