

Affiliate Guide to Georgia CASA Services

2011-2012



AFFILIATE GUIDE TO GEORGIA CASA SERVICES

Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocates, Inc. develops and supports court-sanctioned, community-based affiliate programs that provide trained and supervised volunteers to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children involved in juvenile court proceedings. As the founding entity of CASA in Georgia, Georgia CASA has provided support to affiliate programs and their communities for over twenty years.

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TRAINING

CASA volunteers are trained to effectively advocate for abused and neglected children. Staff and board members are trained to supervise CASA volunteers and administer thriving affiliate programs that provide all deprived children with quality advocacy in and out of the courtroom.

State Volunteer Conference Presented by Georgia CASA, the state conference is an opportunity for CASA volunteers, board members and staff to come together to hear from professionals in the fields of child abuse and neglect, child protection, and volunteer and nonprofit management. The conference is a great networking opportunity for all in attendance and is the largest statewide CASA event. The *CASA Volunteer of the Year Award* is presented at the conference as well as *Awards of Excellence* for affiliate CASA programs.

Council of Programs (COPs) Meeting Each fall and spring, Georgia CASA hosts a meeting of the affiliate program directors from across the state. The meetings provide opportunities for training, networking, sharing expertise and discussing issues or concerns that affect the CASA network and abused and neglected children in juvenile court deprivation proceedings across the state.

Training of the Facilitator Workshop This intensive, three-day training prepares CASA staff to deliver the pre-service 30-hour CASA volunteer training curriculum. The hands-on, interactive training provides participants with the opportunity to facilitate mock training sessions as well as to discuss adult learning theory principles, facilitation skills and how to manage training logistics. The workshop is held twice per year and is open to all CASA staff.

Volunteer Supervisor Training CASA staff who supervise volunteers are encouraged to attend this training, which focuses on volunteer management skills and case building strategies to effectively supervise CASA volunteers. It has a strong emphasis on volunteer retention and utilizes materials from National CASA's Strategic Volunteer Retention Training. Participants are provided with a Volunteer Supervisor training manual and the training is open to all CASA staff and is held once per year.

Strengthening Courtroom Advocacy Georgia CASA created and offers several trainings designed to enhance CASA volunteer and staff skills, comfort, and effectiveness in courtroom advocacy. These trainings are available for local delivery, regional workshops, and webinars. Trainings include: Juvenile Court 101, DFCS Policy and Practice, and Courtroom Advocacy for Staff and Volunteers.

Targeted Training Georgia CASA presents workshops for boards, staff and CASA volunteers that target specific subjects throughout the year. Training may be offered statewide, regionally or on-site.

Leadership Opportunities

- Four affiliate program directors are elected by the Council of Programs (COPs) to serve on the Georgia CASA Board.
- Directors, staff and board members are invited to serve on Georgia CASA Board committees or subcommittees.
- Directors, staff, board members and CASA volunteers are invited to represent CASA on statewide committees, groups and special projects.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Georgia CASA offers assistance to CASA staff and board members to build successful affiliate programs. Opportunities exist to learn new skills, acquire knowledge of best practices, and be coached in unfamiliar situations.

For New Affiliate Programs Georgia CASA staff provides information and consultation to communities that wish to establish an affiliate program. After the Judge has signed a letter of intent, community members form a Steering Committee to build local support for CASA, to determine the governance of the affiliate program, and to form a Board of Directors or Advisory Group.

- Program Development Steps, established by National CASA, are followed to assist communities in the process of establishing a strong affiliate program.
- Program Orientation provides an in-depth overview of the CASA Standards for affiliate programs and the day-to-day operations of an affiliate program for newly hired affiliate program directors and their supervisors.
- On-site Visit addresses any questions and/or comments of the affiliate program anytime after the assignment of the first class of CASA volunteers.

