



Our Mission is to support, improve, and grow local Court Appointed Special Advocate programs and lead advocacy efforts for abused and neglected children across Missouri.

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Government Relations and Lobbying Services

The Missouri CASA Association (MOCASA) is driven to promote the expansion and growth of its local member programs and advance the cause to advocate for abused and neglected children in the foster care system. MOCASA is excited to push this ambitious work forward by engaging the state legislature and other important stakeholders. We believe that protecting our state's children is of utmost importance.

MOCASA is the coordinating agency for Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs throughout Missouri. There are currently twenty-four CASA programs in Missouri serving twenty-seven of the forty-six Judicial Circuits. Together with our affiliate programs, we provide support and promote court-appointed volunteer advocacy for Missouri's abused and neglected children so they may thrive in safe, permanent homes. MOCASA does not provide direct services to children, but provides technical assistance, support and funding for its twenty-four local programs and is focused on expanding CASA programs throughout the state.

MOCASA has recently taken steps to further its statewide visibility and broaden its advocacy by adopting the following mission and vision for this work:

- **Mission** - To build strong and effective CASA programs in Missouri through stakeholder outreach and advocacy.
- **Vision** - We envision an influential statewide CASA network whose member programs continue to grow and expand.

MOCASA is committed to expanding its knowledge and vision of the advocacy and policy opportunities before us and exploring how to best leverage our lobbying capacity to accelerate local CASA program growth and expansion, and, ultimately, the accelerated provision of best-interest advocates for abused and neglected children in the foster care system in the jurisdictions of our local CASA programs.

In 2007, MOCASA began receiving \$300,000 in state funding through a line item in the court budget. This funding increased to \$500,000 in 2017. MOCASA is requesting proposals to contract with a registered lobbyist to represent its primary goal for the 2022 legislative session: to advocate for an increase to our current state appropriation. A contract would run approximately from January 2022 through June 2022, with the possibility for renewal. MOCASA seeks an effective lobbyist with existing relationships in the state legislature, sound knowledge of budgetary issues, child welfare and human services, and experience building new relationships on behalf of institutional clients. Additionally, MOCASA seeks experienced professionals interested in building the organizational footprint in the state's public policy arena

and building the skills and knowledge of our local programs to be strategic public policy advocates.

Finally, cultivating a diverse and inclusive team is essential to the aspirations of MOCASA. We encourage those who represent a broad range of diversity, including, but not limited to, lived experiences with disabilities, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation, to apply.

Scope of Lobbyist Services

MOCASA seeks to retain the services of a registered lobbyist to work with the Executive Director, the Program Services Coordinator, the Advocacy Committee and our network of Local Programs to effectively approach the Missouri State Legislature, individual state legislators, the Governor, local and county government, and other statewide stakeholders to increase our current state appropriation.

MOCASA staff and the Advocacy Committee will rely on a lobbyist and/or lobbying firm to make recommendations for stakeholder engagement and to provide the best solution for increasing the state appropriation. We welcome recommendations for this budget allocation, including where the allocation should be requested in the state budget. It is the duty of the lobbyist and/or lobbying firm to attend necessary meetings, rely on previous relationships with statewide stakeholders, and to attend hearings pertaining to the budget and budget allocations.

A successful lobbyist will need to:

- Advise on appropriations and legislative goals and strategies
- Focus on increasing appropriations to MOCASA
- Develop and put forward legislation in alignment with agreed upon goals
- Facilitate and foster relationships with legislators and statewide stakeholders
- Attend MOCASA Advocacy Committee meetings as needed
- Attend MOCASA Program Director meetings as needed
- Identify key meetings and legislative sessions to lobby on behalf of an expanded MOCASA state appropriation.
- Communicate regularly through weekly email reports and conference calls

Selection Criteria

During the review process, we will focus on the following areas, which are considered pivotal to the success of the project and your partnership with MOCASA.

- Understanding CASA and/or child welfare issues and goals as demonstrated in proposal
- Experience with appropriations and budgeting
- Demonstrated success with developing and putting forward legislation
- Proven ability to advocate successfully for nonprofits
- Cost

Proposal: Required Elements

1. Letter of Interest
2. Detailed proposal
3. Current client list
4. Cost inventory
5. Client testimonials

Submission of Proposals

Please submit an electronic version of the proposal to the MOCASA Executive Director, Leanne Reese, at lreese@mocasa.org.

Proposal Timeline

- Submission Deadline: December 21, 2021

Contact Information

Questions regarding this request for proposal and any information outlined herein should be directed to:

Leanne Reese
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(573) 256-1445