



JUDICIAL COUNCIL of CALIFORNIA

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June 30, 2023

HON. PATRICIA GUERRERO
Chief Justice of California
Chair of the Judicial Council

Ms. Cara L. Jenkins
Legislative Counsel
1021 O Street, Suite 3210
Sacramento, California 95814

HON. MARSHA G. SLOUGH
Chair, Executive and Planning Committee

Ms. Erika Contreras
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 305
Sacramento, California 95814

HON. DAVID M. RUBIN
Chair, Judicial Branch Budget Committee
Chair, Litigation Management Committee

Ms. Sue Parker
Chief Clerk of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 319
Sacramento, California 95814

HON. MARLA O. ANDERSON
Chair, Legislation Committee

HON. CARIN T. FUJISAKI
Chair, Rules Committee

HON. KYLE S. BRODIE
Chair, Technology Committee

*Re: Report on California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association
Funding Allocations and Program Development: Year One, as required
under the State Budget Act of 2022*

Hon. Maria Lucy Armendariz
Hon. C. Todd Bottke
Hon. Kevin C. Brazile
Hon. Jonathan B. Conklin
Hon. Carol A. Corrigan
Hon. Samuel K. Feng
Mr. David D. Fu
Hon. Brad R. Hill
Ms. Rachel W. Hill
Hon. Harold W. Hopp
Hon. Brian Maienschein
Hon. Ann C. Moorman
Ms. Gretchen Nelson
Mr. Maxwell V. Pritt
Hon. Thomas J. Umberg

Dear Ms. Jenkins, Ms. Contreras, and Ms. Parker:

Under item 0250-101-0932 of section 2.00, provision 34, of the Budget Act of 2022 (Stats. 2022, ch. 45), the Judicial Council is submitting *Report on California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association Funding Allocations and Program Development: Year One* for the funding appropriated to the California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association (California CASA) for fiscal year 2022–2023.

ADVISORY MEMBERS
Hon. Judith K. Dulcich
Ms. Rebecca J. Fleming
Mr. Shawn C. Landry
Hon. Kimberly Merrifield
Hon. Glenn Mondo
Hon. David Rosenberg
Mr. David H. Yamasaki

As required by the Budget Act of 2022, this report describes funding allocations awarded to local CASA programs by California CASA and details program developments for fiscal year 2022–2023.

MS. MILLICENT TIDWELL
Acting Administrative Director
Judicial Council

Ms. Cara L. Jenkins
Ms. Erika Contreras
Ms. Sue Parker
June 30, 2023
Page 2

If you have any questions related to this report, please contact Ms. Audrey Fancy, Principal Managing Attorney, Judicial Council Center for Families, Children & the Courts, at 415-865-7706.

Sincerely,



Millicent Tidwell
Acting Administrative Director
Judicial Council

MT/AF/KM

Enclosures

cc: Eric Dang, Counsel, Office of Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins
Alf Brandt, General Counsel, Office of Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
Shaun Naidu, Policy Consultant, Office of Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
Anita Lee, Principal Fiscal and Policy Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office
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MS. MILLICENT TIDWELL
*Acting Administrative Director
Judicial Council*

Report title: *Report on California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association Funding Allocations and Program Development: Year One*

Statutory citation: Item 0250-101-0932 of section 2.00, provision 34, of the Budget Act of 2022 (Stats. 2022, ch. 45)

Date of report: June 30, 2023

The Judicial Council has submitted a report to the Legislature in accordance with item 0250-101-0932 of section 2.00, provision 34, of the Budget Act of 2022 (Stats. 2022, ch. 45).

The following summary of the report is provided under the requirements of Government Code section 9795.

The Budget Act of 2022 appropriated \$20 million to the California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association for fiscal year 2022–23 “to provide funding to the local court-appointed special advocate (CASA) programs to expand capacity, recruitment, and training and to stabilize local budgets and staffing” and “to be used statewide for volunteer recruitment initiatives, shared resources and infrastructure, development of statewide training curriculum, collection of data on program implementation and outcomes to support the report to the Legislature, and other uses to expand [CASA] services in the state.”

Under the Budget Act of 2022, this report describes program implementation, funding allocations, and program developments for fiscal year 2022–23.

The full report can be accessed at <https://www.courts.ca.gov/7466.htm>.

A printed copy of the report may be obtained by calling 415-865-7706.

June 30, 2023

Report on California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association Funding Allocations and Program Development: Year One

Fiscal Year 2022–23



Judicial Council of California

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

Hon. Patricia Guerrero

*Chief Justice of California and
Chair of the Judicial Council*

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*Acting Administrative Director
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Executive Summary

Under the State Budget Act of 2022, the Judicial Council is submitting *Report on California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association Funding Allocations and Program Development: Year One* for the one-time \$60 million appropriation to the California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association.

