

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Department of Family Administration Administrative Office of the Courts

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA) GRANTS - FY 2010

Issue Date: April 1, 2009
Applications Due: May 1, 2009

General Information

The Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program was authorized to operate in Maryland subject to approved Rules and Guidelines, by the adoption in 1989, Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, Section 3-830. The Annotated Code of Maryland states that the role of the Court Appointed Special Advocate is to:

1. Provide the court with background information to aid the court in making decisions in the child's best interest; and
2. Ensure that the child is provided appropriate case planning and services.

The CASA volunteer is considered a friend of the court and does not have party status. The Volunteer is considered an agent of the court and is appointed at the judge's discretion to represent the child's best interests. Volunteers are not represented by an attorney but should be provided access to legal counsel by the program.

The Department of Family Administration at the Administrative Office of the Courts is requesting applications for CASA Grants. Subject to the provision of funds for Fiscal Year 2010, grants will be awarded to applicable programs which enhance the experience of families and children involved with Maryland's legal system. Previously funded programs must have submitted all outstanding reports prior to this grant's submission deadline.

Funding Priorities

Applications submitted should depict programs that have a demonstrated need within the community that is to be served and are services that will be complimentary to those provided by the court. Priority will be given to the continuation of projects currently funded through the Department of Family Administration CASA Grants. Grants are also available to a steering committee, community organization, or court in which there is not presently a CASA program. These groups are eligible to apply for a one-time planning grant from the Department of Family Administration. All groups are to work in conjunction with the Maryland CASA Association when contemplating starting a program for a jurisdiction.

Eligible Grantees

Eligible grantees include a steering committee, community organization, local courts, court-related agencies, and nonprofit service providers.

Grant Payments

If awarded, and unless otherwise provided for in the grant agreement, grant funds will be paid on a *reimbursement basis* only, upon submission of timely financial expenditure reporting and a request for payment. PLEASE NOTE THIS CHANGE IN PROGRAM POLICY FOR THE FY2010 FUNDING CYCLE.

Technical Assistance

An informational session will be provided to anyone seeking additional information regarding the application process. The informational session has been scheduled for **Wednesday, April 22, 2009**, at **10:00 am** and will be held at the Judiciary Education and Conference Center (JECC) located at 2009D Commerce Park Drive in Annapolis, Maryland. Directions for the JECC can be obtained by calling. *Attendance at the informational session is not mandatory* and is offered only as a supplement to the information included within this NOFA and the application. Please contact Angela Langston at 410-260-1740 to notify us if you plan to attend the session, or to request directions.

Funding Cycle

Grant awards will be made to fund projects during the period from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. The availability of funds for this program is contingent upon the provision of funds in the Maryland Judiciary budget by the Maryland General Assembly for Fiscal Year 2010. Because these awards are dependent upon the conclusion of the State budget process, **awards will not be announced until June 2009.**

Applicable Guidelines and Funding Model

In applying for funds, grantees agree to comply with the *Family Division / Family Services Grants: Guidelines for Grant Recipients* for Fiscal Year 2010. CASA funds will be awarded in accordance with the *Performance Based Funding Model for Maryland CASA Programs*. Applicants should thoroughly review both documents before applying. Copies of both documents may be found at: www.courts.state.md.us/family/grantadmin.html.

Application Instructions

The grant application and other relevant documents can be found at www.courts.state.md.us/family/grantadmin.html.

Applications are due on or before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 1, 2009, and should be directed to:

Connie Kratovil-Lavelle, Executive Director
Department of Family Administration
Administrative Office of the Courts
580 Taylor Avenue, 2nd Floor, A Pod
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Submit one original plus nine (9) copies. Faxed or e-mailed applications will not be accepted.

For further information regarding this notice of funding or the application process, please contact Connie Kratovil-Lavelle, Department of Family Administration, at (410) 260-1580.