

Standard 1: CASA/GAL Program Mission and Purpose

“The CASA/GAL program’s purpose is to provide court-appointed volunteer advocacy to abused and neglected children. The program’s goal is a safe, permanent, nurturing home for every child it serves.”

A. CASA/GAL Program Mission

1. Does your CASA/GAL program have a written mission statement? Y/N
2. Is the CASA/GAL program’s mission statement consistent with the mission and standards of National CASA? Y/N
3. Has the CASA/GAL program’s mission statement been adopted by the program’s governing body or advisory council? Y/N
4. Does the CASA/GAL program accept court-referred cases that meet the definition of “children who come into the court system as a result of abuse or neglect”? Y/N
Required
5. Does the CASA/GAL program use individuals who meet the definition of “trained community volunteers”? Y/N **Required**
6. Does the CASA/GAL program ensure that volunteers have regular and sufficient in-person contact with the child at least once a month to enable the volunteer to have an in-depth knowledge of the case and make fact based recommendations to the court? Y/N **Required**
 - a. If exceptions to the once a month requirement are made, does the CASA/GAL program document these exceptions? Y/N/NA **Required**
7. Is the CASA/GAL program an inclusive organization with a governing body, employees and volunteers who reflect the diversity of the children served, as defined in the Explanation of Terms section of the *Standards for Local CASA/GAL Programs*? Y/N
8. Do the CASA/GAL program’s governing body and personnel cooperate and coordinate with the courts, public agencies, community groups, families and individuals? Y/N

B. Legal Authority to Operate

1. Has the program been granted the legal authority to operate through state or local statute, executive or judicial order or court rules? Y/N **Required**

C. Court Recognition and Support

1. If the program is a non-profit organization or is publicly administered by an entity other than the courts, does it have a written agreement with the juvenile or family court that defines the working relationship between the program and the court?

Y/N/NA

NA: Court program

2. Is the written agreement renewed at least every four (4) years? Y/N
3. If the CASA/GAL program is court-based, does it abide by the statutes or court rules which govern the relationship with the court? Y/N/NA

NA: Non-profit organization or publicly administered program

4. Does the CASA/GAL program regularly communicate with the court to determine the court's satisfaction with the program and to obtain the court's recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the program? Y/N

Standard 2: CASA Program Governance

“The CASA/GAL program has a governing body responsible for overseeing the program’s compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, adoption of policies, definition of services and guidance of program development assuring the program’s accountability to the courts and community.”

A. Roles of the Governing Body

1. Does the governing body ensure the program’s compliance with applicable laws and regulations? Y/N
2. Does the CASA/GAL program have access to legal counsel with relevant expertise to clarify the meaning of laws or regulations governing or relating to its program operations? Y/N
3. Does the CASA/GAL program provide legal counsel as needed to assist in performing the duties assigned to the volunteers by the courts? Y/N
4. If the program is a non-profit organization, in those instances when the legal counsel is also a member of the CASA/GAL program board, are the roles of the counsel differentiated and clarified so as to keep the two functions separate? Y/N/NA
5. Does the governing body maintain personnel policies and periodically review and adopt changes as needed? Y/N
6. In a non-profit organization, do the bylaws or written procedures of the CASA/GAL program:
 - a. Describe the organizational structure and responsibilities of the governing body? Y/N
 - b. Establish the mechanisms for selection, rotation and duration of membership and for election of officers? Y/N
 - c. Set the minimum number of formal meetings of the full governing body or advisory council at least four (4) times per calendar year? Y/N
 - d. Set the quorum for these meetings as at least a simple majority of the current membership of the governing body or advisory council? Y/N
7. Does the governing body:
 - a. Appoint the chief executive officer/program administrator and delegate authority and responsibility for program and financial management and policy implementation? Y/N
 - b. Evaluate the management’s handling of the CASA/GAL program’s financial affairs? Y/N

- c. Examine and approve the program's audited financial statements, operating budget and fiscal policies? Y/N
- d. Review financial reports at least quarterly, comparing actual-versus-budgeted expenditures and revenues? Y/N
- e. Hold the chief executive officer/program administrator accountable for the program's performance? Y/N
- f. Adopt or recommend agency policies? Y/N
- g. Select and evaluate the CEO? Y/N
- h. Engage in strategic planning? Y/N
- i. Engage in financial oversight? Y/N
- j. Assist with diversity outreach? Y/N
- k. Actively develop resources for the program? Y/N
- l. Maintain a written record of every meeting? Y/N

B. Program Administration

1. Do clear lines of accountability and authority exist at all levels of the CASA/GAL program's organizational and management structures? Y/N
 - a. Are they formalized in a chart and have all employees, volunteers and governing body members have received a formal orientation regarding the lines of authority and accountability? Y/N
2. If the CASA/GAL program is under an umbrella of a parent organization, is a written agreement developed that:
 - a. Details the rights and responsibilities of the program and the umbrella organization? Y/N/NA
 - b. Includes procedures for resolving situations in which a conflict of interest exists between the CASA/GAL program and its parent organization? Y/N/NA
 - c. Contains the protocol for resource development activities of both organizations? Y/N/NA
 - d. Sets a time frame of no more than two years for review and possible revisions of the agreement? Y/N/NA

NA: Program not under umbrella agency
3. Is communication and collaboration among employees, volunteers and governing body members promoted by:
 - a. Providing opportunities for in-person meetings for volunteers, employees and governing body members? Y/N
 - b. Providing opportunities to serve on committees as appropriate? Y/N

- c. Maintaining brief records of committee meetings? Y/N

C. Ethical Conduct

1. Has the CASA/GAL program established written policies to govern the ethical conduct of members of the governing body, employees and volunteers? Y/N
2. Do the chief executive officer/program administrator, employees, paid consultants, volunteers, legal counsel and/or governing board members of the CASA/GAL program serve in accordance with written policies concerning conflict of interest, accountability and delegation of authority? Y/N
3. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain a written conflict of interest policy approved by the governing body for members of the governing body, program staff, volunteers and paid consultants that:
 - a. Identifies and defines conduct and transactions in which a conflict of interest exists or has the potential to exist and warrants disclosure? Y/N
 - b. Prohibits employees, paid consultants, governing body members and volunteers of a nonprofit or public CASA/GAL program from having direct or indirect financial interest in the assets, leases, business transactions or professional services of the program? Y/N
 - c. Identifies other specific conduct which is prohibited? Y/N
 - d. Establishes the requirement that an individual involved make a timely disclosure of the conflict or potential for conflict in the transaction? Y/N
 - e. Includes a procedure for recusal from the transaction or decision by the person with the conflict or potential conflict? Y/N
 - f. Includes a procedure for dismissal or other appropriate discipline of the person involved with the conflict in the event a prior conflict is not disclosed before becoming involved in the transaction or decision affected by the conflict? Y/N