For Established Affiliate Programs Georgia CASA staff members work closely with affiliate program staff members, Boards of Directors and Advisory Boards. On-site assistance is available to affiliate programs as well as state representation at local events. Consultation is available, but not limited to, the following:

- Budget development and financial administration
- Board/advisory board development
- Resource development, which includes reviewing affiliate program grant requests
- Volunteer recruitment, screening, training, supervision and recognition
- Legal issues regarding affiliate program operations and child advocacy
- Affiliate program planning and evaluation
- Human resources and staffing structure
- Local community education and publicity
- Grant writing
- Outcome measure and logic models

Training is available upon request for COMET/ETO, QuickBooks, record keeping, board orientation and planning, staff hiring and training, and program operations.

Statistical Reports Georgia CASA collects statewide data for children served, volunteers and case outcomes. Each affiliate program reports quarterly information via the internet. Georgia CASA compiles the information and submits a statewide report to the Georgia Department of Human Services, as part of a contractual requirement, National CASA and the CASA network. Past and current statistical reports are available at www.gacasa.org. Statistical reporting assistance and training is available on an ongoing basis.

Comparison and trend reports are also created and provided to the CASA network using quarterly statistics, DFCS reporting, and the Annual Program Survey. In addition to children served and case outcomes, data is available on income sources, salaries, volunteer demographics, length of service, etc.

WEBSITES & SOCIAL NETWORKING

The Georgia CASA website (www.gacasa.org) provides affiliate CASA programs, CASA volunteers, interested supporters, and other stakeholders with convenient, 24/7 access to pertinent information. Additionally, the Georgia CASA Facebook page and Twitter updates provide timely information and online networking opportunities.

The Georgia CASA Website has valuable up-to-date information, including statistics, e-newsletters, press releases, success stories and an affiliate program directory. Also included is a calendar that lists trainings and events for Georgia CASA and the affiliate programs. The website is a great tool for educating the general public and gaining support for the affiliate programs in Georgia. Links are included to affiliate programs that have their own websites. The website serves as a clearinghouse of information for visitors and prospective CASA volunteers.

State CASA Internal Website (Intranet) Affiliate programs can access an intranet site that provides much in-depth information and resources, including sample forms, applications, protocols, policies, publications, and reference materials. While the intranet is password protected, CASA staff and board members have unlimited access. A unique password for each affiliate program is available from Georgia CASA.

Metro Atlanta CASA Collaborative Website Georgia CASA maintains a website (www.metrocasa.org) specifically designed for the metro Atlanta affiliate CASA programs in Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton and Gwinnett counties. The website further assists the Collaborative to develop and share resources in order to strengthen each affiliate program's effectiveness and to increase the number of CASA volunteers in metro Atlanta advocating for abused and neglected children.

The Georgia CASA Forums Georgia CASA provides and maintains the Georgia CASA Director's Forum and the Volunteer Supervisor Forum. The forums are private, online, discussion boards used to enhance communication and information sharing between affiliate programs from around the state as well as the Georgia CASA office.

The Georgia CASA Facebook Page and Twitter Updates Georgia CASA has a Facebook business page that includes timely postings with 'status' updates, event listings, event photos and general information about CASA. The Facebook page also allows for online networking among a wide range of CASA volunteers, staff, board members and supporters. Georgia CASA also maintains a Twitter account and posts relevant, timely updates for its followers.

PUBLICATIONS

Volunteer Training Manual (2007) The 3rd edition of the National CASA Volunteer Training Curriculum was released in 2007 and provides affiliate programs with a standard curriculum for CASA volunteers. The 30-hour training covers CASA roles and responsibilities, juvenile court law and practice, and information regarding child abuse and neglect, child development, cultural diversity and family dynamics. Training manuals are available for a reduced fee through the state office. *Customized state materials are produced and available on the Georgia CASA Intranet.*

Facilitator Training Manual (2007) The Facilitator Edition accompanies the volunteer training manual and provides CASA staff and training facilitators with the necessary tools and information to facilitate the CASA volunteer training. Each affiliate program receives one complimentary copy of the facilitator manual. Additional copies are available through the state office for a fee.

