

The National CASA Association

Application for Provisional Program Membership

Contact Person

Title

Program/Organization

Address

City/State/Zip

County

Telephone Number(s)

Fax Number

Email Address

Organization Type (nonprofit or publicly administered)

Model of Representation (GAL or friend of the court)

Court District/Jurisdiction Served

Court(s) served: State _____ Tribal _____ Both _____

Name of Judge

Email for Judge

Address of Judge
Revised 1/2014

Telephone Number

Provisional membership is available to a steering committee, community organization or a court that is taking steps to develop a volunteer CASA/GAL program. It will only be considered in communities in which there is not already a provisional or full CASA member program. Members in this category must be committed to developing a program within the next 12 months that operates in compliance with National CASA's program standards. To qualify, a program must submit this application and questionnaire, attach the required indicators of compliance and include provisional membership dues of \$100 for one year. Applications will be reviewed and must be approved by the National CASA Association for membership to be granted.

I have reviewed the requirements of provisional membership and agree to abide by them.

Signature of Chief Officer of Governing Body

Date

Signature of Program Director

Date

Please inform us of the status of your program development efforts by completing the questionnaire below and submitting the required indicators of compliance.

**National CASA Association
Provisional Membership Questionnaire**

Development Step #1: Establish Commitment

1. Has the CASA program had contact with and requested start-up material from the National CASA Association and state association (if one exists)?

Yes _____ No _____

2. Have personal contacts been made with key judges in the jurisdiction before program start-up to talk with them about and gain support for the CASA/GAL program?

Yes _____ No _____

3. Was a steering or planning committee created to guide the initial development activities?

Yes _____ No _____

4. Did the planning committee conduct a needs assessment to document the need for the program in the community/geographic location?

Yes _____ No _____

5. Did the needs assessment include:

a. Interviews with key players:

Judges? Yes _____ No _____

State CASA/GAL Director (if one exists)? Yes _____ No _____

Child Protective Services Personnel? Yes _____ No _____

Prosecutor/Attorney General's Office? Yes _____ No _____

Community Child Advocates? Yes _____ No _____

b. *Collecting baseline statistics:*

Number of reports of suspected child abuse in the area? Yes _____ No _____

Number of petitions filed? Yes _____ No _____

Average length of stay of children in foster care? Yes _____ No _____

Duration of the court process in child abuse cases? Yes _____ No _____

c. *Current process for representation of child's best interest, wishes and legal rights before the court and who serves in those capacities?* Yes _____ No _____

6. Did the steering or planning committee conduct a feasibility study and create a written document to confirm the feasibility of development of a successful CASA/GAL program in the jurisdiction?

Yes _____ No _____

7. Did the feasibility study include:

a. *An assessment of community support including financial support and available human resources (board members, volunteers and other leaders for the program)?*

Yes _____ No _____

b. *An assessment of whether the program should be developed independently or as a part of an already existing program?*

Yes _____ No _____

c. *An assessment of the community's ability to sustain the program?*

Yes _____ No _____

Development Step #2: Establish Program Mission

8. During the planning process, was a written mission statement for the program adopted?

Yes _____ No _____

9. Is the population to be served by your CASA program primarily children involved in the court system because of alleged abuse or neglect?

Yes _____ No _____

10. Will your CASA/GAL program provide advocacy primarily through the use of volunteers?

Yes _____ No _____

11. Has the CASA program developed policy to ensure that volunteers have regular, in-person contact with the child sufficient to have in-depth knowledge of the case and make fact-based recommendations to the court?

Yes _____ No _____

Development Step #3: Establish Program Framework

12. Did the CASA/GAL program prepare a plan with timeframes for the organization's development?

Yes _____ No _____

13. Does the plan address:

a. *Whether the program will be a non-profit agency, a unit of the court or county government or operate under an existing nonprofit agency?*

Yes _____ No _____

b. *Whether the volunteers will function as guardians ad litem or friends of the court?*

Yes _____ No _____

c. *Projection of the number of volunteers needed to effectively serve the population?*

Yes _____ No _____

d. *Projection of the number and type of staff necessary to operate the program and supervise volunteers in keeping with National CASA standards?*

Yes _____ No _____

Development Step #4: Create Program Infrastructure

14. What is the program’s legal status? (*Check one of the three blanks below.*)

Independent non-profit organization? _____

A unit of an already established non-profit organization/umbrella agency? _____ (*Please skip to question #18.*)

A unit of a government entity? _____ (*Please skip to question #23.*)

