

Rec'd 4/30/18

**COUNCIL GROVE AREA FOUNDATION**  
APPLICATION FOR GRANT

1. **Organization Name:** CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, Inc.
2. **Address:** 801 North Washington Street, Suite C Junction City Kansas 66441  
Street City State Zip
3. **Organization's Officers:** Eliza Gentile, Executive Director; Andrea Taylor, Board President; Teresa Palmer, Board Vice President; Alice Adams, Board Secretary; Matt Schlagel, Board Treasurer; Ryan Woods, Board Member; Steve Olson, Board Member; Lisa Hatt, Director of Finance
4. **Contact Person, Title, Phone:** Lisa Hatt, Interim Executive Director & Director of Finance, 785-762-3907
5. **Is this a tax-exempt organization? Yes** **If so, date tax exempt status received:** May 17, 2007 (for 501c3)
6. **Title of Project and Brief Description:** CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District currently has an office in Council Grove located at 116 West Main Street. We are requesting this grant money to continue funding this space. The CASA office in Council Grove is used for community outreach, screening, and training of our current and future CASA Volunteer Advocates, Board meetings, as well as a safe place for meetings with families and children. It also serves as a place for CASA Volunteer Advocates to meet for in-service training and to work. The Council Grove CASA office also serves to store all CASA files. In addition to help fund the office, the requested grant funding will also assist with paying our part-time Case Supervisor for Morris County.
7. **Geographic Area to be served:** Council Grove, Morris County
8. **What group will be benefited:** Morris County Court Ordered "Children in Need of Care  
**Size of Group:** Varies
9. **Anticipated Project Period:** May 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019
10. **Is this a request for Capital, Operating Support, or a Special Project?** Capital/Operating Support
11. **Total Project Cost:** \$11,000
12. **Amount Requested from Foundation:** \$3,000
13. **Amount and Source of Pledges or Commitments to Date:** \$0 -- CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District receives funding from Kansas State CASA, the Attorney General's Office, Geary County United Way, Dickinson County United Way, the Combined Federal Campaign, Fundraising, and donations. To date none of the grants listed can be used to cover the expenses of the CASA office in Council Grove.
14. **Other Grant Applications or Funding Requests made for this project:** The John E Trembly Foundation (\$3,000), The Bill Young Foundation (\$3,000), and the Arthur M. Hylton & Ethel L. Hylton Trust (\$2,000).
15. **What action has been taken on the other applications or requests?** We have not yet heard back regarding any other grants for this project.

**16. What is the purpose of this project; what specifically will it accomplish?** Keeping the office in Council Grove open will help CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District meet the needs of children who are involved within the court system of Morris County. These children have been victims of abused and/or neglect. The office enables CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District to recruit, train, supervise, and support CASA Volunteer Advocates in their work with the children. Community outreach is an important component of a visible and active CASA office on Main Street, Council Grove.

**17. What are the problems this project will attempt to solve?** CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District would like to have enough CASA Volunteer Advocates, so that every child who comes through the courts of Morris County can be assigned a CASA. There are currently only 7 trained and certified CASA Volunteer Advocates in Council Grove and each one currently has at least one case. The presence of a highly visible CASA office in Council Grove helps promote the need for CASA Volunteer Advocates as well as educating the community about CASA. The office provides space for recruiting, training, supervising, and supporting CASA Volunteer Advocates. National CASA standards require one staff member to up to 20 Volunteer Advocates. A part-time staff case supervisor is necessary in Council Grove.

**18. How will this project be implemented?** This grant would enable CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District to pay the rent for the Council Grove office, which totals \$5,000 per year (utilities included). Additionally, the grant would help fund the Morris County Case Supervisor position of \$10/hour for 15 hours/week. The office is and would remain available to CASA Volunteer Advocates to meet with families, work on court reports, and even seek the support of fellow CASA Volunteer Advocates. Community outreach from the Council Grove office will continue to be important for attracting new volunteers, training, and informing the public of CASA's role in the courts supporting children.

**19. What local support is there for this project?** The current owner of this building has offered us a very reasonable rent and utilities package. The Morris County court system is also very supportive. Judge White assigns CASA frequently and is very supportive of our program (see attached letter). The Morris County Attorney Office is also very supportive of the CASA program (see attached letter). Ministers from several local churches also support our mission.

**20. Who else in the community is working on this problem?** CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District is the only agency to provide court appointed services to children in the court system. As a result, CASA works closely with other social agencies, schools, mental health services, and medical services that serve family, as well as, the child. CASA is the only agency that is appointed by the Judge to advocate solely for the child.

**21. How will you coordinate with others working on this problem?** We collaborate with the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, County Attorney Offices of Morris, Marion, Dickinson, & Geary Counties, Multiple Disciplinary Team in Council Grove, Kansas Department of Children & Families, St. Francis Community Services, schools, Geary County Prevention Program, Geary County Truancy Court, and other community organizations.

**22. If awarded, how will the grant you are requesting be used?** All funds that we obtain will be used to pay the yearly lease on the space, office expenses for the Council Grove office (paper, toner, etc.), and to pay the wages of the part-time Morris County Case Supervisor.