Crisis Communications Manual Designed for CASA affiliate program staff, the manual includes common CASA crisis situations, crisis action steps, sample policies, and various communication resources useful in a crisis situation. The complimentary manual is available through the state office.

A Guide for CASA Programs Involved in Juvenile Court Deprivation Cases with Limited DFCS Involvement New in 2011, this manual was created for affiliate programs in Georgia seeking additional information about juvenile court deprivation cases that have limited involvement from the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS). This manual is an attempt to clearly identify challenges that CASA volunteers, programs, and courts may encounter.

E-Newsletters Georgia CASA publishes the *Georgia CASA Connector E-Newsletter* quarterly for distribution to its statewide network of CASA volunteers, board members, staff, stakeholders and other supporters. The e-newsletter contains a variety of information relating to the work of CASA in the state. Georgia CASA also publishes an internal e-newsletter, *E-News for CASA Network in Georgia*, between issues of the regular e-newsletter. The internal e-newsletter is targeted to local program board chairs or supervisors, staff, and the Georgia CASA board and staff.

Council of Programs (COPs) Directory At each COPs meeting, an updated booklet directory of CASA program directors and Georgia CASA staff is provided to each attendee. The directory includes a photo of each person, along with brief biographical and program information.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

As the founding entity of CASA in Georgia, Georgia CASA joins National CASA and affiliate programs in assessing and assuring that each child has the best volunteer advocate possible.

Georgia CASA Standards and Requirements Adapted from the standards and requirements established by National CASA, the Georgia CASA standards and requirements guide affiliate program staff and boards in establishing strong, viable programs to serve children in their areas and are intended to ensure consistent quality throughout the CASA network.

Site Visit Every four years, a team of reviewers from Georgia CASA and other affiliate CASA programs participate in a site review process that explores affiliate program operations, adherence to standards, promising practices, and effective advocacy. The site visit includes interviews with program leadership, staff, volunteers, and Judges. A review of financial records, personnel, case, and volunteer files, and governing documents is included. Court observation is included. The affiliate program receives written feedback regarding identified strengths, recommendations and any required action.

Awards of Excellence In honor of the dedication and commitment demonstrated by affiliate programs everyday across the state, the Georgia CASA Board of Directors annually recognizes the exceptional contributions of affiliate programs in Georgia. Each year, applications are solicited and a select few affiliate programs receive the award. In addition to the recognition, each recipient receives a monetary donation to the affiliate program.

Volunteer of the Year Award Each year, Georgia CASA accepts nominations for the Karen N. Sibley Volunteer of the Year Award from all affiliate programs. The award, named after the founder of Georgia CASA, recognizes an outstanding CASA volunteer who has made significant contributions in helping abused and neglected children. In addition to receiving the award, the winner receives a trip to the National CASA Association's annual conference.

National CASA Self Assessment Process Every four years, each affiliate program participates in a self-assessment of its program operations and adherence to national standards. The assessment is submitted to the National CASA office for review and feedback. Each affiliate program develops a plan to strengthen program effectiveness. Georgia CASA provides technical assistance and support throughout the assessment phases as requested.

Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) Georgia CASA provides training and assistance to affiliate programs using Social Solution's ETO database to track volunteer and child/case information.

AFFILIATE PROGRAM FUNDING RESOURCES

Georgia CASA's mission to support affiliate programs includes both financial support and training and technical assistance to find and maintain local support.

State Allocation Georgia CASA administers funds appropriated by the Georgia General Assembly to affiliate programs. Funding is allocated to affiliate CASA programs for the sole purpose of employing staff to recruit, screen, train and supervise CASA volunteers.

Fundraising and Grant Writing Support Georgia CASA provides technical assistance, including grant research and review, development of local fundraising plans, as well as fundraising training for affiliate staff and boards. Additionally, Georgia CASA offers support to affiliate programs in their consideration and completion of specific federal grants, such as Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) and National CASA.