15. For programs operating or planning to operate as independent nonprofit organizations:

a. *Have planners applied for 501c3 status?*

Yes _____ No _____

b. *Has 501c3 status been secured?*

Yes _____ No _____ *If not yet secured, anticipated date?* _____

16. Has the first board of directors been convened?

Yes _____ No _____

17. If so, does the first board of directors have written directives for the following?

a. *Job descriptions for board members?*

Yes _____ No _____

b. *Identification of skills needed on the board?*

Yes _____ No _____

c. *Development of board recruitment strategies?*

Yes _____ No _____

d. *Development of election and screening procedures?*

Yes _____ No _____

e. *Board member training?*

Yes _____ No _____

18. For CASA/GAL programs being developed under the umbrella of a parent organization:

a. *Was a written agreement developed?*

Yes _____ No _____

b. *Did the written agreement detail:*

The rights and responsibilities of the program and the umbrella organization?

Yes _____ No _____

Procedures for resolving situations in which a conflict of interest might exist between the CASA/GAL program and its parent organization?

Yes _____ No _____

The protocol for resource development activities of both organizations?

Yes _____ No _____

Process for receipt and allocation of funds?

Yes _____ No _____

Process for accounting for funds separately?

Yes _____ No _____

The administrative rate, if any, to be paid to the umbrella organization by the prospective CASA/GAL program?

Yes _____ No _____

c. *Was a time frame of no more than two years established for review and possible revision of the agreement?*

Yes _____ No _____

19. If the program is a nonprofit organization (umbrella or independent), does the board of directors meet at least quarterly?

Yes _____ No _____

20. Are up-to-date written minutes maintained of all governing-body deliberations and decisions?

Yes _____ No _____

21. Does the governing body reflect the diversity of the children to be served?

Yes _____ No _____ If not, is there a plan to reach this goal? Yes _____ No _____

22. In a nonprofit organization do the bylaws or written procedures of the CASA/GAL program:

a. *Describe the organizational structure and responsibilities of the governing body?*

Yes _____ No _____

b. *Establish the mechanisms for selection, rotation, and duration of membership and for election of officers?*

Yes _____ No _____

c. *Set the minimum number of formal meetings of the full governing body of at least four (4) times per calendar year?*

Yes _____ No _____

d. *Set the quorum for these meetings as at least a simple majority of the current membership of the governing body?*

Yes _____ No _____

23. Does the governing body of the CASA/GAL program:

a. *Evaluate the management's handling of the CASA/GAL program's fiscal affairs?*

Yes _____ No _____

b. *Review financial reports at least quarterly comparing actual versus budgeted expenditures and revenues?*

Yes _____ No _____

c. *Examine and approve the program's financial statements, budget and fiscal policies?*

Yes _____ No _____

24. Does the governing body have responsibility for determining the extent and nature of the liability protection needed for itself, the organization, program staff and volunteers?

Yes _____ No _____

25. Does the CASA/GAL program have liability protection for the governing body, organization, staff and volunteers through court, state statute or private insurance?

Yes _____ No _____ If yes, through what mechanism(s)? _____

26. Is legal counsel available to advise the organization on start-up legal requirements?

Yes _____ No _____

27. Did the CASA/GAL program:

a. *Develop written goals and objectives to guide the first year of development?*

Yes _____ No _____

b. *Include designation of responsibility and timelines for each goal and objective?*

Yes _____ No _____

c. *Explore and define potential conflicts of interest?*

Yes _____ No _____

d. *Specify key indicators to measure progress?*

Yes _____ No _____

Development Step #5: Plan Resource Development Strategy

28. Has the CASA/GAL program identified the financial and in-kind resources necessary to start a program?

Yes _____ No _____

29. Has the CASA/GAL program identified potential funders?

Yes _____ No _____

30. Has the CASA/GAL program created a written budget for the first year of operation?

Yes _____ No _____

31. Has the CASA/GAL program developed a specific fundraising plan with sources of funding, amounts, timeframes and persons responsible?

Yes _____ No _____

32. Has the CASA/GAL program raised/secured operational funds to date?

Yes _____ No _____

Indicators of Compliance: Check the boxes below to indicate that you have attached each of the following along with the completed membership questionnaire.

For all programs:

- Completed needs assessment
- Mission statement
- State statute relating to CASA/GAL program or court rules relating to CASA/GAL program (whichever is applicable)
- Letter of support from state CASA/GAL organization (if one exists)
- Operating budget for the current fiscal year

For programs structured as nonprofit organizations:

- Articles of incorporation
- Bylaws
- List of current board members with affiliations noted
- Proof of receipt of or filing for nonprofit (501c3) status
- Written agreement with umbrella organization (if applicable)

Submit to completed application, indicators of compliance and \$100 initial dues to:

National CASA Association
100 West Harrison Street
North Tower, Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98119