

GOFERR  
Stakeholders Advisory Committee  
Written Responses  
As of May 26, 2020

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## Guidelines for Written Comments to the GOEFERR Advisory Board

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**(1) Please identify your position and your organization.**

Joy Barrett, Chief Executive Officer for the Granite State Children's Alliance

**(2) Please identify what economic sector your enterprise operates within.**

The Granite State Children's Alliance (GSCA) is an independent non-profit 501c3 organization providing representation, training and technical assistance to the network of eleven Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) in NH. GSCA also operates CACs in Keene (Cheshire County – Monadnock Region CAC), Manchester/Nashua (Hillsborough County CAC North/South) and Laconia (Belknap County – Greater Lakes CAC). Please visit [www.CAC-NH.org](http://www.CAC-NH.org) for additional information about our services in New Hampshire.

**(3) Please describe how your enterprise and economic sector has been impacted by Covid19.**

Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) provide a child/family friendly, victim centered, neutral setting for joint investigations and forensic interviews of child victims of crime involving sexual abuse, felony level physical abuse, and child witnesses to violence such as a homicide or a serious domestic assault. CACs are in every county of New Hampshire and approximately 2,100 children who have been victims of these serious crimes are seen at CAC's in NH each year.

During the COVID-19 pandemic Child Advocacy Center (CAC) doors remain open. As an essential stakeholder in the child protection safety net, we have been in direct communication with our multidisciplinary team (MDT) partners to respond to and address the needs of children who require our services. The MDT is comprised of representatives from child advocacy centers, law enforcement, County Attorney/prosecution, child protective services, victim/witness advocate, and medical and mental health professionals. Collectively, we remain committed to providing forensic interviews and follow up services to children and families who need us.

It is an unfortunate reality that instances of child abuse increase during times of extreme stress. With children not in school or participating in their regular activities, reports of child abuse are down as has been widely reported, however, abuse is still occurring, it is just not being reported.

As our communities open back up CACs will experience a significant surge in their caseloads as more cases of abuse will be reported. We are bracing for the expected dramatic increase of reported child abuse cases. ***We know that we will have to respond to the child abuse epidemic caused by the consequences of isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic.***

During these unprecedented times, we are faced with the challenges of a surging demand for our services in addition to a reduction in revenue. As event fundraising activities have ceased and the uncertainty for our donors with the downturn in the economy, CACs across NH are in need of support to sustain our operations and services to child victims and their families.

We project significant loss of revenue from fundraising and other donor contributions into the network of CACs across NH. CACs will also incur additional expenses in personal protection equipment (PPE) for staff, parents and children as well as cleaning supplies and sanitization services to keep our centers safe for children, families, multidisciplinary partners and our staff.

**(4) Please provide an assessment of how you project your organization and economic sector will be impacted over the next 12 months by Covid-19.**

***GSCA projects an \$847,000 combined loss of revenue from fundraising and other donor contributions into the network of 11 CACs across NH.***

In NH, CACs are responsible for the coordination of the multidisciplinary team (MDT), providing the forensic interview and coordinating referrals to ensure that children in these cases receive timely access to specialized medical attention and appropriate wrap-around services such as evidence based mental health treatment. On average, of the children referred to a CAC; 76% are interviewed for sexual abuse, 15% are interviewed for physical abuse and 9% are referred for witnessing a violent crime or homicide.

GSCA projects the network of NH CACs will be strained to sustain service delivery during the next 12 months with the loss of revenue from fundraising and other fund development efforts. This added to the projections of a surge of cases referred to CACs for forensic interviews and follow up services creates a catastrophic interruption to our essential services to child victims of crime. With the increase demand anticipated in the early fall, CACs may need to build capacity to best serve children, families and agency partners, but may be forced to make cuts to their non-profit budgets.

**(5) Please explain whether your enterprise or economic sector has or is receiving, or may possibly receive in the future, any other governmental support (federal, state or local) or charitable funds specifically intended to help address Covid-19 impacts; and explain whether the identified need might be covered by other governmental or charitable sources of funding or support programs.**

The Network of CACs is not anticipating any future governmental support from federal, state, local or charitable funds specifically intended to help address COVID-19 impacts. Several CACs have received some relief with the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). This provided much needed support during eight weeks of this 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of our budgets to stabilize staff expenses and occupancy costs.

**(6) Please provide comments on one or more ideas on how some portion of public relief funds could be provided to your enterprise and economic sector (including, if possible, an estimate of the amount of funds), and please comment on how these ideas would achieve the following important public goals:**

***(a) The funds will serve a public use and provide a public benefit.***

Public relief funds will support Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) in NH who serve the public and provide public benefits. CACs provide this service to children, families and our multidisciplinary team partners at no charge. The complex dynamics within child protection services requires a collaborative, continued approach to care. CACs coordinate child abuse investigations with local law enforcement and the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and conducts the forensic interviews for child abuse investigations.

