

620.505 Court-appointed special advocate program -- Local board of directors -- Program director -- CASA volunteers.

- (1) For the purpose of providing an independent, efficient, and thorough representation for children who enter the court system as a result of dependency, abuse, or neglect, there may be established a court-appointed special advocate program by the chief judge of family court or, if none, then by the Chief District Judge.
- (2) Local CASA programs shall be governed by a local board of directors. For new CASA programs, the board shall initially be appointed by the chief judge of family court or, if none, then by the Chief District Judge. Members shall be selected by the existing board members thereafter. Each board shall include at least fifteen (15) members. Each board member shall have a demonstrated interest in child welfare issues and commitment to the purpose and role of the court-appointed special advocate volunteers. Cabinet employees shall not be eligible to serve as officers of the board. Members shall, as far as practicable, be representative of the racial and ethnic composition of the area served by the CASA program. The board shall:
 - (a) Determine major personnel, organization, fiscal, and program policies including, but not limited to, the following:
 1. Measures to be taken to safeguard the CASA program's information relating to children, their families, and the CASA volunteers;
 2. The procedures for the recruitment, screening, training, and supervision of CASA volunteers; and
 3. The procedure for and circumstances warranting dismissal of a CASA volunteer from the CASA program;
 - (b) Determine overall plans and priorities for the CASA program, including provisions for evaluating progress against performance;
 - (c) Approve the program budget;
 - (d) Enforce compliance with all conditions of all grants contracts;
 - (e) Determine rules and procedures for the governing board;
 - (f) Select the officers and the executive committee, if any, of the governing board;
 - (g) Meet at least four (4) times each year;
 - (h) Submit an annual report to the association in the uniform manner required which shall include, but need not be limited to, the following information:
 1. Number of CASA volunteers in the program;
 2. Number of program staff;
 3. Number of children served;
 4. Number of volunteers receiving initial training;
 5. Number of and topics for in-service training;
 6. The type of source of the funds received and the amount received from each type of source during the previous fiscal year;
 7. The expenditures during the previous year; and

8. Other information as deemed appropriate.
- (3) Local CASA programs shall comply with the National CASA Association and Kentucky CASA Association Standards for Programs. Local programs shall ensure that CASA volunteers are adequately supervised by providing at least one (1) supervisory staff person for every thirty (30) CASA volunteers that have been appointed by the court and assigned by the program director. Each local CASA program shall be managed by a qualified director whose service may be voluntary or who may be paid a salary. The program director's duties shall include:
- (a) Administration of the CASA program as directed by the local and state boards;
 - (b) Recruitment, screening, training, and supervision of CASA volunteers and other program staff;
 - (c) Facilitation of the performance of the court-appointed special advocates' duties; and
 - (d) Ensuring that the security measures established by the local and state boards for safeguarding the information relating to children, their families, and the CASA volunteers are maintained.
- (4) CASA volunteers shall, as far as practicable, be representative of the socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic composition of the area served.
- (5) CASA volunteers may be removed by the court for nonparticipation or other cause or by the program director pursuant to subsection (2) of this section.
- (6) All written court-appointed special advocate reports submitted pursuant to KRS 620.525 shall become part of the cabinet's record of the child.
- (7) Employees of the cabinet shall not become volunteers or employees of the court-appointed special advocate program.
- (8) Each CASA volunteer, program director, and other program staff shall take an oath, administered by a member of the Court of Justice, to keep confidential all information related to the appointed case except in conferring with or reports to the court, parties to the case, the cabinet, the Citizen Foster Care Review Board, others designated by the court, and as provided by law.
- (9) CASA volunteers shall be appointed by the presiding judge to represent the best interest of the child, subject to judicial discretion, and only after confirmation from the program director that the CASA volunteer has been properly screened and trained.

Effective: July 13, 2004

History: Amended 2004 Ky. Acts ch. 138, sec. 2, effective July 13, 2004. -- Amended 1998 Ky. Acts ch. 278, sec. 18, effective July 15, 1998. -- Amended 1996 Ky. Acts ch. 245, sec. 3, effective July 15, 1996. -- Created 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 264, sec. 2, effective July 13, 1990.