D. Governing Body Membership and Orientation

1. Does the governing body reflect the diversity of the children served? Y/N
2. Is the governing body inclusive of members who have a range of skills, backgrounds and knowledge that support the CASA/GAL program in fulfilling its mission? Y/N
3. Does the governing body have:
 - a. Skills and experience to serve at a policy-making level? Y/N
 - b. Ability to advocate for sufficient financial resources for the program to carry out its purpose? Y/N

- c. Knowledge of the court system and the community served? Y/N
 - d. Ability to reflect community and client interests and to advocate for culturally responsive service delivery? Y/N
 - e. Other specialized skills needed to carry out the objectives of the program? Y/N
4. Does the program develop and utilize the following:
- a. Job descriptions for board members? Y/N/NA
 - b. Board recruitment strategies? Y/N/NA
 - c. Election and screening procedures? Y/N/NA
5. Do the members of the governing body receive formal orientation to the CASA/GAL program's goals, objectives, structure and methods of operation? Y/N

Standard 4: National Affiliation

“The CASA/GAL program is a member of the National CASA Association and meets its standards, requirements and policies.”

1. Is the program a full member of the National CASA Association? Y/N **Required**
2. Does the CASA/GAL program take advantage of the services offered by the National CASA Association including:
 - a. Technical assistance? Y/N
 - b. Resource materials? Y/N
 - c. National conference? Y/N
 - d. Training opportunities? Y/N
3. When using the National CASA trademark, including taglines, slogans and logos, does the program adhere to National CASA graphic standards? Y/N **Required**
4. Does the program use the name CASA, GAL or identify itself as a member of the National CASA Association on all:
 - a. Promotional materials? Y/N
 - b. Public relations materials? Y/N
 - c. Recruitment materials? Y/N
5. Does the program adhere to the National CASA Association:
 - a. Resource development protocol? Y/N
 - b. Government relations protocol? Y/N
 - c. Other approved protocols of National CASA? Y/N
6. If the local program has a program auxiliary or affiliate, does the program make that entity aware of National CASA standards and protocols? Y/N/NA
7. Does the program support National CASA’s efforts to collect data as needed? Y/N
8. Does the program provide a copy of the *Standards for Local CASA/GAL Programs* to its governing body and supervisory staff? Y/N

Standard 5: State Affiliation

“The CASA/GAL program communicates, collaborates and shares information with its fellow programs in the state and is a member of or is affiliated with the state organization, association or network, if one exists.”

1. Does the CASA/GAL program comply with all state laws, regulations, administrative and court rules? Y/N

2. Is the CASA/GAL program a member of or affiliated with the state CASA/GAL organization? Y/N/NA

NA: no state organization

3. Does the CASA/GAL program take advantage of the services available from the state organization including:

a. Technical assistance? Y/N/NA

b. Resource materials? Y/N/NA

c. State conference? Y/N/NA

d. Training opportunities? Y/N/NA

NA: no state organization

4. Is the CASA/GAL program in compliance with state organization standards? Y/N/NA

NA: no state organization

If not, please explain why and what course of action is being taken to come into compliance:

5. Does the CASA/GAL program act in a manner consistent with any agreements made with the state organization? Y/N/NA

NA: no state organization

6. Does the program inform the state organization of any significant event in the operation of the program that could affect other local programs, the state organization or the National CASA Association? Y/N/NA

NA: no state organization

Question 7 refers to tribal programs. If not a tribal program, please mark N/A.

7. Recognizing the unique relationship between tribal programs and state organizations:

a. Is there mutual collaboration between the program and the state organization?

Y/N/NA

Standard 6: Human Resources Management

“The CASA/GAL program follows written policies for recruitment, selection, diversity, training, retention and effective performance of its paid personnel.”

A. Administration

1. Does the chief executive officer or designee have the following qualifications:
 - a. Education and/or training in a related field? Y/N
 - b. Management skills and experience to effectively administer the organization’s personnel and financial resources? Y/N
 - c. Management skills and experience to effectively coordinate services with the court and other community agencies? Y/N
2. Does the chief executive officer or designee:
 - a. Plan and coordinate with the governing body to develop CASA/GAL program policies? Y/N
 - b. Attend or appoint a designee to attend all meetings of the governing body and its committees to the extent authorized by the governing body? Y/N
3. Does the chief executive officer or designee review and revise personnel policies and submit the proposed policies to the governing body for review or approval annually or as needed? Y/N
4. Is the chief executive officer or designee responsible for the overall financial management of the program and does he/she report to the governing body at least quarterly on the program’s financial status? Y/N
5. Does the CASA/GAL program’s governing body have a written succession plan for the chief executive officer or designee? Y/N/NA
6. Does the succession plan makes provisions for the following:
 - a. Designation of an interim chief executive officer, if necessary? Y/N/NA
 - b. Charging a committee with responsibility for conducting a formal search? Y/N/NA
 - c. Providing the resources needed to carry out the search effectively? Y/N/NA

B. Retaining Qualified Employees

1. Does the CASA/GAL program have a written job description for each position or group of similar positions that clearly specifies qualifications and responsibilities? Y/N

2. Does the CASA/GAL program efficiently manage its clerical and administrative systems, including accounting, bookkeeping, personnel records and statistical reporting? Y/N
3. Is administrative and/or supervisory responsibility assigned to employees qualified by experience and training? Y/N
4. Do all CASA/GAL program employees meet all applicable state registration, licensing, or certification requirements for their assignments and/or use of professional titles? Y/N **Required**
5. Does the governing body evaluate the chief executive officer/program administrator in writing at least annually against written performance criteria and objectives? Y/N
6. Does the governing body provide for the participation of the chief executive officer/program administrator in the evaluation process and request his/her review, signature, and response to the evaluation before it is entered into the personnel record? Y/N

