

## SOCIAL AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES COMMISSION FUNDING REQUEST

Legal Name of Agency: Cleveland County CASA, Inc  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1714, Norman, OK 73070  
Application completed by: Tiffany Page  
Telephone Number: 405-360-5295  
Email Address: CASA@clevelandcountycasa.org

Amount of Funding Request: \$2,550

**\*\*\*Please note that agency project funding will be on a reimbursement basis. Payment will be made as invoices with appropriate documentation are provided.**

In what year was your Agency incorporated: 1984

Are you associated with a national organization: Yes

Number of volunteers: 2013-80 volunteers

How many hours do volunteers donate: 2013- 4,424 hours

How much money do volunteers save the agency: 2013- \$99,761

Has your Agency applied for SVSC funds before: Yes

Year 1992 Amount \$2,910 Purpose General Operations

Year 1995 Amount 0 Purpose \_\_\_\_\_

Year 1998 Amount \$2,400 Purpose General Operations

Year 2006 Amount \$2,600 Purpose Volunteer Screening

Year 2007 Amount \$1,500 Purpose Volunteer Screening and Training

**Financial Information from the last fiscal year:**

Percent of the budget which was spent on fund-raising:	<u>6%</u>
Percent of budget spent on programs:	<u>93%</u>
Percent of budget spent on administrative expenses:	<u>1%</u>

**Percentage of Organizational funding:**

Religious Organizations	_____
Civic Clubs	_____
Corporate Donors	_____
Endowment/Interest Income	<u>.5%</u>
Fees for services/products	_____
Government Grants	<u>75%</u>
Government Contracts	_____
Individual Donors	<u>19%</u>
Private Foundations	_____
Special Events (based on net earnings)	_____
United Way	<u>3.5%</u>
Other	<u>2%</u>

**Overall Mission of Agency**

Please provide a one page narrative in 10 or 12 point type describing the mission of your agency. List the client population (income, age, geographic location – percentage of City of Norman residents) and describe all programs and services offered currently by your agency. Include any duplication of services in our area and the percentage increase or decrease projected in staff numbers over previous year.

**Specific project for which funding is being requested**

Please provide a one page narrative in 10 or 12 point type describing the project for which funds are requested including programs, staff positions, salaries, equipment, office supplies and other expenses. Please address what similar services are available through other local agencies, why this program is unique, how many will

benefit and why it would be appropriate for City of Norman funds to be used to support this program.

### **Financial Information**

Please provide a description of internal financial evaluation procedures, control processes and performance review procedure including the percentage increase or decrease of total budget over previous fiscal year budget. Attach previous year budget summary and projected budget to include in kind contributions and budget assumptions. An independent audit (not an internal audit) is required for any organization that has assets, an annual budget or annual income of \$100,000 or more. For an organization below the \$100,000 level, if no audit is available, so state and provide a signed financial statement (signature of the Board Treasurer or the organizations' chief financial officer) for the most recent fiscal year.

### **Required Attachments to this application:**

**Narrative describing Overall Mission of Agency**

**Narrative describing Specific Project for which Funding is being requested**

**Financial Information as previously outlined**

**Budget summary and projected budget**

**Copy of most recent Audit**

**Copy of IRS tax exempt status letter or your application for tax exempt status**

**List of current board members including names and professions**

**List of current staff members and their position titles**

## **Cleveland County CASA Program Description**

Cleveland County CASA recruits, trains and supervises community volunteers to serve as Court Appointed Special Advocates for children who are adjudicated “deprived” due to child abuse and/or neglect and have been made wards of the court.

Child abuse and neglect is a significant issue in our state—Oklahoma consistently ranks in the top five states for rates of child abuse and neglect, and our community is not immune. Only the most severe of these cases enter the court system. While there is no formal tracking of the number of children that fall under the jurisdiction of the court, there are usually between 300-350 children at the end of any given month who are living outside of their homes in foster homes, group homes, and other forms of placement. We estimate that there is an average of 500-700 children a year who are wards of the court in Cleveland County.

When a child enters the child welfare system, he/she enters it virtually alone. Due to the mere size of the bureaucratic state agencies and the court system, children often fall through the cracks of the very system put in place to protect them. Child welfare workers, overloaded with caseloads of 60-90 children, operate from crisis to crisis and rarely have the time to give each case the attention it needs to move children out of the limbo of foster care and into a permanent home in a timely manner. As a result, children are often moved from foster home to foster home without getting needed services, resulting in children more damaged than when they were removed from the home in the first place. Studies of former foster children show that they experience higher rates of homelessness, incarceration, teen pregnancy, and reliance on public assistance as adults. Their time in the child welfare system impacts their long-term success as community members and citizens.

CASA was developed to remedy some of these shortcomings. Through his/her court order, the CASA has access to all the information that exists on the child and his or her family. The CASA researches the case background, interviews all parties and professionals, monitors progress toward case plan goals, and facilitates communication between professionals. The volunteer then submits written reports to the court and is present in court making recommendations representing what he/she believes to be in the best interest of the child. Otherwise, the judge has to make important decisions that impact these vulnerable children based on limited information. The CASA also presents recommendations to address the children’s needs, such as a need for counseling, an educational evaluation, or even something as basic as clothing.

Perhaps most importantly, CASAs are also a source of stability and consistency to children who are experiencing nothing but uncertainty and change. The CASA is focused solely on the child and his/her best interests, without an inside stake in the case. Cases assigned a CASA receive literally hundreds of hours of attention that they would not receive if not appointed a CASA. In 2013, 80 Cleveland County CASA volunteers represented the best interests of 168 children. Cleveland County CASA is the only program providing this service to our community.

## **Proposed Budget**

In previous years, Cleveland County CASA has approached and received funds from the Social and Voluntary Services Commission for assistance in training and screening new advocates. Standards set forth by the Oklahoma CASA Association and National CASA Association require all CASA volunteers to undergo screening and background checks that include; OSBI, MVR, and national background checks including a sex offender registry search and Mary Ripley Violent Crime search.

It is the goal of Cleveland County CASA to screen and train an additional 30 volunteers in the remainder of the 2015 fiscal year. These volunteers would provide advocacy services for an additional 40-45 children in our community who are wards of the court. There is no other program in our community that offers a similar service.

Through this application, Cleveland County CASA is requesting assistance in the area of Volunteer Training and Screening.

### **Volunteer Training and Screening:**

Volunteer screening for 30 volunteers= \$1,800

Training manuals for 30 volunteers = \$750

**Total Request: \$2,550**