

CPAC Frequently Asked Questions



Here are some frequently asked questions about our organization:

What is CPAC? What services do we provide?

CPAC is a federally funded Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center. We are part of a network of parent centers throughout the United States and Territories (for more information visit www.parentcenterhub.org).

CPAC helps families and students/youth navigate the special education system and the laws and regulations that guide special education programs. Additionally, we support families and students/youth in collaborating and partnering with districts and other agencies with the goal of supporting everyone to work together in the best interest of students.

In addition to funding from the U.S. Department of Education, we receive CT State Department of Education and local funding to support families, students/youth, and professionals who serve them.

Our services include support for families and students/youth via phone, email, virtual meetings, and training on various relevant topics related to special education.

Is there a fee for CPAC services?

No. Our services are free for families, students/youth, and most professionals.

Why are you called an “Advocacy Center” if you don’t provide advocates?

The Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center was founded in 1983 under the premise of supporting families to learn to advocate for their children with the belief that families are the best advocates for their children. In more recent years, this support has included training and information for students and youth with disabilities so they can become effective self-advocates based on their individual needs.

We also work to support families, students/youth, and the professionals who serve them to work together in the interest of the best outcomes for students.

At CPAC, we believe that the best advocacy is done by the people who know their children the best – families. As families learn to advocate, they can learn to teach their children to advocate for themselves to the greatest extent possible, based on their age and individual needs.



With this in mind, we provide training and information so families and students/youth can learn how to have a voice at the table and advocate for programs and services that meet their needs. Many families will advocate for their children and/or support their children as self-advocates, sometimes throughout their lifespan.

We believe that learning the skill of advocacy, rather than having someone else do it for them, is more effective and sustainable. We also recognize that there are times when families and students/youth need more help than we can provide. Through individual consultation, we can help determine what direction they need to move in and can provide referral sources if necessary.

Do you attend Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings?

CPAC does not typically attend PPT meetings, however, there are very limited and specific circumstances when a consultant might attend a meeting to support a family and student/youth. The first step is to talk with a CPAC Parent Consultant who can discuss the specifics of your situation and help determine what resources or support you might need.

Why haven't I received a call back from CPAC?

Parent Consultants return calls in the order they are received. Depending on the current call volume, calls may be returned up to 48 hours (about 2 business days) after they are received (not including weekends or holidays). Despite our best efforts in working with cell service carriers, some carriers may identify our phone number as "possible spam", "service center", "medical center", "New London", or with no ID at all. If you called us, please watch for a return call from 860-739-3089.

Additionally, we find that we leave messages on voicemail that people are not receiving. If you are waiting for a call, please check your voicemail to see if we called you back. If we can't reach you after calling three times and we have an email address, we will send you an email. Please check your spam folder.

If you have not heard back from us in 48 hours, please call back or email us again.

Can I make an appointment to talk with a CPAC Parent Consultant?

Yes. We recognize that there are times when families, youth, and professionals need to schedule a time to connect with a parent consultant. Please email us at cpac@cpacinc.org to set up an appointment.

Can I get an advocate to work with me?

CPAC does not provide free or paid advocates. While we sometimes attend PPT meetings to support families and students/youth in very limited and specific situations, our mission is to educate, support, and empower families and students/youth to advocate for themselves. We do this through telephone consultation and providing information and training.



If I have an advocate or attorney can CPAC help me?

CPAC can answer process questions, such as how many days a district has to get an IEP to a family. However, we do not want to interfere with your attorney's strategy, therefore if you have concerns about what they are doing, please ask them directly. Once you are no longer working with the attorney/advocate, please give us a call. We would be happy to help you.

Do we help with Department of Children and Families (DCF) cases?

While some of our families and students/youth may have DCF involvement, CPAC does not serve as an organization that helps navigate DCF cases.

Do you have staff who speak languages other than English?

CPAC has staff members who speak English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Additionally, we use the support of a language interpretation line to support families who speak other languages.

Does CPAC help with daycare issues?

CPAC generally does not help with daycare issues. However, if families are looking for daycare programs for their children with disabilities, CPAC may be able to provide some resources where families can find more information about programs in their area of the state.

Who can I reach out to if I have concerns about the service I have received?

CPAC's Co-Executive Directors are available to discuss your concerns. Please reach out via email to cpac@cpacinc.org or call 860-739-3089 and ask for an Executive Director.