C. Personnel Policies

1. Does the CASA/GAL program have written personnel policies and/or practices? Y/N
2. Does the CASA/GAL program comply with applicable laws and regulations governing fair employment practices? Y/N **Required**
3. Are revisions/policy updates provided or made available to all employees? Y/N
4. Are the CASA/GAL program personnel salaries and benefits established:
 - a. By considering practices of similar agencies and organizations in the area? Y/N
 - b. In compliance with salary and benefit levels set by appropriate governing, legislative or elected bodies? Y/N
5. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain written operational procedures regarding grievances to provide personnel the opportunity and means to lodge complaints and appeals, where this is allowed under state law? Y/N

D. Workforce Diversity

1. Are the CASA/GAL program's personnel recruitment and selection practices in compliance with applicable laws and regulations? Y/N **Required**
2. Does the CASA/GAL program administer its personnel practices without discrimination based on age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, disability or religion? Y/N

3. Is the CASA/GAL program in compliance with the Equal Employment Opportunity Act? Y/N **Required**
4. Does the CASA/GAL program have a written equal opportunity policy which clearly states its practices in recruiting, selecting and promoting personnel? Y/N
5. Does the CASA/GAL program include its equal opportunity statement in personnel recruitment materials? Y/N
6. Does the CASA/GAL program have a written anti-discrimination policy which clearly states its practices in recruiting, selecting and promoting personnel? Y/N
7. Does the CASA/GAL program have a written anti-harassment policy which clearly states its practices in recruiting, selecting and promoting personnel? Y/N
8. Does the CASA/GAL program make an effort to ensure that its facility is free of barriers that restrict the employment of or use by physically challenged employees, volunteers and clients? Y/N
9. Does the program actively recruit, select and promote qualified employees reflective of the children it serves? Y/N
10. Has a written plan been developed and implemented to diversify the program's work force to promote cultural competency and equal opportunity? Y/N

E. Recruitment and Selection of Qualified Employees

1. Are all applicants for paid employment with the CASA/GAL program required to:
 - a. Complete a written application containing information about educational background and training, employment history and experience working with children? Y/N **Required**
 - b. Submit the names of three or more references, at least two of whom are unrelated to the applicant? Y/N
 - c. Authorize the CASA/GAL program and other appropriate agencies to secure a state and local criminal records check as well as a national criminal records check, child protective services check and sex offender registry as appropriate and permissible by state law? Y/N
 - d. Attend and participate in personal interviews, if requested? Y/N
2. Is a formal security check conducted on all applicants for paid employment? Y/N
3. Does the check include:
 - a. A finger-print based criminal background check from the FBI or an equivalent national criminal record check ? Y/N **Required**

- b. The central Child Abuse Registry or other child protection services records, when authorized by law? Y/N/NA **Required**
N/A: Not authorized by law to check Child Abuse Registry
 - c. The sex offender registry? Y/N
 - d. If the employee has lived in another state within the past five years, does the CASA/GAL program secure the records checks specified in Standard 6.E.4 in any area in which the person has resided in the previous five years? Y/N **Required**
4. Does the CASA/GAL program reject an applicant if he/she refuses to sign a release of information for appropriate law enforcement checks or submit to fingerprinting? Y/N
 5. Does the CASA/GAL program's selection process for all employees include an assessment of the applicant's awareness and sensitivity to the cultural and socioeconomic differences that are present among the children and families served by the program? Y/N
 6. Does the CASA/GAL program reject any applicant found to have been convicted of, or having charges pending for a felony or misdemeanor involving a sex offense, child abuse or neglect, or related acts that would pose risks to children or the CASA/GAL program's credibility? Y/N **Required**
 7. Is this rejection policy stated on the screening application form? Y/N
 8. When an applicant is found to have committed a misdemeanor or felony that is unrelated to or would not negatively impact the credibility of the CASA/GAL program, does the program consider:
 - a. The extent of the rehabilitation since the misdemeanor or felony was committed? Y/N
 - b. Other factors that may influence the decision to accept the applicant for employment? Y/N

F. New Employee Orientation

1. Are all employees formally oriented to the program's mission, purpose, policies and services? Y/N
2. Does the orientation and training for new employees include:
 - a. Information about confidentiality laws and the employee's responsibility to abide by these laws? Y/N
 - b. Information about the CASA/GAL program's structure, service mandates, relationship to the court and professional ethics, including sexual harassment and non-discrimination policies? Y/N

- c. Lines of accountability and authority within the program? Y/N
- d. Information about pertinent laws, regulations and policies? Y/N
- e. Information about the mission and purpose of CASA/GAL programs on the local, state and national levels? Y/N
- f. Demographics of community and children served? Y/N
- g. Employee's job responsibilities and description? Y/N

G. Employee Training and Development

1. Does the CASA/GAL program plan and implement a training and development program for employees to improve their knowledge, skills and abilities? Y/N
2. Does the CASA/GAL program provide information about the backgrounds and needs of the children served by the program? Y/N
3. Is the training and development program reviewed annually and revised based on the CASA/GAL program's assessment of its training needs? Y/N
4. Does the training and development program provide the following:
 - a. Opportunity for employees to pursue continuing education to upgrade knowledge and skills to fulfill the requirements of their respective positions? Y/N
 - b. Information related to children who are abused and neglected and in the court system? Y/N
 - c. Information related to cultural competency, inclusion and diversity issues? Y/N
 - d. Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) compliance information and resources? Y/N

H. Employee Supervision

1. Is adequate employee supervision provided by supervisors who are easily accessible? Y/N
2. Is the frequency of individual or group supervision arranged on the basis of:
 - a. Employee needs? Y/N
 - b. The complexity and size of the workload? Y/N
 - c. Familiarity with the assignment? Y/N
3. Do CASA/GAL program administrators hold regularly scheduled case conferences with supervisory staff to review progress on each case? Y/N

