

**Combined Children's
Advocacy Programs and
Contingency for Child
Advocacy Center and Court
Appointed Special
Advocate Grants Report for
Fiscal Year 2019**

As Required by

**House Bill 1, 86th Legislature,
Regular Session, 2019 (Article II,
Health and Human Services
Commission, Rider 95(e)) and
Texas Family Code, Section 264.608**



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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Background	5
Texas CASA	5
CACTX	5
3. Funding and Expenditures	6
Grants	6
Expenditures.....	7
Administrative Expenditures	8
Required Data	8
4. Oversight.....	11
5. Conclusion	12
List of Acronyms	13

Executive Summary

The *Combined Children's Advocacy Programs and Contingency for Child Advocacy Center and Court Appointed Special Advocate Grants* report for fiscal year 2019 is submitted in compliance with the 2020-21 General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 (Article II, Health and Human Services Commission [HHSC], Rider 95(e)) and Texas Family Code, Section 264.608.

Rider 95(e) requires HHSC to submit a report detailing the expenditures of funds appropriated for children's advocacy programs. Section 264.608 requires HHSC to submit a report detailing the data on contracts and client services.

Beginning in fiscal year 2016, HHSC established contracts to administer the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program and Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC) program.

The CASA program provides recruitment, training, and supervision of volunteer advocates representing children under 18 years of age in the protective custody of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Child Protective Services (CPS). In fiscal year 2019, HHSC contracted with Texas CASA to provide services for this program.

The CAC program provides support for multidisciplinary teams of law enforcement, child protective services, prosecution, medical, and mental health professionals who investigate and prosecute child physical and sexual abuse cases through the local centers. In fiscal year 2019, HHSC contracted with the Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas (CACTX) to provide services for this program.

1. Introduction

Rider 95(e) requires HHSC to submit an annual report detailing the expenditure of funds appropriated for children’s advocacy programs by December 1 of each year to the Governor, Senate Committee on Finance, House Appropriations Committee, and Legislative Budget Board (LBB).

The report must include:

- Information demonstrating continuity of services from the previous fiscal year;
- The amount of grants awarded in each of the categories;
- The amount of expenditures for administration;
- The amount of expenditures from General Revenue - Dedicated Compensation to Victims of Crime Fund Account No. 0469; and
- Oversight activities conducted relating to the children’s advocacy programs.

Section 264.608 of the Texas Family Code requires HHSC to submit an annual report to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, members of the Legislature, and LBB. This report must:

- Summarize reports from volunteer advocate programs under contract with HHSC;
- Analyze the effectiveness of the contracts made by HHSC under Chapter 264; and
- Provide information on:
 - ▶ The expenditure of funds under Chapter 264;
 - ▶ Services provided and the number of children for whom the services were provided; and
 - ▶ Any other information relating to the services provided by the volunteer advocate programs under Chapter 264.

2. Background

HHSC contracts with one statewide organization for each children’s advocacy program. The statewide organization must be exempt from federal income taxation under section 501a of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.¹

HHSC program staff responsibilities include oversight of funds management, contract administration, contract monitoring, oversight of program operations, and provision of technical assistance to contracted entities.

Texas CASA

Texas CASA develops curricula concerning CASA standards for court-appointed special advocates and local staff. Texas CASA recruits, trains, and supervises volunteer advocates who attend legal proceedings on behalf of children, aged 18 years or younger, who are in the protective custody of DFPS to ensure the minor’s best interests are served.

CACTX

CACTX develops and supports local child advocacy centers who use a multidisciplinary team approach to investigate and prosecute offenses involving child physical and sexual abuse. This team is comprised of law enforcement, CPS, the local prosecuting authority, and medical and mental health professionals who collaboratively develop effective, coordinated strategies sensitive to the needs of each case and child. Services include specialized forensic interviewing, medical and mental health assessments and treatment, multidisciplinary team case reviews, and comprehensive advocacy services.

¹ Texas Family Code, Section 264.409 and Section 264.603.

3. Funding and Expenditures

Grants

Rider 95 allocated the following fiscal year 2019 funds to the children's advocacy programs. Table 1 delineates grant funding by program, while Table 2 details the method of financing for the grant awards. For fiscal year 2019, the Legislature appropriated HHSC an additional \$264,500.00 in exceptional item funding for CASA, and an additional \$250,000.00 in exceptional item funding for CAC.

Table 1. Fiscal Year 2019 Grant Award by Program

Program	Grant Amount
CASA	\$13,224,500.00 ²
CAC	\$13,599,003.00
Total	\$26,823,503.00

Table 2. Fiscal Year 2019 Grant Award by Financing Method

Financing Method	Grant Amount
General Revenue	\$16,569,660.00
General Revenue - Dedicated Compensation to Victims of Crime Fund No. 0469	\$10,229,843.00
License Plate Trust Fund Account No. 0802	\$24,000.00
Total	\$26,823,503.00

²The fiscal year 2019 grant amount for Texas CASA includes the License Plate Trust Fund Account No. 0802 appropriated amount of \$24,000; however, only \$10,793.96 was collected.

