

Continuing Education Credit (CEC) Policy

Requirements:

12 CEC per fiscal year (from July 1st to June 30th) are required for advocates who are on the advocate roster as of July 1st. Advocates working exclusively in Probate Court must earn 4 credits each fiscal year.

New advocates training in the fall class will be required to complete 6 CEC by June 30th of the following calendar year. For new advocates training in the winter/spring class, the 12 CEC requirement will take effect on the July 1st following their swearing-in.

Intention/Spirit of Requirements:

The CEC requirement exists to ensure that each advocate remains current on juvenile welfare issues and to allow for the healthy challenging of individual thoughts and perspectives. The intention is to keep the advocacy efforts of each volunteer alive and vital, thereby preventing stagnation of approach. This is how the best interest of any child will be best served.

CASA of DuPage Objectives:

- To comply with dictates established by and to remain in good standing with National CASA
- To comply with the written agreement between CASA of DuPage County and the 18th Circuit Court
- To provide frequent and varied continuing education opportunities that are interesting, pertinent, conveniently located and at no cost to advocates
- To encourage exposure to a variety of topics relative to the juvenile welfare system that go beyond an advocate's particular case experience
- To create awareness of qualifying community offerings
- To provide opportunities of community in which advocates can come together, talk freely, share experiences and information, and be exposed to/learn from the experiences of other advocates
- To generate opportunities for staff and advocates to come together

Credit Criteria:

- Up to 4 CEC above the annual requirement can be carried over from one fiscal year into the next fiscal year
- Educational opportunities that are not generated by the CASA office and are not on the CASA calendar need advance office approval to ensure credit toward the CEC requirement; the number of credits will be determined by the learning value and overall relevance of the learning opportunity
- A maximum of 6 (50%) CEC per year can come from books or videos (if viewed individually), to ensure a sufficient portion of each advocate's continuing education involves the exchange of thoughts and perspectives with other advocates and/or outside experts;

- To receive CEC credit, advocates must log the CEC events attended or completed into their “in-service training” tab within their Optima dashboard. Non-CASA generated events must include (under the notes section) the name of the event, book, etc., a brief summary of what was learned, and how it impacts the role of the advocate.

General Credit Amounts:

- Amount of credit received will generally approximate time spent in an education session (for example, a 2 hour class will yield 2 CEC; 1 hour webinar will yield 1 CEC); CASA reserves the discretion to extend or limit amount of credits as deemed appropriate, upon consideration of the benefit of the session and its applicability to the advocacy role.
- Not more than 4 credits will be issued for one topic covered by an outside non-CASA source (for example, **a semester long class** on substance abuse at a community college would receive 4 CEC) – ***exceptions may be granted for professional workshops, conferences, and seminars that incorporate a variety of CASA pertinent topics/speakers***
- Pertinent **book or video** - 3 CEC/book; 2 CEC/video
- Pertinent **TV series** – 1 CEC for each hour episode, up to a maximum of 4 for a series. Please seek prior approval of the series to ensure credit.

Standing CEC Opportunities:

- The **Brown Bag Lunches** – held most months on a Thursday at the CASA office from 11:30 to 1:30; 2 CEC
- **Book Discussion Group** – held quarterly; 4 CEC for reading book and attending
- **CASA Chats** – held by individual Advocate Supervisor; 2 CEC
- **CASA 101/201 Sessions** – held by CASA staff; 2 CEC

CEC Opportunities Publicity:

CEC opportunities will be published on the CASA CEC calendar (available on website) and disseminated via the weekly email CEC Newsletter.

Relevant community based educational opportunities are entered on the CASA calendar as the staff becomes aware of them. Advocates are encouraged to share with the staff any opportunities of which they are aware so they can be made available to all interested.

Disclaimer:

CEC opportunities (standing and other) may be cancelled due to insufficient sign-ups or due to conflicts created by holidays or for any unforeseeable cause; in these instances notification will be provided as far in advance as possible via email.

Advocates who are on cases and not in compliance with the CEC requirement can be dismissed from the program at the discretion of the staff. Advocates who are not on cases and not in compliance with this requirement may not receive a case until compliance is achieved or substantial good faith effort is displayed.

CASA reserves the right to make changes to this policy at its discretion and to grant exceptions as deemed appropriate.