



Kentucky CASA Network

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KCN, CASA by the Lakes to Continue Providing Support to CASA Volunteers, Children, and Families in Christian County

The Kentucky CASA Network, Inc. (KCN) was informed on July 15, 2024, that the CASA Program of Christian County, KY Inc. Board of Directors voted to dissolve its 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity, effective immediately. The KCN has been proactively involved with developing and supporting the local program since its founding in 2018, providing support to the board of directors, the executive director, and the CASA volunteers who advocate for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. While the KCN is disappointed to hear of the board's decision to dissolve the current organization, we are pleased to share with the community that CASA services are still present and will continue in Christian County, and we are working collaboratively with the county's Family Court Judges and neighboring program, CASA by the Lakes, to ensure that appropriately trained and supervised CASA volunteers can continue to provide advocacy for children. There will be no disruption in services to the children who are benefitting from CASA advocacy and support.

The KCN and all of Kentucky's local CASA programs are governed by Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) 620.500-620.550, which provide the legal duties and responsibilities of the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program in the Commonwealth. The KCN is obligated by law to exercise oversight over local programs if they do not meet operational standards relating to finances, training, volunteers, record-keeping, and other basic functions. All CASA programs in Kentucky are 501(c)(3) organizations and as such bound by laws for operating as a nonprofit organization in Kentucky.

One of the ways the KCN carries out this requirement in Statute is by conducting formal Quality Assurance Reviews of all local CASA programs, and in addition to reviewing compliance, uses this process to provide support and technical assistance to programs in areas where they may need it.

During the most recent Quality Assurance Review of CASA Program of Christian County, and through other training and technical assistance provided to the program, the KCN identified a myriad of areas of noncompliance with both KRS and National CASA/GAL Association Standards. KCN staff have dedicated countless hours to providing a pathway for the program to come into compliance, maintain a sustainable organization, and provide effective advocacy for children. "It is unfortunate that the Christian County Board of Directors has opted not to take that path to develop and maintain a highly effective CASA program," said KCN Board Chair Bryan Bulkley.

In order to continue offering CASA services in Christian County, the KCN is working alongside neighboring program CASA by the Lakes, which serves Calloway and Marshall Counties, to provide temporary supervision to the CASA volunteers currently serving children. As of July 16, CASA by the Lakes staff was sworn in by the Family Court Judge, and the program signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Court to take on this role,

Kentucky CASA Network Values

Collaboration * Service * Accountability * Gratitude * Transparency * Equity

ensuring there is no disruption of services. Executive Director Jessica Foust notes, “As members of the National CASA/GAL Association and the Kentucky CASA Network, we recognize the importance of collaboration, sharing resources, and providing unwavering support to our sister programs throughout the state. Together, we form a community of programs united by a shared mission: providing a voice to the children who need it most. For 26 years, CASA by the Lakes has served our local community and we are excited for the opportunity to provide that same level of care and support to the CASA volunteers and children to which they are appointed in Christian County.”

The KCN is very appreciative of the time and effort that CASA by the Lakes is dedicating to ensure that CASA best-interest advocacy continues to be present in Christian County. Between 2018-2023, there were 1,326 new child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases filed in Christian County, according to the Administrative Office of the Courts; during that time, 52 children were appointed a CASA volunteer. All children in Christian County who are impacted by the child welfare system deserve to have a CASA volunteer advocating for their best interests in court. The KCN is committed to continuing to work with the community so that CASA in Christian County can be sustainable and flourish. Community members who are interested in getting involved with CASA in Christian County can contact the KCN by email at info@kentuckycasanetwork.org.

About the Kentucky CASA Network

The Kentucky CASA Network is the state association for Court Appointed Special Advocates, as recognized in the Kentucky Revised Statutes, with a mission to support the development, growth, and continuation of local CASA programs in Kentucky. CASA programs recruit and train volunteers to advocate on behalf of children who have come into the court system as a result of dependency, neglect, or abuse. In 2023, 1,211 CASA volunteers advocated for 3,472 abused and neglected children statewide. Kentucky currently has a network of local CASA programs that covers more than 90 counties. For more information, please visit www.kentuckycasanetwork.org.