***(b) The funds will preserve or increase the social welfare or economic prosperity of the state, and will promote the general welfare of the state's citizens.***

Public relief funds will support Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) in NH by preserving the social welfare and promoting the general welfare of the state's citizens. NH CACs strive to reduce the trauma suffered by child victims of abuse by creating a child-friendly, victim centered safe place where children can talk to a trained professional forensic interviewer about their abuse and streamline the investigation process. We remain dedicated to the tireless fight of assuring children and their families have a victim centered CAC experience in a safe, responsive place to heal, survive and thrive.

***(c) The funds will promote the orderly development of economic and social activities, create or preserve employment opportunities, or protect the physical environment.***

Public relief funds will support Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) in NH by preserving employment of our professional staff. There are many positions within NH's CACs supporting the essential services for child victims and their families. Relief funds will also

support the occupancy costs associated with our physical CAC locations around NH. There is a CAC in each of NH's ten counties (with two in Hillsborough County). Many CACs also have satellite locations to provide convenience for our children and families and agency partners.

***(d) The funds will contribute significantly to the continued operation, competitiveness and future success of the organization and the economic sector, and will enhance the resiliency of the organization to survive future economic or health challenges.***

Public relief funds will absolutely contribute to the overall health of the network of Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) in NH. During these unprecedented times CACs are faced with the challenges of a surging demand in addition to a reduction in revenue to sustain the operation of our essential CAC services. As event fundraising activities have ceased and the uncertainty for our donors with the downturn in the economy, CACs across NH are in need of support to sustain our operations and services to child victims and their families.

We project an \$847,000 combined loss of revenue from fundraising and other donor contributions into the network of CACs across NH.

***(e) The use of funds is not in conflict with local or regional development plans and policies, or any other provision of state or federal law.***

Public relief funds to support NH Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) are not in conflict with local or regional development plans and policies, or any other provision of state or federal law.

***(f) The funds are structured in a way that will help the community and the State at large, and not just the particular private business or organization.***

Public relief funds to support NH Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) will help communities across NH. As part of our service delivery model we partner with multiple public, private, state, county and local organizations to provide a collaborative, coordinated systematic approach to child abuse investigations and subsequent supports for children and their families. CACs produce many important community benefits:

- allegations of sexual assaults and abuse are more thoroughly investigated;
- more offenders are held accountable;
- the community is better educated about the problem of child sexual abuse;
- trauma experienced by children is reduced;
- non-offending parents are empowered to protect and support their children;
- and children receive prompt and ongoing services including Trauma Focused Therapy and specialized medical evaluations tailored to their needs.

***(g) The use of funds is consistent with the one-time availability of the public relief funds and will not require future continuing operational support from the public sector in order to maintain success.***

One-time support of public relief funds for NH Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) will not require future continuing operational support from the public sector in order to maintain success. CACs rely on a diversified portfolio of resources to continue the service delivery that is critical to law enforcement, DCYF, the Attorney General's office, and other community agencies; all to best support child victims of physical and sexual abuse.

It is the devastating loss of revenue from fundraising events and the loss of direct donations from individual donors and companies due to the economy that cause the need for support during the COVID-19 crisis. Combined revenue from fund development efforts contributes neatly 30%-40% to CAC operating budgets. GSCA understands that the GOFERR is charged with the deployment of relief resources as a bridge while we recover to revenue models that include investments in our work from fundraising and philanthropy.

**(7) Please describe how the receipt and use of the public relief funds described in question 6 could be accounted for in your organization's financial statements.**

The Granite State Children's Alliance (GSCA) uses an accounting system whereby we are able to segregate income and expense items for reporting purposes. We currently provide federal, state and private funding sources with reports and source documents to support our organization's use of funds. Complying with any reporting requests will not be a problem for our organization.

**(8) Please describe specific measures for public reporting on the receipt and use of the public relief funds, so that the State may satisfy any public reporting obligations that may be imposed with respect to such funds.**

The Granite State Children's Alliance (GSCA) provides independent audited financial reports in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles and Government Auditing Standards. Applicable to our federal programs, we provide required reporting in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of our federal awards. Additionally, we annually provide the IRS a tax return on Form 990 and we provide private organizations and local governments with expenditure reports as required on an as needed basis.