The State Budget Act of 2022 (Stats. 2022, ch.45) amended the Judicial Council’s Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) grant funding to include an additional \$60 million, to be paid in three increments over three years, to the California CASA Association (California CASA) for support of CASA programs across the state. The State Budget Act of 2022 appropriated \$20 million for fiscal year 2022–23, including \$16 million to provide funding to local CASA programs to expand capacity, recruitment, and training and to stabilize local budgets and staffing. The remaining \$4 million was to be used statewide for volunteer recruitment initiatives, shared resources and infrastructure, development of statewide training curriculum, and collection of data on program implementation and outcomes to support the report to the Legislature.

The State Budget Act of 2022 specified that the Judicial Council annually report to the Legislature on CASA program implementation and outcomes. The initial report due on July 1, 2023, is required to describe funding allocations and program development.

On January 10, 2023, Governor Newsom proposed eliminating \$40 million in funding for fiscal years two (2023–24) and three (2024–25) in an effort to achieve a balanced budget. As a result, California CASA and local CASA programs began adjusting their plans in preparation for the possibility of reduced funding. Subsequently, on May 12, 2023, the Governor’s May Revision included an adjustment to restore the funding for years two and three. Although California CASA adjusted and retooled implementation plans in anticipation of the reduced funding, it is positioned to continue implementation efforts to meet planned outcomes.

I. Background

A CASA program is a nonprofit organization that supports and promotes trained volunteers appointed by a judicial officer to provide advocacy for a child who is under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court. A CASA volunteer spends time with the child, monitors the child’s needed services, and provides child-focused recommendations to the court based on the best interest of the child.

There are 44 local CASA programs in California serving 51 of the state’s 58 counties. In 2022, 8,871 active Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA volunteers) served 11,790 youth in the dependency and juvenile justice systems across California. Local CASA programs recruited and trained 1,866 new CASA volunteers in 2022. CASA volunteers spend time with youth in person

each month, meet with the stakeholders involved in the youths' lives, and provide recommendations to superior court judges based on each child's needs and best interests.

II. Year-One Funding Allocations

Year-one funding of \$20 million included \$100,000 for Judicial Council's administration of the funds. The remaining \$19.9 million was transferred to California CASA: \$19.5 million in December 2022 and \$400,000 in February 2023. In December 2022, California CASA awarded \$16 million to local CASA organizations. The first payment was made to programs in December 2022, the second payment was made in May 2023, and the third will be made in December 2023.

The balance of \$3.9 million is designated for California CASA-driven initiatives to implement statewide services and efficiencies that benefit the local programs collectively. Of this amount, California CASA was allocated \$1 million for its implementation and oversight of the grant process and for its work in the areas of evaluation, marketing and volunteer recruitment, shared resources and infrastructure, training, growth strategy for the local CASA network, and diversity, equity, and inclusion development. The two highest priorities for the remaining funds are (1) to implement a comprehensive statewide marketing campaign to recruit new volunteers and donors; and (2) to determine an appropriate way to measure the impact of CASA volunteers on the health and wellbeing of children. These funds must be expended by June 30, 2024.

III. Year-One Grant Opportunities and Funding Allocations for Local CASA Programs

California CASA created three grant opportunities for local programs in the first year: Grant Opportunity 1 for operational expenses; Grant Opportunity 2 for staff retention; and Grant Opportunity 3 for innovation/growth/diversity in serving more children with CASA advocacy.

California CASA allocated:

- \$3,997,832 to 39 programs for Grant Opportunity 1;
- \$6,916,266 to 37 programs for Grant Opportunity 2; and
- \$5,085,901 to 31 programs for Grant Opportunity 3.

The total funding allocated to each program for FY 2022–23 is detailed at Appendix A. All 44 local CASA programs received year-one funding. The grant period for all opportunities is October 1, 2022, through June 30, 2024.

In year one, some local programs were challenged to fully implement efforts to address staff retention (e.g., compensation increases or benefits) and hire staff to support growth initiatives because of the uncertainty of funding for years two and three. To prepare for the funding reductions proposed by the Governor in January 2023, California CASA created a budget modification process for those local CASA programs to request a change to their grant awards

and modified the reporting period slightly. With the funding restored, California CASA will be able to return to the grants process that was under way for years two and three.

Grant Opportunity 1

Grant Opportunity 1 provides funding to local CASA programs for expenses related to day-to-day operations including, but not limited to, general operational expenses and recruitment, training, and supervision of CASA volunteers. This grant opportunity is intended to provide support for expenses related to the implementation and execution of the CASA model as defined by [California Rules of Court, rule 5.655](#) and [Welfare and Institutions Code sections 100–110](#).