Volunteer Screening and Training Support In order to support affiliate programs' screening and training of CASA volunteers, Georgia CASA pays for the FBI fingerprint-based checks on all volunteers and staff and offsets half of the cost of volunteer training manuals.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

The greatest assets of an affiliate program are the people who advocate for children, those who support the program as well as those who learn about child abuse and neglect and support the changes in law and policy that will improve the child protection system. Georgia CASA markets CASA in Georgia to help affiliate programs develop the constituencies to make them successful.

Toll Free Number to receive and manage general requests for information and inquiries from anywhere in the state.

April/May Activities April as National Child Abuse Prevention & Awareness Month and May as National Foster Care Month provide great opportunities for affiliate programs to hold community events to recruit and recognize CASA volunteers and to educate the general public, collaborative partners, key decision makers, supporters, and the media about CASA. Georgia CASA provides affiliate programs with several public relations tools for the timeframe. Affiliate program events may include a Light of Hope candlelight ceremony, community education programs, CASA volunteer recognition events and participation in local community collaboration events.

CASA Awareness Day at Atlanta Braves Game On September 3, 2011, CASA volunteers, board members, staff, and family and friends can take part in this annual awareness day at the ballpark. The day includes a CASA exhibit booth, 50/50 raffle, CASA parade around the field and an on-field presentation to CASA. Local CASA programs are offered tickets at a deep discount, with Georgia CASA covering the remaining cost for each ticket.

Public Awareness Materials Available for Affiliate Programs (see the Intranet for details)

- Customized brochures and bookmarks (ready for print)
- Exhibit screens and brochure (ready to order)
- Name badges (ready to order)
- *Make a Lifelong Difference, Unpacking Hope* and *Everyday Heroes* DVDs (6 to 7-minute CASA informational videos)
- Braves-CASA TV public service announcement featuring Tim Hudson (30 seconds)
- Customizable fact sheet
- CASA key messages
- CASA success stories
- Recent national and state child abuse/neglect statistics
- PowerPoint presentation template
- Targeted volunteer recruitment tools and ideas
- Annual report template
- Newsletter template
- Ad files for billboard, print and radio
- Press release templates

Additional public awareness materials and resources often become available throughout the year.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

As advocates for children, CASA volunteers, staff and board members often continue their advocacy outside the courtroom to ensure that elected officials and policy makers have a greater understanding of the strengths and limitations of the child welfare system.

State Advocacy Georgia CASA provides a collective voice to the Georgia General Assembly on legislative issues impacting CASA and abused and neglected children in the child welfare system. As a statewide voice, Georgia CASA coordinates legislative activities and distributes education materials to legislators, CASA volunteers and staff, board members and other supporters of the CASA program. The state allocation is determined by the General Assembly and dependent on the support of elected officials.

CASA and Foster Youth Day at the Capitol A key component to CASA's advocacy efforts is the relationship between elected officials and affiliate CASA programs across the state. Annually, Georgia CASA hosts CASA and Foster Youth Day at the Capitol, which brings CASA volunteers, staff, board members, current and former foster youth from Georgia's Independent Living Program, and supporters to the Capital to meet and greet with legislators and state level officials. This event is held one day during the legislative session, which typically runs January through March.

CASA Meets Congress Coordination In June 2012, the National CASA Association's annual conference will take place in Washington, D.C. Georgia CASA coordinates the Georgia delegation for CASA Meets Congress that is held in conjunction with the conference.

Collaborative Partners Georgia CASA maintains mutually supportive relationships with other children's organizations to enhance CASA's reputation in Georgia, including the Council of Juvenile Court Judges, Department of Family and Children's Services, the Supreme Court of Georgia Committee on Justice for Children, the Georgia Network of Children's Advocacy Centers, the Office of the Child Advocate, Voices for Georgia's Children, and the Barton Child Law and Policy Center.