I. Employee Performance Evaluation

1. Is the performance of each employee evaluated:

- a. At least once a year by the person to whom she/he is accountable? Y/N
 - b. By means of a standardized evaluation form? Y/N
 - c. Against established criteria? Y/N
 - d. With the active participation of the employee? Y/N
2. Do the employee evaluations include:
- a. An assessment of job performance in relation to the quality and quantity of work?
Y/N
 - b. Criteria that reflect the job description and performance objectives established in the most recent evaluation? Y/N
 - c. Clearly stated objectives for future performance? Y/N
 - d. Recommendations for future training and skill building, as applicable? Y/N
 - e. Opportunity for self-evaluation by the employee? Y/N
3. Are the employees provided the opportunity to:
- a. Sign the evaluation report? Y/N
 - b. Obtain a copy? Y/N
 - c. Include written comments before the report is entered into the personnel record?
Y/N

J. Employee Discipline and Termination

1. Do the CASA/GAL program's personnel policies and practices:
 - a. Include policies and procedures for the termination of employees that are in compliance with applicable laws and regulations? Y/N
 - b. Specify the conditions for disciplinary action? Y/N
 - c. Specify the conditions for termination of employees? Y/N
 - d. Specify violations of program policy and/or documented sub-standard performance as possible conditions for disciplinary action and/or termination?
Y/N
2. Do the CASA/GAL program's policies and procedures specify the person or persons with authority to terminate or discharge an employee? Y/N

K. Maintaining Personnel Records

1. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain a written confidential personnel record for each employee containing, as appropriate:
 - a. The employee's original application? Y/N

- b. Job description? Y/N
 - c. Reference documentation? Y/N
 - d. Documentation of all record checks? Y/N
 - e. Verification of education for professional and administrative personnel? Y/N
 - f. Training records? Y/N
 - g. Performance evaluations? Y/N
 - h. Disciplinary actions? Y/N
 - i. Termination summaries? Y/N
 - j. Letters of commendation? Y/N
 - k. Time attendance records? Y/N
 - l. Proof of eligibility to work in the US (I-9 form)? Y/N
2. Do written policies grant employees access to their records and detail the procedures for review, addition and correction by employees? Y/N

L. Whistleblower Policy

- 1. Does the governing body of the CASA/GAL program have a “whistleblower policy”? Y/N
- 2. Does this policy provide for governing body, staff and volunteers a procedure for reporting unethical, inappropriate or illegal activities that afford the reporter protection in making a good faith report? Y/N

Standard 7: Volunteer Management

“The CASA/GAL program follows approved written policies for its volunteers regarding recruitment; application, selection and screening; training; supervision; volunteer roles and responsibilities; and dismissal.”

A. Volunteer Recruitment

1. Has the CASA/GAL program prepared a standardized packet of written information to recruit volunteers which includes:
 - a. The purpose and role of the CASA/GAL volunteer? Y/N
 - b. The qualifications for becoming a volunteer? Y/N
 - c. The minimum time commitment required? Y/N
 - d. Equal opportunity statement? Y/N
2. Does the recruitment plan include targeted strategies to attract volunteers from:
 - a. Diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds that reflect the children served? Y/N
 - b. A variety of age groups? Y/N
 - c. Different socio-economic levels? Y/N
3. Do strategies for recruitment of volunteers include:
 - a. Media outreach? Y/N
 - b. Speaking engagements? Y/N
 - c. Community collaboration? Y/N

B. Volunteer Application, Screening and Selection Process

1. Has each CASA/GAL volunteer been trained by the program and appointed by the court to advocate for children who come into the court system as a result of abuse and neglect? Y/N
2. Does each CASA/GAL volunteer meet the following criteria:
 - a. Minimum age of 21? Y/N
 - b. Successfully passed the application and process screening? Y/N **Required**
3. Is each CASA/GAL volunteer determined to be an individual who respects a child’s inherent right to grow up with dignity in a safe environment that meets his/her best interests? Y/N
4. Is each CASA/GAL volunteer determined to be an individual who assures that the child’s best interests are represented in the court at every stage of the case? Y/N

5. Are all volunteer applicants required to:
 - a. Complete a written application containing information about educational background and training, employment history and experience working with children? Y/N **Required**
 - b. Submit the names of three references, at least two of whom are unrelated to the applicant? Y/N **Required**
 - c. Authorize the CASA/GAL program and other appropriate agencies to secure a state and local criminal records check as well as a national criminal records check if available, child protective services check and sex offender registry as appropriate and permissible by state law? Y/N
 - d. Attend and participate in personal interviews with CASA/GAL program personnel? Y/N **Required**
6. Does the CASA/GAL program verify the educational background, training and employment history submitted by the volunteer on the written application? Y/N
7. Is a formal security check conducted on all volunteer applicants? Y/N
8. Does the check include a finger-print based criminal background check from the FBI or equivalent national criminal record check? Y/N **Required**
9. Does the CASA/GAL program conduct a check on the volunteer with the central Child Abuse Registry or other child protection services records when authorized by law? Y/N/NA **Required**
N/A: Not authorized by law to check Child Abuse Registry
10. Does the CASA/GAL program conduct a check on the volunteer with the sex offender registry? Y/N
11. If the volunteer has lived in another state within the past five years, does the CASA/GAL program secure the records checks specified in Standard 7.B.7 in any area in which the applicant has resided in the previous five years? Y/N **Required**
12. Does the CASA/GAL program reject the volunteer applicant if he/she refuses to sign release of information? Y/N **Required**
13. Does the CASA/GAL program reject any applicant found to have been convicted of, or having charges pending for, a felony or misdemeanor involving a sex offense, child abuse or neglect, or related acts that would pose risks to children or the CASA/GAL program's credibility? Y/N **Required**
14. Is this rejection policy stated on the volunteer application form? Y/N

15. When an applicant is found to have committed a misdemeanor or felony that is unrelated to or would not negatively impact the credibility of the CASA/GAL program, does the program consider:
 - a. The extent of the rehabilitation since the misdemeanor or felony was committed? Y/N
 - b. Other factors that may influence the decision to accept the applicant as a CASA/GAL volunteer?
16. Does the CASA/GAL program ensure that individuals who are not selected are treated with dignity, respect and, if appropriate, referred to alternative volunteer opportunities? Y/N
17. Does the CASA/GAL program ensure that all screening is completed and written verification is on file prior to a volunteer being assigned a case? Y/N

