

Handout #2a

## CASA of Iowa 2021 Policy Updates for State Board Approval

The Local Program Policy Manual has been reorganized to align with the 11 National CASA Local Program Standards for publicly administered organizations. National CASA released updated standards in December 2020. This table provides a summary of the local program policy revisions for State Board review and approval.

- New or clarifying language is in blue font.
- General information is in black font.
- Special requests of the board are in red font.

General Request
<p>National CASA/GAL standards indicate that <b>staff and volunteers</b> are to provide <i>annual written acknowledgement</i> of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policies.</li> <li>• Confidentiality policy</li> <li>• Conflict of Interest policy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Request of ICAB:</b> CASA of Iowa recommends written acknowledgement by staff upon new hire or by volunteers at acceptance into the program and upon any new release of the policy manual thereafter, at least every three (3) years rather than annually as noted by National CASA/GAL.</p>

Standard 1. Mission and Core Model	
Pg	Policy revisions or additions
6	<p>1.1 Operate under the Core Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of the National CASA/GAL's core model for best interest advocacy: learn, engage, recommend, collaborate and report.</li> </ul>
7	<p>1.3 Emulate core values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of ICAB's strategic plan, the core values of respect, integrity, partnering and advocacy were adopted.</li> <li>• National CASA/GAL Association's core values are identified as adaptability, collaboration, integrity, respect, quality, service and stewardship. The state and local standards state programs shall establish values that are written, consistent with the values of National CASA/GAL and adopted or provided by the program's administrative authority.</li> <li>• <b>Request of ICAB:</b> modify and adopt the following as ICAB's core values: advocacy, collaboration, quality, integrity, respect and equity. See page 6.</li> </ul>

<b>Standard 2. Guiding Principles</b>	
<b>Pg</b>	<b>Policy revisions or additions</b>
<p>This is a new standard from the National CASA/GAL Association; however, many of the actions associated with this standard were included in the prior Local CASA Program policy manual. Additions or clarifying language are in blue.</p>	
8	<p>2.1.2 Instill best interest advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Added language that advocates are to meet <i>in person</i> with the child at least every 30 days; <i>visits take place to ensure in-depth knowledge of the child's life for informed recommendations to the court.</i></li> <li>● Exception process for not having <i>in person</i> contact is outlined.</li> </ul>
8	<p>2.2 <i>Train program staff and advocates on the guiding principles.</i></p>

<b>Standard 3. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</b>	
<b>Pg</b>	<b>Policy revisions or additions</b>
9	<p>3.1 <i>Reflect the populations served</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Diversity, equity and inclusion are highlighted, celebrated and advocated for in the program's work related to operations, management and quality advocacy. CASA of Iowa staff and advocates shall provide written acknowledgment indicating agreement and understanding of the following CASA of Iowa policies: Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, Anti-Discrimination, and Anti-Harassment.</i></li> </ul>
9	<p>3.1.a <i>Local programs are required to have a written recruitment plan to diversify the advocate base to reflect the population served by the program, reviewed annually and updated every three (3) years.</i></p>

<b>Standard 4. Ethical Conduct</b>	
<b>Pg</b>	<b>Policy revisions or additions</b>
11	<p>4.1.4 Expanded to include language in blue font: The local program's staff and advocates must immediately notify the State Organization <i>if/when they are involved in any investigation for abuse/neglect or criminal misconduct, or if/when criminal charges are filed against them.</i></p>

<b>Standard 5. Governance and Administration</b>	
<b>Pg</b>	<b>Policy revisions or additions</b>
16-17	<p>5.1 State Organization oversight and responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This entire policy is a new addition based on NCASA standards. Includes a whistleblower policy.</li> </ul>
17-18	<p>5.2.4 Background screening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Removed specific examples where an exception may be requested for someone with a criminal history.</i></li> <li>ICAB to begin conducting national criminal checks including National Sex Offender Registry. Research is underway to identify and secure a vendor.</li> </ul>
19	<p>5.4 Orientation for the Iowa Child Advocacy Board</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The State Organization ensures new members of the Iowa Child Advocacy Board receive formal orientation to:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicable laws and regulations.</li> <li>National CASA/GAL Association Core Model.</li> <li>National CASA/GAL Association Standards for Local CASA/GAL Programs.</li> <li>Roles of national, state and local CASA/GAL programs.</li> <li>Goals, objectives, structure and operations, including receiving key documents.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
19	<p>5.5 Training and Development Plan for the Iowa Child Advocacy Board</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CASA of Iowa provides periodic opportunities for ongoing training and development to improve the knowledge and skills of the State Board members who administer the local court appointed special advocate and foster care review board programs.</li> </ol>

