

CASA Child Advocates of Montgomery County



Board Policies

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Board Recruiting Strategy Plan

Board recruitment is one of the most important functions of the current Board. CASA's ability to grow and to meet goals is highly dependent upon having the right members on the Board. Board recruiting is the job of all Board members.

According to the CASA By-laws, the Governance, Planning and Policy Committee, chaired by the Vice Chair of the Board, has responsibility for nominating new Board members.

The Governance Committee Charter includes (among others) these specific duties for the Governance, Planning and Policy Committee:

- Assess the Board's current composition and identify missing quality and characteristics
- Prepare priorities for Board composition
- Draft a recruitment plan and continuously cultivate new prospects
- Meet with prospective Board members and recommend candidates to the Board

Factors that will be considered in selecting potential Board members:

- *All Board members* are expected to have the following characteristics:
 - Ability to think strategically and to participate in governing CASA effectively
 - Significant influence and leadership in the community
 - Ability to represent CASA effectively in the community
 - Willingness to accept a fiduciary responsibility for CASA
 - Ability to provide and attract significant financial or other essential resources to enable the organization to achieve its mission, goals and objectives
- Other factors to be considered include:
 - Particular skills and experience needed by the Board, e.g., leadership in local companies, and leadership in marketing, legal, banking, finance, fundraising, etc.
 - Board diversity in terms of ethnicity, gender, geography, and other factors considered important by the current Governance, Planning and Policy Committee
 - Willingness to devote time and resources to furthering CASA's mission
- The Board may also include, at the Board's discretion, a representative of the Champions of CASA or CHAMPS appointed as CHAMPS member. The Board will have at least one active Advocate appointed member. These are full voting members who will act as liaisons for CHAMPS or Advocates, and are selected by the board. These members should, if practical, have the characteristics expected of all Board members, but this may be waived by the Board at their discretion. These members should:
 - Be able to effectively represent their community
 - Be well connected with issues, challenges and need for change in their community

Board Election and Screening Procedures

The Board Vice Chair is, according to the Bylaws, Chair of the Governance, Planning and Policy Committee, which is responsible for Board member recruiting and nominating.

Board recruiting is a year-round function. CASA's goal is to have classes of Board Members begin each year on November 1.

1. Before the May Board meeting of each year, the Governance, Planning and Policy Committee will:

Review the strategic plan, including mission, vision and goals, to determine implications for Board member recruiting and development. The committee will determine what skills, knowledge, personal contacts and/or other attributes future Board members will need to possess in order for the Board to do its part in advancing the strategic plan.

a. Assess which communities are already represented on the Board, and determine gap areas.

This assessment will include:

- i. Review of characteristics expected of *all* board members, including:
 1. Ability to think strategically and to participate in governing CASA effectively
 2. Significant influence in the community
 3. Ability to represent CASA effectively in the community
 4. Willingness to accept a fiduciary responsibility for CASA
 5. Ability to provide and attract financial and other essential resources to enable the organization to achieve its mission, goals and objectives
- ii. Particular skills needed by Board, including leadership in local companies, and leadership in business management, finance, marketing, legal, banking, fundraising, etc.
- iii. Board committees that need additional representation
- iv. Demographic representation, including but not limited to ethnicity, gender, and inclusion of north and south Montgomery County

b. Solicit names of potential Board Members from the current Board and staff

c. Propose members for a Nominating Task Force, comprised of Board members and members from the Advisory Council and community, to solicit names of prospective community members who might fill the predetermined needs, based on the assessment and the Board discussion of Board member needs. A key purpose of the Nominating Task Force is to expand our pool of potential Board Members beyond contacts of current Board Members

d. Present the assessment and proposed Nominating Task Force membership to the full Board in May for discussion and input and approval

2. Immediately following the May Board meeting, the Nominating Task Force will convene to begin work, to be completed before the July Board meeting. Their work will include the following:

- a. Propose potential Board members, based on criteria laid out by the Board, and including potential candidates already suggested by the Board
- b. Determine which potential members best fit CASA's needs
- c. Have casual, no-commitment conversations with prospective Board members to determine their fit for the Board, their knowledge of CASA and their interest in being considered
- d. Make a preliminary determination based on the needs assessment, knowledge of the candidates and the preliminary discussions which candidates should continue to be considered for Board membership
- e. Prepare a short synthesis of the interview and a Potential Board Member Bio form for the recommended candidates