C. Volunteer Training

1. Does the CASA/GAL program deliver training to its volunteers using the *National CASA Volunteer Training Curriculum* or its equivalent? Y/N
2. Is the training program reviewed annually and revised based upon the CASA/GAL program's assessment of its training needs? Y/N
3. Does the CASA/GAL program verify that volunteers successfully complete at least 30 hours of pre-service training before being assigned a case? Y/N
4. Does pre-service training include:
 - a. Roles and responsibilities of a CASA/GAL volunteer? Y/N **Required**
 - b. Court process? Y/N
 - c. Dynamics of families including mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence and poverty? Y/N
 - d. Relevant state laws, regulations and policies? Y/N
 - e. Relevant federal laws, regulations and policies, including the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA)? Y/N
 - f. Confidentiality and record keeping practices? Y/N
 - g. Child development? Y/N
 - h. Child abuse and neglect? Y/N
 - i. Permanency planning? Y/N
 - j. Community agencies and resources available to meet the needs of children and families? Y/N
 - k. Communication and information gathering? Y/N
 - l. Effective advocacy? Y/N
 - m. Cultural competency? Y/N

n. Special needs of the children served? Y/N

5. In addition to the 30 hours of pre-service training, does the CASA/GAL program require each prospective volunteer to visit the court while it is in session to observe proceedings if allowed by the court? Y/N/NA

N/A – not allowed by the court

6. Does the volunteer applicant spend a minimum of 10 hours of pre-service training in personal contact with and under the supervision of the program staff delivering the training? Y/N

7. Is the CASA/GAL volunteer sworn in by the judge before appointment to a case? Y/N

8. Does the CASA/GAL program require volunteers to complete at least 12 hours of in-service training per year? Y/N

9. Does the in-service training include cultural competency training with National CASA's *A World of Difference* manual and video or equivalent? Y/N **Required**

10. Does the CASA/GAL program provide Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) compliance information and resources to all volunteers? Y/N **Required**

D. Volunteer Supervision

1. Is the frequency of individual or group supervision arranged on the basis of:

a. Volunteer needs? Y/N

b. The complexity and type of case handled by the volunteer? Y/N

2. Are CASA/GAL volunteers held accountable for the performance of their assigned duties? Y/N

3. For employees assigned to supervision as a full time function, does the employee supervise no more than 30 volunteers or a maximum of 45 cases? Y/N

4. For employees assigned to supervision as one of a number of responsibilities, are the 30:1 and 45:1 ratios reduced according to the number of work hours devoted to supervision and/or additional responsibilities the supervisor may hold? Y/N

5. Do CASA/GAL program supervisors hold regularly scheduled case conferences with volunteers to review progress on each case? Y/N

6. Does the CASA/GAL program have in place a mechanism for volunteer recognition? Y/N

E. Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

1. Are the roles and responsibilities of the CASA/GAL volunteer clearly communicated through written policies, job descriptions and training and reinforced through the supervisory process? Y/N
2. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain a current manual of volunteer policies and procedures? Y/N
3. Do volunteer policies and procedures specify the role of the CASA/GAL volunteer? Y/N
4. Does each volunteer receive a copy of the volunteer policies and procedures and provide signed acknowledgement of reading and understanding the policies? Y/N
5. Is the role developed with the input and approval of the court, if not already determined by statute? Y/N/NA
N/A: Role already determined by statute
6. Does the CASA/GAL program ensure that the volunteer has a written job description with roles and responsibilities including:
 - a. Obtaining first-hand a clear understanding of the needs and situation of the child by reviewing all relevant documents and records and interviewing the child, parents, social workers, teachers and other persons to determine the facts and circumstances of the child's situation? Y/N
 - b. Identifying and advocating for the best interest of the child? Y/N
 - c. Seeking cooperative solutions by acting as a facilitator among parties? Y/N
 - d. Providing at every hearing reports which include findings and recommendations? Y/N
 - e. Appearing at all hearings to advocate for the child's best interests and providing testimony when necessary? Y/N
 - f. Having regular and sufficient in-person contact with the child to ensure in-depth knowledge of the case and make fact-based recommendations to the court?-Y/N
 - g. Making recommendations for specific appropriate services for the child and, when appropriate, the child's family? Y/N
 - h. Determining if a permanent plan has been created for the child? Y/N
 - i. Monitoring implementation of service plans and court orders assuring that court-ordered services are implemented in a timely manner and that review hearings are held in accordance with the law? Y/N
 - j. Informing the court promptly of important developments in the case through appropriate means as determined by court rules or statute? Y/N
 - k. Advocating for the child's best interests in the community by interfacing with mental health, educational and other community systems to assure that the child's needs in these areas are met? Y/N
 - l. Participating in all scheduled case conferences with supervisory staff? Y/N
 - m. Participating in in-service training? Y/N

- n. Maintaining complete records about the case, including appointments, interviews and information gathered about the child and the child's life circumstances? Y/N
 - o. Returning case files to the program after the case is closed? Y/N
7. Is a volunteer's case load limited to no more than two children/sibling groups at a time unless an exception is granted? Y/N
- a. If an exception is granted, is there documentation for the justification of the exception? Y/N/NA
 - b. If an exception is granted, is there a limit of five assigned cases to a volunteer? Y/N/NA
8. Do the CASA/GAL program's volunteer policies and procedures:
- a. Include requirements regarding the reporting of any incident of child abuse or neglect, or any situation in which the volunteer has reason to believe the child is in imminent danger, to the CASA/GAL supervisor and appropriate authorities, following state legal requirements for mandated reporting? Y/N **Required**
 - b. Prohibit taking a child to the volunteer's home or any home other than the child's? Y/N **Required**
 - c. Prohibit giving legal advice or therapeutic counseling? Y/N **Required**
 - d. Prohibit making placement arrangements for the child? Y/N **Required**
 - e. Prohibit giving money to the child, the child's family or caregiver? Y/N **Required**
 - f. Prohibit giving expensive gifts to the child, the child's family or caregiver? Y/N
 - g. Require discussing all recommendations concerning the case with the program supervisor prior to submitting recommendations to the court? Y/N
 - h. Contain explicit policies prohibiting supervisors from altering reports or recommendations without the knowledge and agreement of the CASA/GAL volunteer? Y/N
 - i. Include clear policies to resolve conflicts between a volunteer and his/her program supervisor regarding the handling of a case, the reporting of information or the recommendations to be included in a report? Y/N
 - j. Contain explicit requirements that a CASA/GAL volunteer not be related to any parties involved in the case or be employed in a position and/or by an agency that might result in a conflict of interest? Y/N
 - k. Provide for volunteer access to legal counsel? Y/N

