

National CASA Association Government Relations Protocol

In state and federal legislatures, CASA and volunteer GAL programs enjoy strong bi-partisan support. This support has been generated both because of the strength of our volunteers' work for children, and because of the thoughtful and coordinated efforts of the CASA/GAL network to inform legislators about that work. Legislators appreciate the fact that the network presents a unified voice in support of the best interests of all programs, rather than making multiple requests for funding which would benefit only individual programs. The coordinated approach distinguishes our network as one that is committed to the welfare of abused and neglected children in all jurisdictions, rather than a group of loosely affiliated organizations protecting their own self-interests.

The following protocol has been developed in order to maintain this level of support, and to continue the tradition of local/state/national collaboration in the area of government relations:

1. Communication on policy issues
Any representative or organization acting on behalf of a CASA-member organization that is contemplating contacting a legislator or agency of federal or state government on policy issues which might affect other CASA and GAL programs should inform the state office (in the case of state government) or the National CASA office (in the case of the federal government) prior to the contact. Program representatives shall inform both the state and national offices in the event that an unplanned contact with a legislator or government official produces information that is relevant to the interests of CASA/GAL programs generally.
2. Coordination of requests for Government Funding
Any representative or organization acting on behalf of a CASA-member organization should contact the state or national office prior to communicating with the state or federal government (executive, legislative or judicial) concerning potential funding. Requests for government funding should be in collaboration with the state office (for state funding) or the national office (for federal funding). The common good of all CASA/GAL programs should take precedence over the benefit of an individual local or state CASA/GAL program. When there is an avenue for funding which can only be made to a local jurisdiction and which will not jeopardize funding requests for broader CASA/GAL purposes, the state or national office may approve a direct local approach.
3. Responding to Government Requests for Proposals
Proposals submitted in response to a Request For Proposals (RFP) by a government agency need not be submitted through the state or national

office. However, the same provisions for communication with state and national offices should be followed.

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National CASA Board of Directors

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National CASA Board of Directors

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