**(9) Please identify other important organizations or functions in the State that have an important impact on your organization or economic sector, and, if possible, provide ideas of how those organizations and functions may be assisted by public relief funds in a manner that would help your organization or economic sector.**

As part of our CAC service delivery model we partner with multiple public, private, state, county and local organizations to provide a collaborative, coordinated systematic approach to child abuse investigations and subsequent supports for children and their families. The multidisciplinary team is comprised of representatives from law enforcement, County Attorney/prosecution, child protective services, victim/witness advocate, and medical and mental health professionals. GSCA is unaware of how those organizations may be assisted with public relief funds.

**(10) What would your business, agency, organization, sector do with the funds that cannot be done currently?**

Public relief funds to support NH Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) will assist with operating expenses traditionally offset by revenue from fundraisers (now cancelled) and donor contributions (drastically reduced). Relief funds will also support GSCA and CAC staff retention and enhanced commercial cleaning and needed PPE for our CACs.

**(11) We consistently hear different stories of what is occurring and what is needed; given the opportunity, please comment on what do you think should be said or considered that hasn't received much attention?**

For many children stay at home does not mean safe at home.

At Child Advocacy Centers we can only help the children we can reach. In addition to our services to child victims and their families, we take a leadership role in helping identify the kids who need our help by providing education to NH adults through our KNOW & TELL program. Since the COVID-19 pandemic has forced New Hampshire schools online and eliminated in-person student/teacher interaction, reports of child sexual abuse have fallen sharply. With learning online instead of in-class, teachers and other child-facing professionals just don't have the same vantage point to evaluate their students' wellbeing.

The National Sexual Assault hotline operated by RAINN recently revealed that **more than half of all calls were from minors, 79% of whom reported living with their perpetrator.** The national non-profit expects reports of child abuse to increase significantly as stay-at-home orders are lifted. We know in NH we are not immune from this horrific reality. Our experience, and data, indicates to us that we will see an increase once children are able to feel safe enough outside their environments to make

disclosures of abuse. **We need to make every attempt to reach child victims NOW and get them the help they need.**

As the school year comes to an end and child victims have even less contact with adults outside of their home who may potentially observe signs of abuse and make a report, GSCA is providing educational tools to inform the public at large. We are widening our net and enlisting all adults to understand their moral responsibility and mandated duty to make reports of suspected abuse and neglect.

GSCA developed new educational tools for recognizing and reporting abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic including five actions all adults can take to protect children from abuse and neglect, warning signs of abuse that may be recognized during video communication and tips for communicating during remote learning are now available and free to the public at [www.KNOWandTELL.org](http://www.KNOWandTELL.org).





May 21, 2020

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GOFERR Stakeholder Advisory Board

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sarah P McClennen. I am the owner and a sole proprietor of a small Structural Integration Clinic in New London, NH. I have been in business for almost 30 years in NH.

Structural Integration is a form of bodywork. The purpose of Structural Integration is to release restrictions in the soft tissue to reduce pain, increase ROM, restore function after surgery or injury, teach patients how to recognize tension patterns in their bodies and how to release these areas through exercises, breathing techniques, and self-regulation of the nervous system. In NH, there is a license for Structural Integration separate from Massage. In many states, Structural Integrators practice under a Massage License.

On March 27, 2020, Governor Sununu closed all non-essential businesses in NH. In the first few days following his announcement, there was great confusion in our business sector. Examples given of essential businesses were, chiropractic, physical therapy, care givers, among others. Many of us think that we fit in those categories. Our patients think we are essential. Some of us decided to keep working, with proper cleaning protocols and wearing masks. Just as chiropractors and physical therapists were continuing to work. All three of these professions work one on one with clients, in an office setting. We can control the interactions with other patients by scheduling more time between appointments to allow for cleaning, as well as so that patients do not come in contact with each other.

We were told on March 31, 2020 that we must close our doors. However, we were given no explanation as to why we were non essential. We were also informed that self-employed people could for the first time ever, collect unemployment. Please understand that closing our doors means no incoming revenue. Today, May 21, 2020 we are still not allowed to reopen.

So, many of us applied for unemployment, me included. This process was fraught with issues. The system was not set up to handle our lack of a W2 form. We were told to submit a request for Net Profit Amount Form. This form uses Line 31 from the Schedule C IRS Form used by sole proprietors to claim their business expenses. The net profit could be equated to the owner's salary. This makes sense since unemployment is meant to cover the wages/salary of a worker.

Let me give myself as an example so you can have a clear idea of the shortcomings for sole proprietors.

I make roughly \$98,000/year gross revenue. I claim each year roughly \$50,000 in businesses expenses. My net profit is roughly \$50,000/year.