F. Dismissal of a CASA/GAL Volunteer

1. Do the CASA/GAL program's policies and practices:
- a. Specify the conditions for disciplinary action? Y/N
 - b. Specify the conditions for non-voluntary termination of volunteers? Y/N

2. Are the following possible grounds for dismissal of a volunteer specified in the policies and procedures:
 - a. Taking action without program or court approval that endangers the child or is outside the role or powers of the CASA/GAL program? Y/N **Required**
 - b. Engaging in an ex-parte communication with the court? Y/N
 - c. Violating a program policy, court rule, or law? Y/N
 - d. Failing to complete required pre-service and in-service training? Y/N
 - e. Failing to demonstrate an ability to effectively carry out assigned duties? Y/N **Required**
 - f. Falsifying his or her application or misrepresenting facts during the screening process? Y/N **Required**
 - g. Existence of child abuse/neglect allegations against the volunteer? Y/N **Required**
 - h. Existence of a conflict of interest which cannot be resolved? Y/N
3. Do the CASA/GAL program's policies and procedures specify the person or persons with authority to terminate or discharge a volunteer? Y/N

G. Volunteer Records

1. Does the volunteer record contain:
 - a. Application? Y/N
 - b. Emergency and identifying contact information? Y/N
 - c. Job description? Y/N
 - d. Reference documentation? Y/N **Required**
 - e. Documentation of all record checks? Y/N **Required**
 - f. Training records? Y/N
 - g. Performance evaluations and any other applicable documentation related to performance? Y/N
 - h. Documentation of volunteer status? Y/N
 - i. Copy of current driver's license, motor vehicle records check and verification of automobile insurance (if the program allows volunteers to transport)? Y/N/NA
N/A: program does not allow volunteers to transport.
2. Do written policies:
 - a. Outline when and if volunteers have access to their records? Y/N
 - b. Detail the procedures for review, addition and correction by volunteers of information contained in the record? Y/N

3. Does the CASA/GAL program retain the record after a volunteer has left the program in accordance with the program's records retention policy? Y/N

Standard 8: Financial, Facility, and Risk Management

“The CASA/GAL program manages its operations in accordance with generally accepted financial and risk management practices and applicable federal, state and local statutory requirements.”

A. Budgeting

1. Does the CASA/GAL program have a written budget? Y/N
2. Is the budget reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to the beginning of the fiscal year? Y/N
3. Does the governing body or its designee review and approve all deviations from and revisions to the budget? Y/N

B. Financial Resources

1. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain its tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service? Y/N

C. Financial Reporting and Accountability

1. Is the CASA/GAL program accountable to its governing body for prudent financial management? Y/N

Questions 2-4 are for non-profit organizations. If the program is publicly administered, please mark NA to questions 2-4.

2. Was an IRS Form 990 completed and filed in a timely manner? Y/N/NA
3. If the program’s actual expenditures exceeded \$50,000 and were less than \$200,000 during the last year, was a financial review performed by an independent certified public accountant within nine months of the end of the fiscal year? Y/N/NA
4. If the program’s actual expenditures exceeded \$200,000 during the last year, was an audit performed by an independent certified public accountant, in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards, within nine months of the end of the fiscal year? Y/N/NA ***Required***
 - a. If yes, was the certified public accountant approved by the governing body? Y/N/NA

Question 5 refers to publicly administered programs. If the CASA/GAL program is a non-profit organization, please mark NA to question 5.

5. Is an audit conducted periodically, covering all years since the previous audit, in accordance with laws or regulations governing audit of a public agency’s financial operations? Y/N/NA
 - a. If yes, does an independent auditor conduct the audit? Y/N/NA

6. Does the program make summary financial, statistical, service data and governing body information available to the public on request? Y/N

Questions 7-10 refer to CASA/GAL programs that have annual audits performed. If no audit is performed, please mark NA to questions 7-10.

7. Does the designated committee or person meet with the independent auditor as necessary? Y/N/NA
8. Is the auditor's report reviewed and formally approved or accepted by the governing body? Y/N/NA
9. Does the governing body ensure that program personnel act on the recommendations set forth in the management letter? Y/N/NA
10. Is the report made available for public inspection upon request? Y/N/NA

D. Financial Accounting and Record Keeping

1. Does the CASA/GAL program receive, disburse and account for its funds in accordance with sound financial practices and generally accepted accounting principles? Y/N
2. Does the CASA/GAL program adhere to written operational procedures in regard to accounting control? Y/N
3. Do the written operational policies and procedures include:
 - a. Internal financial controls? Y/N
 - b. Descriptive chart of accounts? Y/N
 - c. Prompt and accurate recording of revenues and expenses? Y/N
 - d. Maintenance of a filing system which contains account records and receipts? Y/N
 - e. Safeguarding and verification of assets? Y/N
 - f. Control over expenditures? Y/N
 - g. Separation of duties to the extent possible? Y/N
4. Does the governing body review and monitor the CASA/GAL program's fiscal management? Y/N
5. Does the non-profit CASA/GAL program make timely payments to the Internal Revenue Service and to other taxing authorities, as required by law? Y/N ***Required***
6. Does the program use a financial management system that ensures the segregation of restricted funds? Y/N
7. If the CASA/GAL program has the fiscal authority, do its policies and procedures require that:

a. All personnel with fiscal responsibilities are oriented to the bookkeeping system and are advised with regard to any changes? Y/N/NA

N/A: CASA/GAL program does not have the fiscal authority

b. Systems are in place to prevent or detect fraud or abuses of the system, such as control, use, and review of the system by more than one person? Y/N/NA

N/A: CASA/GAL program does not have the fiscal authority

8. Are the accounting records of the CASA/GAL program kept up-to-date and reconciled on a monthly basis? Y/N

9. Are bank statements reconciled to the general ledger on a monthly basis? Y/N

E. Resource Development

This section refers to non-profit organizations. If the program is publicly administered, mark NA to questions 1-4.