Programs are required to track two of the four outcomes listed below:

1. Maintain the year-over-year number of children served.
2. Maintain CASA volunteer retention year-over-year.
3. Maintain or increase private or public philanthropy (excluding state funding and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans and grants).
4. Establish and/or maintain regular meetings with their county’s juvenile court judges and the Department of Health and Human Services (social services).

At the end of the grant period (June 30, 2024), each program will submit a written report that includes comparative data for how the funding supported the local program and how the program achieved two of the outcomes listed above.

Grant Opportunity 2

Grant Opportunity 2 provides funding to meet competitive market wage rates in the programs’ counties for existing CASA staff, to provide or increase employee benefits, and/or to offer opportunities for professional staff development and training. Programs will measure outcomes in year-over-year staff retention and equitable compensation and benefits within the workplace. At the conclusion of the grant period (June 30, 2024), programs will submit documentation and a brief narrative describing the impact this funding had on their staffs, including outcomes.

Grant Opportunity 3

Grant Opportunity 3 provides funding for CASA programs to scale up and sustain growth to serve more children in their counties. Programs proposed innovative ideas and projects to increase their CASA services or new innovations to build or maintain more diverse, equitable, and inclusive (DEI) staff and/or CASA volunteers. Local CASA programs were also able to request funds for new staff positions under Grant Opportunity 3.

Programs that applied for Grant Opportunity 3 were required to submit two measurable outcomes to increase the number of children served with CASA volunteers or new innovations to build or maintain DEI staff and/or CASA volunteers. Programs also submitted a California CASA budget template to explain the use of the funds. At the conclusion of the grant period

(June 30, 2024), programs will submit written narratives documenting their expenditures and outcomes.

Organizational Capacity Preassessment Tool

All local CASA programs completed an organizational capacity preassessment as part of the application process. Programs answered questions in seven categories: (1) Aspirations, (2) Strategy, (3) Organizational Skills, (4) Human Resources, (5) Systems and Structure, (6) Organizational Structure, and (7) Culture.

In addition, each program is required to submit reports for data collection of outcomes through the grant period and a postgrant organizational assessment with supporting documentation by December 2023.

IV. Year-One Activities of California CASA and Local CASA Organizations

California CASA developed a comprehensive, multiyear statewide plan for:

- Implementation of volunteer recruitment initiatives,
- Distribution of resources and infrastructure,
- Development of curriculum, and
- Collection of data.

California CASA delayed full implementation of certain efforts in the event that funding reductions proposed by the Governor in January 2023 were enacted. However, California CASA is positioned to restart planned efforts with funding restoration.

Volunteer and Recruitment Initiatives

California CASA plans to expand marketing statewide to increase awareness of the needs of foster youth, the CASA model, and the range of statewide opportunities for volunteer advocates to serve youth in the foster care system. California CASA will assess the marketing capabilities of the local network, review National CASA/GAL (guardian ad litem) Association for Children marketing and branding standards, research successful statewide campaigns and other state CASA initiatives, develop an overarching strategic marketing and recruitment plan, issue a request for proposals for an outside consulting team, and hire a consultant. California CASA plans to spend a minimum of \$3 million for a robust volunteer recruitment campaign, with extensive placement of radio and television ads, social media outreach, billboards, bus signs, and street banners.

Shared Resources and Infrastructure

California CASA plans to assist the local network with recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and all aspects of cultivating a workplace where employees can thrive. Utilizing a consultant, California CASA will provide training on important employment laws and issues dealing with workplace

rights. California CASA also plans to implement efforts to make the network more efficient and cost-effective via shared resources and infrastructure support, such as a service for language translation and a centralized CASA database to simplify data management.

Growth Strategist

California CASA will provide a growth strategist as a consultant to help local CASA programs create efficient and sustainable processes. The consultant will engage with the local CASA programs to create or modify their own existing strategic plans, with the ultimate goal of increasing the number of children served. The consultant will work closely with California CASA staff and provide change management training for all 44 local CASA programs.

Collection of Data and Outcomes

The California CASA staff plans to conduct an assessment on statewide data and outcomes to measure impact. In year one, California CASA partnered with a consultant to assess current data readiness, make recommendations for meaningful metrics both statewide and locally, develop a mixed-methods evaluation framework, and provide capacity building to ensure sustainability. Local programs will provide data about their grant programs in the coming years, and California CASA will continue working with the consultant on collecting data and measuring outcomes.

Development of a Statewide Training Curriculum

CASA volunteers must complete at least 30 hours of preservice training. California CASA provides CASA University to support this preservice training with an online platform that allows trainees to access and complete half of the training virtually. Of the 44 local CASA programs, 35 currently use CASA University. California CASA plans to review all content currently in the curriculum: eight chapters and 37 units. The goal is to make the curriculum more reflective of current needs, the diverse populations served by programs, and best practices in adult learning strategies.

