

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR CASAs

Objective

Continuing education provides opportunities for CASAs to expand their knowledge around topics such as child development and mental health, gain understanding and sensitivity toward families going through the dependency system, and improve communication skills to increase their ability to be a “better” CASA.

Procedure

Each year, CASAs are required to complete 12 hours of continuing education credit; the year starts the month they graduate. This is an annual requirement, based on a suggested average of one hour of continuing education per month. Alternatively, attending our hosted workshops to get two hours each in six-months.

CASAs receive weekly ‘CASA News’ letters by email announcing workshops, seminars, discussion groups and activities for which they can receive credit. It is especially useful if CASAs attend discussion groups, read from an approved list of books or view approved movies in the early stages of their cases. This will help them get started on the right path. Our fiscal year is 7/1 to 6/30.

Types of Continuing Education

Mostly all Continuing Education (CE) hours will be included to a CASAs monthly report each month. These hours are entered by the *supportteam*.

- Trainings Organized and Hosted by Child Advocates

Attendees will receive hour-for-hour credit. CASAs receive monthly e-mail invitations in addition to CASA News. The Volunteer Services department will track attendance and enter hours into CASA Tracker.

- Trainings Organized and Sponsored by Other Organizations

Courses offered by other groups such as DFCS, Community College, FIRST5, DV Council, etc., and recommended by Child Advocates will receive hour-for-hour credit. These trainings will also be advertised via e-mail and/or CASA News. The topics must be of interest or applicable to the CASA’s role. If a CASA wants to attend a training elsewhere that they found themselves, prior approval from the Specialist must be obtained to receive credit. The CASA is responsible for contacting their Supervisor about receiving credit, and the Supervisor will be responsible for inputting the hours into CASA Tracker.

- Community Classes

Courses (usually a semester-long class) offered by a college or university (as part of a degree program or not), will receive the 12 hours continuing education credit only if the

class subject is relevant to being a CASA. The CASA must get approval from their Supervisor prior to submitting hours.

- Discussion Groups

Groups of CASAs led by a CASA Supervisor or another designated person to discuss various issues also count as Continuing Education. The group discussion may include general training on specific topics (usually short), case issues or new court procedures and policies. The CASA will receive hour for hour credit for up to 3 hours. Discussion groups are advertised through CASA News and the group leader will track attendance and enter hours into CASA Tracker.

- Independent Study

Credit will be given for an in-depth study by a CASA of a particular issue involved in their specific case (e.g. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Munchhausen's, hemophilia, etc.). The amount of credit given will be up to the discretion of a CASA Specialist.* The CASA must obtain prior approval in order for credit to be given. Mentors should ask their Specialist before approving credit. The Supervisor will input the hours into CASA Tracker when advised that the CASA has completed the study.

- TV/Videos/DVDs/Movies

Videos of Continuing Education training, of interest to CASAs available from local libraries or online. If the title is not on Child Advocates' recommended list, the Specialist must approve the documentary or film in order to receive credit. Child Advocates has a list, but not limited to, appropriate DVDs and this list is posted on our website. Commercial movies (in theaters or in video format) that are approved will be given up to two hours of credit. The CASA shall add the hours on their monthly report.

- Books

A list of books on various topics approved for Continuing Education hours is available on the resource page of our website. This list can also be found on the Shared drive.

A Specialist can approve any books not on the list. Mentors should ask their Specialist before approving credit. The CASA must report the date the book was read, the book title and number of pages. For every 100 pages read, CASA receive one hour of credit, with a maximum of three hours of credit per book. *Not all 12 hours can be of books/videos.*