In the unemployment system, there is a cap at \$41,500. At this level of income, in my case \$8,500 less than I make each year, the weekly benefit amount (WBA) is \$427/week. If I divide my net profit or salary of \$50,000 by 52 weeks, the result is \$961.54. This is 44% of my salary. Under COVID-19, the federal government added \$600/week to the NH State amount of \$427. This brought my weekly total from unemployment to \$1027. So, you might say I was getting more than I would get if I was working.

However, remember that is only the salary portion of my business revenue and there is another \$50,000 which I earn which pays my business overhead, (rent, utilities, phone, legal fees, office expenses, etc.). So, I come up short. I cannot pay all my business and personal expenses on  $\frac{1}{2}$  my usual income.

In addition, if I were to try and be creative and do other allowable services or sales of product to help run my business, pay the business overhead not covered by unemployment, 100% of any money I bring in is reported to unemployment and decreases the amount I receive. So, if I make any amount over \$427 per week, I receive nothing from unemployment, not even the federal bonus. So, as a business owner, I am left with my hands tied. I cannot try to cover the business portion of my income without jeopardizing my salary. This is very disempowering.

As businessmen and women, I am sure this dilemma is clear to you as well as the fact that it is not sustainable.

In the beginning, I assumed that the shutdown was to make sure hospitals were not overwhelmed. This made sense. I assumed a month. I have sufficient funds for the short term to carry me through. However, many people in my profession do not. As good as we all are at healing, listening, helping, many of my colleagues fall short in financial planning. So, this has put a huge strain on our professional sector.

I was not worried but applied for the EIDL loan and the PPP Loan as well, just in case. Originally the EIDL Loan came with a \$10,000 advance which was not a loan but a grant. That was quickly reduced to \$1,000/employee. So, for a self-employed person that is \$1,000. I applied for that March 24, 2020 and have not seen any money yet. A free thousand is worth applying for.

Then I applied for the PPP Loan around the same time, end of March. My bank dragged their feet, again because it was unclear how self-employed persons fit into a payroll protection program. By the time my bank submitted the application, the funds were gone. Mostly as a result of the policy that self-employed people could not submit our applications until one week after all other small businesses. So, I told myself this would be a lean month and did not give it too much power over me.

When the second round of PPP money was announced, I had my application in the morning my banker called me. As insurance, I also applied through another bank which was reported to have gotten more loans the first round for their customers. I received the loan from my original bank.

Now comes the interesting part. You might say that this is great. I have unemployment and I have the PPP Loan. However, again the rules are unclear. But after careful research, I determine that you cannot collect unemployment once you receive the PPP Loan. Unemployment asks you to report all money received from COVID-19 relief programs. I did and my claim was put on hold.

PPP Loan gives 2.5x your monthly payroll. For self-employed persons, that is Line 31 of schedule C divided by 12 and times 2.5. For me the loan amount came to \$11,200. This money must be used within the eight weeks follow receipt of the loan. So, eight weeks of payroll/salary. This gives me \$1400/week. This is better than unemployment and as long as I use it for salary, rent and utilities it will be forgiven. It is also not taxable. Unemployment is taxable. I am now getting \$1,400 instead of my usual revenue of \$1,885. Ok, but still short of the revenue of the business. However, I will be ok.

Many in our sector, have received no unemployment, no PPP loan, no EIDL loan. Again, those of us who received the money were persistent. We called unemployment daily, waiting on hold for hours. We badgered our banks. Many of us received no money for 4-6 weeks. Then it all came in.

These scenarios speak to the stressful nature of this situation for self employed people.

Our sector provides health care for people. We work with pain management cases, reducing or eliminating the need for opioids, we work with surgery and injury recovery, mobility, ROM, stress reduction (which helps lower blood pressure, lessens the risk of diabetes, helps prevent suicides, decreases rates of depression). Our services are significantly less expensive than other alternatives.

Human connection, touch, listening, and support are critical to human health, especially during a crisis. Currently, with the Governor not allowing us to reopen, many of us risk going under. In addition, our patients are suffering and in need of our services.

I am addressing the issue of why we as Health Care Practitioners were put on the non-essential business list in the first place separately, with the Task Force and the Governor and I plan to continue to work towards our sector being classified as Essential Services.

I cannot give you grandiose plans for how the money directed to our sector will be used. But I can tell that it will be detrimental to society at large to lose the healing services of Massage, Structural Integration and other Body work modalities.

It was Mother Theresa who said that there is more hunger for love and appreciation in this world than for bread—and she is not wrong. Whether or not we feel loved profoundly influences how we feel on a day to day basis. A growing body of research confirms the wisdom of her words—holding a partner’s hand, receiving healing touch, talking—all of these activities are as important to our wellbeing as remembering to drink enough water and get enough exercise.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my assessment of the situation at hand.

Sincerely,

Sarah P McClennen