1. Does the non-profit CASA/GAL program's board of directors set policies and exercise control over fundraising activities carried out by its employees and volunteers? Y/N/NA

2. Does the CASA/GAL program provide funders with an accurate description of the program, its purpose and services, and the financial needs for which the solicitation is being made? Y/N/NA

3. Does the CASA/GAL program spend funds for the purposes for which they were solicited, except for reasonable costs for administration of the fund-raising activities? Y/N/NA

4. Does the CASA/GAL program establish controls on processing and acknowledging contributions in accordance with applicable laws? Y/N/NA

F. Facility and Workplace Management

1. Does the CASA/GAL program operate in offices that provide a safe, well-maintained physical environment for its personnel, volunteers and visitors? Y/N

2. Are the CASA/GAL program's facilities in full compliance with applicable fire safety codes and regulations? Y/N

3. Does the nonprofit CASA/GAL program plan for the disposition of property in the event of its dissolution? Y/N

4. Does the CASA/GAL program take reasonable measures to maintain its equipment and ensure it is used as intended? Y/N

G. Risk Management

1. Does the CASA/GAL program protect its physical, human and financial resources by evaluating and preventing or reducing the risks to which they are exposed? Y/N

2. Does the CASA/GAL program have liability protection for staff and volunteers through the court, state statute or private insurance? Y/N
3. Does the governing body have responsibility for determining the extent and nature of the liability protection needed for personnel and volunteers, when applicable laws are unclear or silent? Y/N
4. Does the CASA/GAL program evaluate and reduce potential liability by:
 - a. Assigning the risk management function to a person or committee whose job description includes responsibility for risk management policies and activities? Y/N
 - b. Ensuring that appropriate bonding, self-insurance or external coverage is adequate to meet the potential liability of the CASA/GAL program? Y/N
 - c. Developing a process to identify risks in terms of their nature, severity and frequency? Y/N
 - d. Avoiding risk through loss prevention and risk reduction? Y/N
 - e. Evaluating and monitoring the effectiveness of the risk management function? Y/N
 - f. Determining how often records checks are required on governing body, staff and volunteers? Y/N
5. Does the CASA/GAL program carry workers' compensation insurance, and other insurance deemed necessary, based upon an evaluation of the program's risks? Y/N
6. Does the CASA/GAL program inform its governing body members, officers, employees and volunteers of the amount and type of insurance coverage that is provided on their behalf by the program? Y/N
7. Does the CASA/GAL program annually review its insurance coverage with its insurance carrier to ensure adequate coverage? Y/N
8. Does the CASA/GAL program require staff, volunteers and governing body members to immediately notify the CASA/GAL program of any criminal charges? Y/N
9. Are licenses or other evidence of compliance prominently displayed as required by state and federal law? Y/N **Required**
10. Does the CASA/GAL program allow the transportation of children by volunteers or staff? Y/NA

Questions 11a-12d refer to programs that allow staff and volunteers to transport children. If your program does not allow this, please mark NA to questions.

11. If the CASA/GAL program permits staff and/or volunteers to transport children or drive on behalf of the program, do the staff and/or volunteers provide the following:
 - a. Copy of a valid current driver's license? Y/N/NA **Required**

- b. Proof of adequate personal automobile insurance? Y/N/NA **Required**
12. Does the program secure motor vehicle division record checks and, in addition, have policy and procedures which ensure that CASA/GAL staff and/or volunteers:
- a. Obtain permission of the supervisor or director? Y/N/NA **Required**
 - b. Obtain permission of the child's legal guardian or custodial agency when transporting a child? Y/N/NA **Required**
 - c. Remain knowledgeable about the potential personal risk of liability? Y/N/NA **Required**
 - d. Choose to accept the responsibility? Y/N/NA **Required**
13. Do the CASA/GAL program staff, volunteers and governing members immediately notify the CASA/GAL program of any criminal charges filed against them? Y/N

Standard 9: Public Relations

“The CASA/GAL program communicates with its community and other service providers about its program and of the needs of the children it serves and cooperates with other agencies to plan for needed programs of service for children.”

1. Does the CASA/GAL program:
 - a. Conduct an ongoing public information and education program to provide an understanding of the program’s purpose, function and place in judicial proceedings and the community social service system? Y/N
 - b. Disseminate public information for the purpose of broadening awareness of the needs and problems of the children that it serves? Y/N
 - c. Make known its role, functions, and capacities to other agencies, community organizations, government bodies and corporations, as appropriate to its mission? Y/N
 - d. Work closely with representatives from the legal and social services communities, other child advocacy programs, community service and civic groups and businesses to accomplish its purposes? Y/N
2. Does the CASA/GAL program have a written crisis management plan that addresses issues that may have a significant affect on the credibility, reputation or funding at the local, state or national level? Y/N
 - a. Does the crisis management plan provide information sharing between national, state and local organizations in a timely manner and subject to confidentiality limitations? Y/N

Standard 10: Planning Evaluation

“The CASA/GAL program maintains management information and data necessary to plan, evaluate and report on its services.”

A. Data Collection

1. Does the CASA/GAL program collect the information needed to complete the National CASA Association’s annual survey and to deliver, monitor and evaluate its services? Y/N
2. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain the following data on children:
 - a. Demographic information, including age, gender and ethnicity for new, active and closed cases within a specified time period? Y/N
 - b. Total number of children served within a specific time period? Y/N
 - c. Number of new children served within a specific time period? Y/N
 - d. Number of children whose cases were closed within a specific time period? Y/N
 - e. Type of case? Y/N
 - f. Type of abuse or neglect in abuse/neglect cases? Y/N
 - g. Reason for CASA/GAL case closure by the program and court? Y/N
 - h. Placement of child at time of CASA/GAL case closure by the program and court? Y/N
3. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain the following data on volunteers:
 - a. Demographic information, including age, gender, ethnicity, education and employment status within a specified time period? Y/N
 - b. Status of volunteers within a specific time period (number of assigned cases, number on inactive status, number available for a case as well as length of service with the program)? Y/N
 - c. Number of volunteer hours contributed? Y/N
 - d. Total length of time volunteer is assigned to each case? Y/N
4. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain the following additional information:
 - a. Number of children in the court’s jurisdiction needing CASA/GAL volunteers versus number of CASA/GAL volunteers assigned to cases? Y/N
 - b. Case outcomes? Y/N
 - c. Any other data required by funding sources? Y/N
5. When the CASA/GAL program develops and/or participates in a computerized information system, are the following safeguards implemented:
 - a. Operational procedures governing use of the system and software? Y/N