**23. Is there any additional information you would like to be considered in our determining whether to make this grant?**

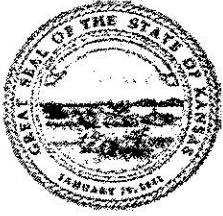
The children that CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District advocates for are not problem children. They are caught in the middle when their parents fail to protect and provide for them. Social workers are overloaded with cases and the Guardian ad Litem visits are often limited to just a few minutes in court before the hearing. The CASA Volunteer Advocates visit the child/children regularly. They listen to the children and advocate for the child/children throughout the entire case. CASA Volunteer Advocates stay with each case until it is closed. For many abused children, their CASA Volunteer Advocate will be the one constant adult presence in their lives. Independent research has demonstrated that children with a CASA Volunteer Advocate are less likely to spend time in long-term foster care and 70% less likely to reenter care and four times more likely to graduate from high school. CASA is the only agency that is appointed by the Judge to advocate solely for the child. This avoids duplication of services and encourages collaboration with other social agencies.

Children in the Morris County court system have a Guardian Ad Litem. They may have a Department of Children and Families (DCF) social worker, a St. Francis social worker, a family support worker, a foster or placement worker, or others that may be assigned to their case. But, all of these people are responsible for many cases and have many children they need to monitor. A CASA Volunteer Advocate is assigned the child or children from one family. The CASA Volunteer Advocate will speak with parents, grandparents, and/or other family members involved, school teachers and school counselors, and a foster parent, but the CASA Volunteer Advocate represents the child or children. A report is completed each month describing to the court the child/children's needs and wishes.

Children are among our most vulnerable citizens. Some of them become lost in the system. Our goal is to have the facilities to be able to train enough CASA Volunteer Advocates, so every child coming through the Morris County court system may have the support of a CASA Volunteer Advocate.

Signature *Lisa Smith* Date *23 April 2018*

(PLEASE RETURN APPLICATION TO FARMERS & DROVERS BANK, P.O. BOX C, COUNCIL GROVE, KANSAS, 66846)



**MARGARET F WHITE  
DISTRICT MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

**MORRIS COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
P.O. BOX 259 - 501 W MAIN  
COUNCIL GROVE, KS 66846  
PHONE (620) 767-6838  
FAX (620) 767-6488**

**February 26, 2018**

Dawn Rouse  
Office of Judicial Administration  
Kansas Judicial Center  
301 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street Room B2  
Topeka, Kansas 66602-1507

Dear Ms. Rouse:

I am the District Magistrate Judge for the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District based out of Morris County. I am writing you because I support our CASA organization. I hear Child in Need of Care matters and often appoint a CASA as they are able to provide information to the Court that might otherwise be unavailable. For example, in truancy cases where the children and parents are not complying with the order of the court, they have been very helpful. Since there usually is no other agency involved in that type of case, the CASA is able to provide information that may pinpoint another reason for the truancy of the child, which many times can be the case.

The CASA is usually more involved with the children than is the Guardian ad litem. Although the GAL does meet with the children, the CASA has the ability to meet more often with them and can provide helpful information as to what is going on in the child's life. A child may be more willing to open up to the CASA volunteer than to the GAL as they develop a trusting relationship with the child.

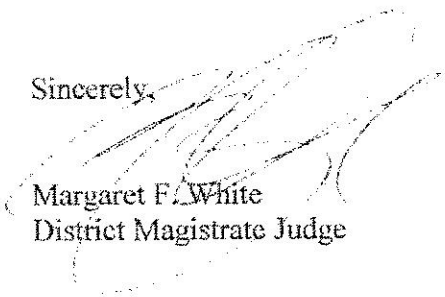
The CASA can also obtain information from the child's school as I often will order grade reports, not just in truancy cases, but also other CINC cases where the child is of school age. With our foster care agencies, I may not receive any reports from the school on the child's attendance and grades until the day of court. Many times the CASA will have this information prior to the day of court so that all attorneys, as well as the court, can review prior to the hearing.

Our CASA's provide very extensive and complete reports for every hearing and do so in a timely manner. They often will provide an addendum if any problem arises after their initial report.

This organization, which operates entirely completely with the help of volunteers, has been extremely helpful in my decisions on the outcomes of cases. If there was ever a loss of this program, it would be a detriment not only in the cases I hear, but to the community as a whole as they help protect the children from harm and are their voice when the GAL is not able to talk to them.

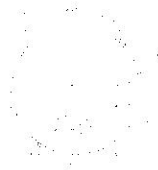
Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Margaret F. White", is written over the typed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Margaret F. White  
District Magistrate Judge

# STATE OF KANSAS



## OFFICE OF THE MORRIS COUNTY ATTORNEY

February 28, 2018

CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District  
Eliza Gentile  
801 N. Washington Street, Suite C  
Junction City, KS 66441

RE: Letter of Support for CASA of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District

Dear To Whom it May Concern:

I wanted to take this opportunity to send a letter of support for the CASA program in the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District as I have in the past.

As the Morris County Attorney, I have had the continued privilege of working with many CASA volunteers, all of which have continued to be very helpful in the cases. CASA volunteers are a very vital part of the ongoing CINC cases here in Morris County. The volunteers provide a CASA report before the hearing and there is a CASA volunteer present in the courtroom.

I was very pleased to see an office open here in Morris County a couple of years ago. I will continue to offer my support for the CASA program and hope that it will continue to be around for many years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laura E. Allen", written in black ink.

Laura E. Allen  
County Attorney

501 WEST MAIN, COUNCIL GROVE, KANSAS 66846  
TELEPHONE 620-767-5899 FACSIMILE 620-767-7581