<b>Standard 6. Management and Funding</b>	
<b>Pg</b>	<b>Policy revisions or additions</b>
20-22	<p>CASA of Iowa demonstrates mission-oriented leadership in operations management and is a responsible steward of all resources in order to maximize advocacy for children who are eligible for and in need of a CASA/GAL advocate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This entire standard has been added or updated based on the 2020 NCASA standards.</li> </ul>

<b>Standard 7. Human Resources</b>	
Pg	Policy revisions or additions
23-26	<p>CASA of Iowa follows written policies for recruiting, screening, training, supervising, evaluating and developing staff from diverse backgrounds in an equitable and inclusive environment that advances the CASA/GAL mission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This entire standard has been added/updated based on the 2020 NCASA standards.</li> <li>● CASA of Iowa follows human resource policies as outlined by the State of Iowa and the Department of Inspections and Appeals.</li> </ul>

<b>Standard 8. Volunteer Administration</b>	
Pg	Policy revisions or additions
27	<p>8.1.1 Recruitment of advocates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The local program has a <b>written</b>, inclusive plan for recruiting and selecting advocates who reflect the diversity of children served.</li> </ul>
28	<p>8.2.1 Qualifications of CASA Applicants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The National CASA/GAL age qualification for CASA advocates is 21 years.</li> <li>● The CASA Program Committee continues to recommend CASA of Iowa’s age qualification remains at least 19 years.</li> </ul> <p><b>Request of ICAB:</b> Affirm the minimum age of Iowa CASA advocates as 19 years with the understanding that this does not align with National CASA/GAL standards as noted above. The minimum age requirement of 19 years is in the current Administrative Rules.</p>
30	<p>8.2.8 Screening advocates for reactivation</p> <p>Added: <b>Approved advocates who are unable or unwilling to accept a case assignment in a 6-month period must be placed on appropriate leave by entering an “Alert” in the advocate’s CAMS record.</b></p>
32	<p>8.3.1.e. Pre-Service Training (of Advocates)</p> <p>Added: <b>Any applicant who does not meet the criteria of completing pre-service training within 1 year of applying or six months of starting pre-service will be exited from the program.</b></p>
47	<p>8.8 Corrective Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Additional grounds or clarification for advocate dismissal from the program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The individual demonstrates an inability to effectively carry out their duties, <b>which may include not following the local program coordinator’s guidance.</b></li> <li>○ The individual has allegations of child abuse or neglect <b>or criminal activity</b> brought against them.</li> <li>○ <b>The individual refuses to submit to background checks every four (4) years, or</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	does not satisfactorily pass background checks.
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<b>Standard 9. Public Education and Engagement</b>	
<b>Policy revisions or additions</b>	
No changes; this content was Section 3: Public Relations is the last version of the CASA Program Policy manual.	

<b>Standard 10. Data and Records</b>	
<b>Pg</b>	<b>Policy revisions or additions</b>
46	CASA of Iowa compiles, maintains, manages and reports quality data and information in accordance with applicable laws, policies and/or standards. The program maintains complete, accurate and current case records and advocate files. <a href="#">The State Organization reviews data from local programs for accuracy.</a>

<b>Standard 11. Network and Membership</b>	
<b>Pg</b>	<b>Policy revisions or additions</b>
48	<p>11.1.4 <a href="#">CASA of Iowa provides a copy of the NCASAA Core Model and Standards for Local CASA/GAL Programs to the Iowa Child Advocacy Board and the program staff, and reviews these with the administrative authority periodically to strengthen understanding and clarity of the role and requirements of local CASA/GAL programs in advancing our shared mission.</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is noted that the National CASA/GAL Association does not recognize the Iowa Child Advocacy Board as a Board of Directors (applies only to non-profit CASA programs); however, the state board is recognized as part of the administrative authority for the CASA of Iowa programs.</li> </ul>



# CORE VALUES

CASA of Iowa and Iowa Citizen FCRB

*Vision: Safety, permanency, and well-being of every child in Iowa.*

*Mission: Advocating for the protection of Iowa's children and improvement of the child welfare system.*

## ADVOCACY

We seek to ensure all children have their voice heard and rights promoted and protected. Their views and wishes shall be genuinely considered when decisions are being made about their lives



## INTEGRITY

We are committed to being responsive, respectful, honest, trustworthy, fair and humane in our work and interactions.



## COLLABORATION

We collaborate with the State of Iowa, National/State/Local CASA programs, stakeholders and each other to effectively and creatively carry out our mission.



## RESPECT

ICAB board, staff and volunteers will be courteous, considerate, and professional in all interactions, striving to build trusting relationships.



## QUALITY

We pursue excellence in everything we do to serve and support staff and volunteers in providing the best advocacy for children, to include ongoing assessment and continuous improvement of our work.



## EQUITY

We strive to provide support based on individual circumstances to ensure that everyone has access to the same opportunities.



Adopted by the Iowa Child Advocacy Board - March 2021