- b. Confidentiality policies concerning electronic data and information sharing via electronic media? Y/N
- c. Review of all decisions regarding computerized files by agency management? Y/N

B. Program Planning

1. During the planning process, is input sought from the CASA/GAL program's governing body, staff, volunteers and local community, as appropriate to the program's structure? Y/N
2. Does the planning process include the following:
Identifying advocacy needs of the child population served by the CASA/GAL? Y/N
 - a. Documenting long- and short-term measurable goals for child outcomes, volunteers and resource development? Y/N
 - b. Determining objectives related to goals and carrying out those tasks with related timeframes and specified person responsible? Y/N
 - c. Assessing and tracking progress? Y/N
 - d. Listing resources needed for achieving goals? Y/N
 - e. Assessing management's capacity to carry out the planning effort? Y/N
 - f. Allowing for an annual review of the plan? Y/N

C. Program Review

1. Does the CASA/GAL program complete an evaluation/program review at least once every two years? Y/N
2. Does the evaluation/program review include the following:
 - a. Degree to which the program identifies and meets the advocacy needs of the children it serves? Y/N
 - b. Changing demographics, increased community need, over-utilization and other reasons indicating a need to expand service, establish a priority system or refrain from increasing the caseload size carried by the program?
 - c. Effectiveness of the services based on predetermined definitions and criteria? Y/N
 - d. Progress made in implementation of the inclusiveness and cultural competency plan? Y/N
3. Does the CASA/GAL management:
 - a. Submit results of its planning and evaluation processes to the governing body? Y/N
 - b. Share findings with personnel and volunteers? Y/N

- c. Disseminate information or findings to funders, the courts and other community agencies as appropriate? Y/N

D. Maintaining Confidentiality

1. Does the CASA/GAL program follow written policies and procedures regarding access to, use of and release of information about the children it serves to ensure that children's confidentiality is maintained at all times? Y/N
2. Do CASA/GAL employees and volunteers respect the child's right to privacy by maintaining confidentiality? Y/N **Required**
3. Does the CASA/GAL program demonstrate its compliance with all applicable statutory requirements pertaining to confidentiality of client information? Y/N **Required**
4. Does the CASA/GAL program ensure that its policies, procedures and practices are consistent with applicable laws and regulations? Y/N **Required**
5. Is access to CASA/GAL records limited to the court, authorized agency personnel and others outside the agency whose requests for access to confidential information are permitted by statute or by the court? Y/N **Required**
6. Are all electronic and hard copy, correspondence, files and records safely and securely maintained? Y/N
7. Are there controls in place to ensure that records can be located at any time? Y/N

Standard 11: Record Keeping

“The CASA/GAL program maintains complete, accurate and current case records and follows written policies for acceptance and assignment of CASA/GAL cases.”

A. Case Records

1. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain, for each child served, a case record which includes:
 - a. Biological or other identifying information? Y/N
 - b. Background on the nature of the presenting problem or reason for referral by the court? Y/N
 - c. Court reports and any court orders related to the service being provided? Y/N
 - d. The social service case plan? Y/N
2. Are all records for children served kept up to date through:
 - a. Current contact entries? Y/N
 - b. Periodic progress notes or summaries? Y/N
3. Are the entries made in the case record specific, factual and pertinent to the nature of the service? Y/N
4. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain copies of all volunteer reports, correspondence and notes from telephone or in-person consultations concerning the case? Y/N
5. Does the CASA/GAL program require its volunteers to turn in their case records, including all notes and written materials, when the case is closed? Y/N **Required**
6. Does the CASA/GAL program, upon termination of service, have a closing summary of the case entered into the case file? Y/N
7. Does the CASA/GAL program have written operational procedures, consistent with legal requirements and with the policy on confidential information governing retention, maintenance, protection, duration and return of case files when the case is closed? Y/N
8. Does the CASA/GAL program have established procedures for the legal and programmatic release, in writing, of volunteers when a case is closed or when a volunteer is removed from a case? Y/N **Required**
9. Does the CASA/GAL program have established procedures for encrypting confidential email messages sent through public accounts? Y/N

B. Acceptance, Assignment and Closure of Cases

1. Are cases accepted by the program without discrimination based on a child's gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, disability or religion? Y/N
2. Is a CASA/GAL volunteer assigned at the earliest possible stage of the court proceedings? Y/N
3. Whenever possible, do the judge and the program's administrator determine which cases are to be referred to the CASA/GAL program? Y/N
4. Are all appointments and assignments made by an appropriate written order of the court? Y/N
5. Does the CASA/GAL program, in cooperation with the court, retain the right to determine which referred cases it can appropriately serve, within the limits of its resources, capacities, statutory authority and mission? Y/N
6. Do the CASA/GAL program and/or the court notify all parties and agencies involved in the case of the CASA/GAL volunteer's appointment and release? Y/N
7. In determining caseload size, does management or supervisory personnel assess the following:
 - a. Nature and difficulty of the tasks assigned? Y/N
 - b. Work and time required to serve each child or to complete each task? Y/N
 - c. Responsibilities that may be assigned? Y/N
8. Does the CASA/GAL program maintain case assignment records? Y/N

Standard 12: Inclusiveness and Diversity

“The CASA/GAL program demonstrates that inclusiveness and diversity are essential components of quality advocacy for the children it serves.”

1. Does the CASA/GAL program create and implement an ongoing, written plan to guide and measure progress in increasing inclusion and diversity for its governing body, staff and volunteers as part of the organizational strategic plan, with measurable actions that will demonstrate progress? Y/N **Required**
2. Does the CASA/GAL program identify inclusiveness and diversity goals and activities? Y/N
3. Does the CASA/GAL program measure progress toward achieving those goals? Y/N
4. Does the CASA/GAL program identify goals and activities to be met in the future? Y/N
5. Does the CASA/GAL program engage individuals to help the program identify and understand the needs of the children served, along with the actions the program can take to address these needs from a diversity perspective? Y/N

a. What individuals have been engaged (positions, not names)?

b. How do you engage these individuals?

c. What have you learned from these individuals about their perception of your program?

6. Does the CASA/GAL program monitor the progress of these actions at least once every year? Y/N