

Understanding FPAR Definitions: What is a Family Planning Encounter and Who is a Family Planning User?



Understanding what counts as a family planning encounter and which clients count as family planning users is more nuanced than it appears at first glance. This job aid contains definitions and processes that Title X staff can use to determine which visits and clients to include in the Office of Population Affairs (OPA) Family Planning Annual Report (FPAR).

Definitions and Processes

These definitions and processes (presented as flow charts) derive from the [Family Planning Annual Report Forms and Instructions](#) and [Providing Quality Family Planning Services: Recommendations of CDC and the U.S. Office of Population Affairs \(QFP\)](#). See the full documents for comprehensive guidance.



Client refers to an individual who seeks services at a health center regardless of the type of service, whereas a **user** refers to an individual who seeks family planning and related services.

Family planning user is an individual who has at least one family planning encounter during the reporting period. The same individual may be counted as a family planning user only once during a reporting period. A client becomes a “new user” when they receive counseling, education, or clinical services aimed at avoiding unintended pregnancy or achieving intended pregnancy for the first time at the service site. At subsequent visits, the user is an “ongoing user.”



Family planning encounter is a documented contact between an individual and a family planning provider that is either face-to-face in a Title X service site or virtual using telehealth technology. The purpose of a family planning encounter is to provide family planning and related preventive health services to female and male clients who want to avoid unintended pregnancies or achieve intended pregnancies. In order to count as a family planning encounter, a written record of the services provided during the visit must be documented in the client record.

Laboratory tests and related counseling and education (such as HIV tests and STD screening), in and of themselves, do not constitute a family planning encounter **unless**:

1. there is face-to-face contact between the client and provider;
2. the provider documents the encounter in the client’s record; **and**
3. for new users, the tests are accompanied by family planning counseling or education.



Family planning provider is the individual who assumes primary responsibility for assessing a client and documenting services in the client record. Providers include those agency staff who exercise independent judgment as to the services rendered to the client during an encounter. Although a client may meet with both clinical and other service providers during an encounter, the provider with the highest level of training who takes ultimate responsibility for the client’s clinical or non-clinical assessment and care is credited with the encounter.



Family planning services include contraceptive services, pregnancy testing and counseling, achieving pregnancy, basic infertility services, preconception health, and sexually transmitted disease services.

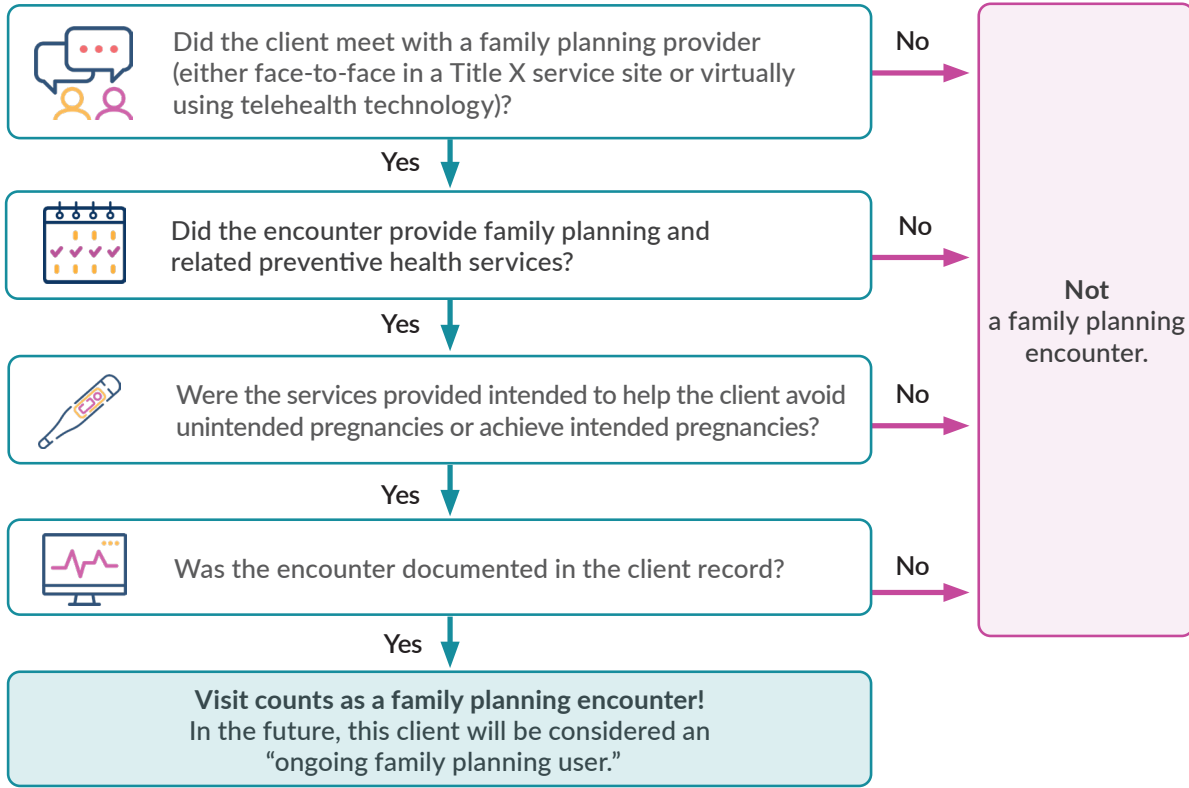
Related preventive health services include screening for breast and cervical cancer.