3. **At July Board meetings, the Governance Committee will recommend to the full Board a slate of candidates who should be seriously considered.** The Potential Board Member Bio form will be included in the Board meeting pre-read materials. The full Board will discuss the potential candidates. After this meeting, a Board Member and the Executive Director will meet with each candidate the Board believes should continue to be considered, to make sure he/she understands the CASA mission, Board member role and expectations, is able to fulfill the role required of Board members, and is interested in doing so
4. **At September Board meetings, the Board will vote on new members,** following a discussion led by the Board members meeting with the candidates on what each potentially brings to the board. A majority vote of the Board will confirm a new Board member
5. **The Governance, Planning and Policy Committee Chair (or someone he/she appoints) will contact the newly elected Board Member(s) to let them know the outcome of the vote,** congratulate them, and arrange for a new Board member orientation. The committee Chair will give the new Board Member the paperwork and instructions for the fingerprint/criminal background/CPS check, which must be completed prior to the first Board meeting
6. **New Board Member orientations will be held in October of each year**
7. **New Board Members will join the Board on November 1 of each year**
8. **For Board positions which become open during the year, the Governance, Planning and Policy decision will make a recommendation on whether the position needs to be filled immediately,** or can wait until the November “class”. When we have a full functioning Board, the preference will be to bring Board members in on the November 1 cycle.
9. **Prior to joining the Board, all Board members will** pass a national criminal background check (obtained from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation) that includes a fingerprint check and Social Security number verification, Texas and National Sex Offender Registry check and CPS background checks including other counties and states where the potential Board member has lived in the previous 7 years. (Refusal to sign the release of info or to do the background check will disqualify a potential board member.)

Appendix 1: Background Check Requirements

The background checks and consents in Section 9 are mandatory for Board members, and may not be waived or postponed. A potential Board member who does not consent to the check, or whose background check is not acceptable will not be considered for a Board position with Child Advocates of Montgomery County, Inc.

For each active Board member, CASA will repeat any of the required records checks biannually which do not provide automatic updates. If the potential Board member has lived in a jurisdiction not covered by the national criminal background check utilized, CASA will secure the county and state criminal record checks and a child abuse registry or child protective services check where permissible by law in any county and state in which the person has resided for the previous seven (7) years.

A potential Board member whose background check produced a conviction, guilty plea, plea of no contest, acceptance of deferred adjudication or pending charge is barred from being a Board member if the charge is any level of offense under the Texas Penal Code:

- Chapter 19, Criminal Homicide
- Chapter 20, Kidnapping
- Chapter 20A, Trafficking
- Chapter 21, Sections 21.02, 21.07, 21.08, 21.11, 21.12 Continuous Sexual Abuse of Young Child or Children, Public Lewdness, Indecent Exposure to Another Person, Indecency with a Child, Improper Relationship between Educator and Student
- Chapter 22, Sections 22.011, 22.02, 22.021, Sexual Assault, Aggravated Assault, Aggravated Sexual Assault, Injury to a Child, and additional Sections 22.04, 22.041, 22.05, 22.07, 22.11
- Chapter 25 Offenses Against the Family: Bigamy; Prohibited Sexual Conduct, and additional sections
- Chapter 28, Section 28.02 Arson
- Chapter 29, Robbery
- Chapter 30, Section 30.02 Burglary
- Chapter 33, Section 33.021 Online Solicitation of a Minor
- Chapter 42, Section 42.072 Stalking
- Chapter 43, Public Indecency

A Board member whose background check produces a conviction, guilty plea, plea of no contest, acceptance of deferred adjudication or pending charge that includes any grade of felony, other than for offenses listed in the paragraph above, is barred from being a Board member for 10 years after the offense, after which time the CASA program will consider the extent of the rehabilitation.

If the Board member has committed a misdemeanor or felony unrelated to the paragraph above, including a misdemeanor drug-related offense, or would not pose a risk to children and would not negatively impact the credibility of our CASA program, CASA will consider the extent of the rehabilitation.

If the charge barring the potential Board member is not final, a review of the application may be made if the charge is dismissed or a finding of not guilty or other determination of innocence is entered.

A Board member whose background check produces information that includes a group of offenses or information that if considered separately would not bar an application, may result in the disqualification of the potential Board member if CASA determines that the offenses constitute a problematic pattern.

Appendix 2: Board Members Who Are Advocates

Board members who are also CASA Advocates shall not vote on personnel actions directly related to specific employees. This includes, but is not limited to, individual employee pay raises, individual employee evaluations and individual disciplinary actions. This prohibition does not include voting on general matters, including personnel policies, budgets or any other resolution, motion or action of the Board that may affect the staff, but are not directed at specific individuals.

Note: We are required by Texas CASA (for our grants) to have this specific policy about Board Members who are Advocates not voting on personnel actions. This is non-negotiable.