DIRECTORY OF AFFILIATE CASA PROGRAMS

Advo-Kids CASA, 770.820.9195

Fayette, Pike, Spalding & Upson Counties

Alcovy CASA, 770.385.7450

Newton & Walton Counties

Athens-Oconee CASA, 706.613.1922

Clarke & Oconee Counties

Atlantic Area CASA, 912.876.3816

Bryan, Liberty, Long, McIntosh & Tattnall Counties

Bartow County CASA, 770.386.1060

Bartow County

Camden County CASA, 912.882.3119

Camden County

Carroll County CASA, 770.838.1964

Carroll County

Chattahoochee CASA, 706.327.9612 x207

Muscogee County

CASA of the Alapaha Judicial Circuit, 229.686.6576

Atkinson, Berrien, Clinch, Cook & Lanier Counties

**CASA of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit,
706.276.2272**

Fannin, Gilmer & Pickens Counties

CASA of the Augusta Judicial Circuit,

706.737.4631

Burke, Columbia & Richmond Counties

CASA for Children, 770.345.3274

Cherokee County

CASA of Forsyth County, 770.886.4082

Forsyth County

CASA Glynn, 912.264.4448

Glynn County

CASA of Houston County, 478.396.2185

Houston County

**CASA of the Ogeechee Judicial Circuit,
912.764.4849**

Bulloch, Effingham, Jenkins & Screven Counties

CASA of Paulding, 770.505.0065

Paulding County

CASA of Polk & Haralson, 770.748.2414

Haralson & Polk Counties

CASA of Southwest Georgia, 229.248.1040

Baker, Calhoun, Decatur, Grady & Mitchell Counties

CASA of the Toombs Judicial Circuit, 706.359.5544

Glascock, Lincoln, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren & Wilkes Counties

CASA of Troup & Heard Counties, 706.845.8243

Heard & Troup Counties

Central Georgia CASA, 478.238.6318

Bibb, Crawford & Peach Counties

**Children's Voice: Douglas County CASA,
770.577.7228**

Douglas County

Clayton County CASA, 770.477.3268

Clayton County

Coastal Plain CASA, 229.386.9765

Irwin, Tift, Turner & Worth Counties

Coweta CASA, 770.253.0046

Coweta County

DeKalb County CASA, 404.378.0038

DeKalb County

Dougherty County CASA, 229.435.0074

Dougherty County

Enotah CASA, 706.864.0300

Lumpkin, Towns, Union & White Counties

Floyd County CASA, 706.235.2272

Floyd County

Fulton County CASA, 404.224.4720

Fulton County

Gordon County CASA, 706.629.4561

Gordon County

Gwinnett County CASA, 770.619.6015

Gwinnett County

Hall-Dawson CASA, 770.531.1964

Dawson & Hall Counties

**Juvenile Court of Cobb County/CASA,
770.528.2285**

Cobb County

Lookout Mountain CASA, 423.255.6147

Catoosa, Dade & Walker Counties

Murray/Whitfield CASA, 706.272.7919

Murray & Whitfield Counties

Northeast Georgia CASA, 706.886.1098

Elbert, Franklin, Habersham, Hart, Madison, Oglethorpe, Rabun & Stephens Counties

Ocmulgee CASA, 478.452.9170

Baldwin, Greene, Hancock, Jasper, Jones, Morgan, Putnam & Wilkinson Counties

Piedmont CASA, 706.387.6375

Banks, Barrow & Jackson Counties

Rockdale CASA, 770.761.0202

Rockdale County

S.A.F.E. CASA

Bacon, Brantley, Charlton, Coffee, Pierce & Ware Counties - Currently in re-development

**Savannah/Chatham County CASA,
912.447.8908**

Chatham County

SOWEGA CASA, 229.931.4488

Ben Hill, Crisp, Dooly, Lee, Macon, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Terrell, Webster and Wilcox Counties

TLC CASA, 478.275.8100

Bleckley, Candler, Dodge, Emanuel, Jefferson, Johnson, Laurens, Montgomery, Pulaski, Telfair, Toombs, Treutlen, Twiggs, Washington & Wheeler Counties

Thomas County CASA, 229.225.4338

Brooks & Thomas Counties

Tri-County CASA, 912.367.0064

Appling, Jeff Davis & Wayne Counties



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