Washington State Department of
Labor & Industries

Child Physical Abuse Exams

2025 Annual Report to the Legislature

November 2025

Available online at: Lni.wa.gov/LegReports

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Introduction

The Crime Victims Compensation Program (CVC) helps victims of violent crime by providing financial compensation for expenses such as medical bills, loss of financial support, and funeral expenses. Although CVC is housed within the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I), the program does not fall under Title 51 and has its own governing statute, RCW 7.68.

Program eligibility is defined in the law. These include: the incident must have occurred in Washington state; the incident must be reported to law enforcement within one year of the date of the incident; and a claim must be filed with CVC within three years of the incident being reported to law enforcement. Along with this, CVC is a secondary payer to any available insurance.

However, there are CVC-covered services in which reporting to law enforcement is not required and the program is a primary payer regardless of whether or not the victim has insurance. One of those services is paying for child physical abuse forensic examinations (CPA). To cover these expenses, medical providers must be registered with L&I's Medical Provider Network (MPN). If registered, providers are required to submit the billing to CVC with the examination report attached in order to receive payment.

If either the provider is not registered with the MPN, the examination report is not attached to the bill, or the incident did not occur in Washington state CVC would deny payment. If the bill is denied because the provider is not registered with the MPN, the provider would be given this explanation and would be given the choice to register. If the provider is later registered, they could resubmit the bill for processing and payment. If the bill is denied because the examination report is not attached to the bill, the provider would be given this explanation and could resubmit the bill with the examination report attached for processing and payment.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, the Washington state legislature passed Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5897 to provide authority for CVC to cover medical evaluations of suspected child victims of physical abuse. The bill authorized CVC to be a primary payer for these examinations without regard to any other financial resources available to child victims. In addition to making CVC a primary payer, the legislature also did not require the incident to be reported to law enforcement for CVC to cover the expenses of the examination. However, the law expired on June 30, 2019, and was not extended. As a result, CVC lost the funding to continue paying for CPAs. Between fiscal years 2016-2020, when the first iteration of this benefit was authorized, approximately 600 CPA bills were received and processed.

In 2022, the legislature passed SSB 5814 to reauthorize and fund CVC's ability to cover CPAs. The legislature recognized the importance of these examinations for children suffering physical abuse. Also, it recognized that providing CVC the ability to cover these examinations would incentivize timely evaluations, lead to early identification of abuse, and, potentially, prevent a child from further traumatization or injury.

In addition to covering CPAs, SSB 5814 requires L&I to submit an annual report to the legislature by November with the following information:

- total number of bills requesting payment for child abuse examinations;
- number of bills approved or denied, including reason for denial; and
- number of bills covered for another reason.

This report provides the required information.

Reporting Requirements

TOTAL NUMBER OF BILLS RECEIVED

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025), CVC received 1,237 bills for child physical abuse examinations. This is 310 more than were received in FY 2024 and a significant increase since the benefit was reauthorized by the legislature in 2022.

The total amount billed for the child physical abuse examinations in FY 2025 was $656,916. The program paid $347,270 for 939 of the examinations billed. L&I determines the amount it will pay for each service in its fee schedule, which is also used for workers' compensation claims. Providers who accept payment from CVC may not bill the victim for the remainder of the cost. They are required to accept the payment as full reimbursement for their services.

In addition to the amount paid for each bill, 298 of them were not paid as child physical abuse examinations for reasons listed in Figure 2 below. Of those, an additional eight were paid by CVC under a different provision.

Figure 1: Total Number of Bills Received and Amounts Paid

Fiscal Year	Number of Bills Received	Number of Bills Paid	Amount Billed	Amount Paid
2025	1,237	939	$656,916	$347,270
2024	927	793	$766,943	$340,505
2023	418	392	$366,116	$194,852

Figure 2: Bills Not Paid By CVC

Reason For No Payment	Number of Bills
Covered as a sexual assault exam in lieu of child physical abuse exam.	8
Not covered due to missing forms or reports to show bill was for CPA, or billing error.	169
Not covered due to: crime not in Washington state; claims coded as child physical abuse in error; or bills were for follow-up care, not forensic exams.	121

Conclusion

In FY 2025, L&I received more than 1,200 bills for child physical abuse examinations. This compares to over 900 bills received in FY 2024 and over 400 bills received in FY 2023 when the benefit was reinstated.

Since the removal of legal barriers in 2022, more child victims have access to these vital examinations. As L&I continues to work with interested parties on refining billing processes and outreach, more providers are becoming aware of this service for child victims of physical abuse. Therefore, usage and billing for these services is expected to continue to increase.