

CLARK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM

Petitioner: Jessica L. Colvin, Chief Financial Officer

Recommendation:

Approve and authorize the allocation of \$400,000 in Clark County Outside Agency Grant (OAG) Funds to the Eighth Judicial District Court (EJDC) for the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA); authorize the County Manager or her designee to execute the required grant resolutions per NRS 244.1505; or take other action deemed appropriate. (For possible action)

FISCAL IMPACT:

Fund #:	2030.000	Fund Name:	County Grants
Fund Center:	N/A	Funded PGM/Grant:	N/A
Amount:	\$400,000		
Description:	Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CSA)		
Additional Comments:	N/A		

BACKGROUND:

In June of 1980, the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA) began under the leadership of the Honorable Judge John Mendoza. In July of 1980, Clark County approved the original funding in the EJDC for the first CASA coordinator and administrative assistant. By December of 1980, there were approximately 40 volunteers.

There has been considerable national research on the effectiveness of CASA programs. In 1999, NRS 432B.500 was amended to read "After a petition is filed that a child is in need of protection pursuant to NRS 432B.490, the court shall appoint a guardian ad litem for the child". District Court Rule 5.210 sets forth the administration of this statutory requirement through a CASA program and appoints volunteer CASA/GAL's. Today, there are over 3,200 children in need of protection with only approximately 400 CASA/GAL volunteers. The CASA program is in need of hundreds of additional volunteers and it is the goal of this request to increase the number of CASA/GAL volunteers so that we meet the statutory requirement that every child has a voice for their best interests.

The EJDC recently completed a three month grant project authorized and funded by the National CASA/GAL Association. This \$50,000 grant focused its efforts on increasing the number CASA volunteers through the use of media buys. The results were dramatic. Over the three-month period between September and November of 2021, the CASA program inquiries more than doubled and the number of new CASA volunteers increased by 43%.

The National CASA/GAL association provides for non-profit auxiliary organizations to support the mission and vision of CASA's nationwide through fundraising. The EJDC recently ended an agreement with the CASA Foundation and signed a new agreement with Champions for CASA effective July 1st of 2022. This funding is needed in the interim to allow the new non-profit auxiliary to operate and raise funds and will be used for media buys, a portion of recruitment staff costs, and various recruitment activities. In addition, the EJDC has dedicated an additional \$65,000 of Family Court AA fees for community outreach recruitment events.

Cleared for Agenda

07/19/2022

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