CASA volunteers are required to complete at least 12 hours of in-service training annually. California CASA will work to enhance the availability of in-service training statewide. The association plans to build an on-demand online platform where CASA volunteers can access in-service training on various topics at any time. This platform will include recordings of past webinars, details related to upcoming live webinars, and a series of interactive online courses. California CASA plans to hire a learning and education specialist and intends to launch the in-service training platform in the third quarter of 2023.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

California CASA plans include a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. In year-one, California CASA provided a statewide nine-month DEI training to staff representing 26 local CASA programs and California CASA staff and board members. Plans to expand DEI training more widely to the local network include a DEI training guidebook that can be used by California CASA and local CASA organizations.

Conclusion

Under the Budget Act of 2022, in FY 2022–23 California CASA allocated \$16 million in funding to local CASA programs to expand capacity, recruitment, and training to stabilize local budgets and staffing through the three grant opportunities detailed in this report.

California CASA continues to utilize and make progress on efforts funded by the \$3.9 million appropriated to the organization to initiate, administer, and execute projects of shared benefit to the entire local CASA network, including the implementation of efforts that support:

- Implementation of volunteer recruitment initiatives,
- Distribution of resources and infrastructure,
- Development of curriculum, and
- Collection of data.

California CASA’s initial implementation plans were based on funding over a three-year period. California CASA and local CASA programs began adjusting their strategy to prepare for the possibility of reduced funding and delayed implementation of certain planned efforts in response to the Governor’s January 10, 2023, proposal to eliminate the remaining \$40 million in funding for years two (FY 2023–24) and three (FY 2024–25). With the restoration of the remaining funding, California CASA is positioned to continue the planned implementation efforts described in this report.

Appendix A Year-One Funding Allocations

The table¹ below lists the 44 local programs and their grant award amounts, with the biggest award going to CASA of Los Angeles, and the smallest award going to CASA of Mariposa County.

County	CASA Organization	Award	County	CASA Organization	Award
Los Angeles	CASA of Los Angeles	\$2,651,472	Marin	Marin CASA	\$255,190
San Diego	Voices for Children San Diego	\$1,253,480	Merced	CASA of Merced County	\$238,031
Orange	CASA of Orange County	\$942,095	El Dorado	Child Advocates of El Dorado County	\$211,423
Santa Clara	Child Advocates of Silicon Valley	\$811,342	San Joaquin	CASA of San Joaquin County	\$207,605
Sacramento	CASA Sacramento	\$725,596	Stanislaus	CASA of Stanislaus County	\$206,365
Riverside	Voices for Children Riverside	\$697,151	Alameda	Alameda County CASA	\$198,229
Santa Cruz	CASA of Santa Cruz County	\$544,573	Tulare	CASA of Tulare County	\$186,342
San Bernardino	CASA of San Bernardino County	\$535,440	Humboldt	CASA of Humboldt	\$183,850
San Luis Obispo	CASA of San Luis Obispo County	\$519,740	Sonoma	CASA of Sonoma County	\$149,715
Kern	CASA of Kern County	\$489,233	Butte, Glenn, Shasta and Tehama	CASA of Butte, Glenn, Shasta & Tehama Counties	\$122,923
Santa Barbara	CASA of Santa Barbara County	\$478,367	Mendocino and Lake	CASA of Mendocino & Lake Counties	\$109,587
Yolo	Yolo County CASA	\$366,449	Amador and Calaveras	CASA of Amador and Calaveras Counties	\$108,416
Contra Costa	CASA of Contra Costa County	\$358,153	Nevada	Child Advocates of Nevada County	\$107,771
Fresno and Madera	CASA of Fresno and Madera Counties	\$352,612	San Benito	CASA of San Benito County	\$106,142
Ventura	CASA of Ventura County	\$330,191	Lassen	CASA of Lassen Family Services	\$88,633
Solano	CASA of Solano County	\$328,032	Plumas	Plumas CASA	\$80,243
Monterey	CASA of Monterey County	\$324,072	Siskiyou	CASA of Siskiyou County	\$70,721
San Mateo	CASA of San Mateo County	\$312,727	Napa	Napa CASA	\$63,588
San Francisco	San Francisco CASA	\$291,617	Del Norte	CASA of Del Norte	\$55,113
Kings	CASA of Kings County	\$284,721	Inyo and Mono	CASA of the Eastern Sierra	\$44,381
Imperial	CASA of Imperial County	\$274,944	Modoc	Modoc CASA	\$41,500
Placer	Child Advocates of Placer County	\$259,423	Mariposa	CASA of Mariposa County	\$32,803

¹ California CASA Association, memo from CEO Sharon Lawrence, *California CASA Legislative Appropriation Funding Report* (Feb. 1, 2023).