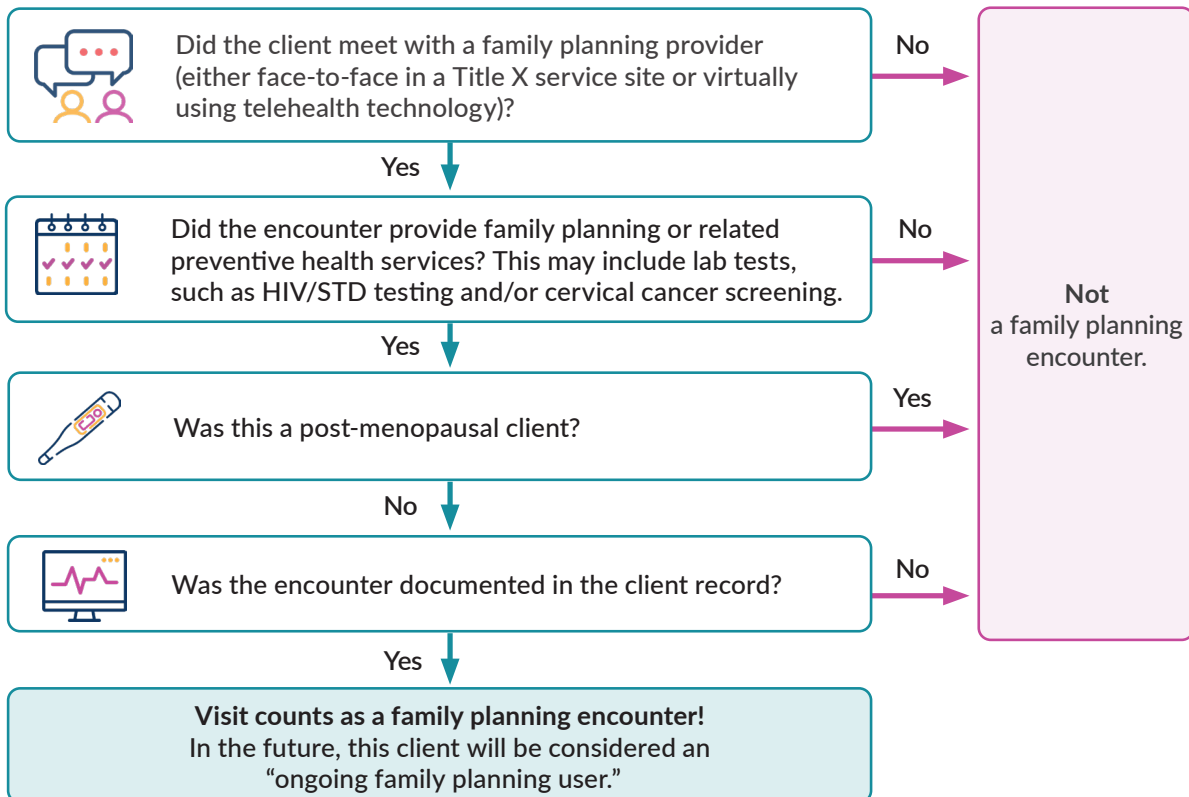
Pay source (i.e., private insurance, Medicaid, Title X) is **not** a determining factor in whether a client is considered to be a family planning user.

Family Planning Encounter Flow Charts

New User¹



Ongoing User²



¹ A visit with a **new** client who is post-menopausal or who has been sterilized and is not seeking a reversal is not considered a family planning encounter, and the client is **not** a family planning user.

² A visit with an **ongoing** family planning user of reproductive age who was sterilized (under the site's Title X-funded project or elsewhere) and continues to receive gynecological or related preventive health services from the site is considered a family planning encounter; the client continues to be a family planning user.