Expenditures

Table 3 details funds expended by Texas CASA in fiscal year 2019.

Table 3. Texas CASA Expenditures

Texas CASA	Expended	Unexpended Balance	Total
General Revenue	\$8,031,390.11	\$54,187.89	\$8,085,578.00
General Revenue - Dedicated Compensation to Victims of Crime Fund No. 0469	\$5,226,901.94 ³	\$0.00	\$5,226,901.94
License Plate Trust Fund Account No. 0802	\$11,403.00	\$11,810.93	\$23,213.93 ⁴
Total	\$13,269,695.05	\$65,998.82	\$13,335,693.87

Table 4 details the funds expended by CACTX in fiscal year 2019.

Table 4. CACTX Expenditures

CACTX	Expended	Unexpended Balance	Total
General Revenue	\$8,484,081.50	\$0.00	\$8,484,081.50
General Revenue - Dedicated Compensation to Victims of Crime Fund No. 0469	\$5,114,921.50	\$0.00	\$5,114,921.50
Total	\$13,599,003.00	\$0.00	\$13,599,003.00

³The fiscal year 2019 General Revenue - Dedicated Compensation to Victims of Crime Fund No. 0469 for Texas CASA includes the fiscal year 2018 unexpended funds (\$111,979.94) carried forward to fiscal year 2019.

⁴The fiscal year 2019 License Plate Trust Fund Account No. 0802 for Texas CASA includes the fiscal year 2018 unexpended funds (\$12,419.97) carried forward to fiscal year 2019 and the \$10,793.96 that collected in fiscal year 2019.

Administrative Expenditures

Texas Family Code, Chapter 264, Subchapters E and G, cap administrative expenses for CASA and CAC. Administrative expenses cannot exceed 12 percent of the annual legislative appropriation. Table 5 shows the total amount of administrative expenditures and the percentage of the annual legislative appropriation.

Table 5. Administrative Expenses by Total and Percent of Legislative Appropriation

Contractor	Administrative Expenses	Percent of Legislative Appropriation ⁵
Texas CASA	\$780,277.71	5.9%
CACTX	\$1,571,880.00	11.56%

Required Data

Table 6 provides information regarding contracts for both Texas CASA and CACTX.

Table 6. Fiscal Year 2019 Contracts Summary

	Texas CASA	CACTX
Contract Term ⁶	2 years	2 years
FY 2019 Total Amount	\$13,224,500.00 ⁷	\$13,599,003.00
Administrative Cap	\$1,586,940.00	\$1,631,880.36

⁵The legislative appropriation is the fiscal year 2019 grant award for CASA and CAC detailed in Table 1.

⁶ Contract term is for fiscal years 2018-19. HHSC is permitted to extend the contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds.

⁷The fiscal year 2019 total amount includes the License Plate Trust Fund Account No. 0802; however, only \$10,793.96 was collected to be expended in fiscal year 2019. Additionally, the fiscal year 2019 total amount does not include the unexpended fiscal year 2018 funds (\$124,399.91) carried forward to fiscal year 2019.

	Texas CASA	CACTX
Actual Administrative Expense	\$780,277.71	\$1,571,880.00
Actual Service Expense	\$12,489,417.34	\$12,027,123.00
Total Expenditures	\$13,269,695.05	\$ 13,599,003.00

To evaluate contractual compliance and to ensure fiscal controls, HHSC completed contract monitoring activities during fiscal year 2019 for the areas listed in Table 7. There is one minor administrative finding for Texas CASA regarding personnel evaluations being inconsistent with current Texas CASA policies and procedures. Texas CASA revised its employee handbook to resolve this issue.

Table 7. Fiscal Year 2019 Contract Monitoring Activities

Contract Monitoring Activity	Texas CASA	CACTX
Board of Directors Makeup and Operation	No findings	No findings
Organizational Chart	No findings	No findings
Policies and Procedures	One finding: personnel evaluations were inconsistent with the current Texas CASA policies and procedures.	No findings
Payroll Journals	No findings	No findings
Timesheets and Activity Logs	No findings	No findings
Scheduled Trainings	No findings	No findings

HHSC receives quarterly statistical reports from Texas CASA and CACTX detailing client and service data and information from each local program. The following data is based on those reports.

Table 8 details Texas CASA’s fiscal year 2019 performance data. Texas CASA saw an increase in the number of children served from fiscal year 2018 (30,136 children served in fiscal year 2018).

Table 8. Fiscal Year 2019 Texas CASA Data

Data	Total Number
Children Served	30,432
Court-Appointed Volunteers	10,874
New Volunteers	3,238
Local Programs	72
Counties Served	219

Table 9 shows CACTX’s fiscal year 2019 performance data. CACTX saw an increase in the number of children served from fiscal year 2018 (49,702 children served in fiscal year 2018).

Table 9. Fiscal Year 2019 CACTX Data

Data	Total Number
Children Served	50,108
Children Receiving Mental Health Services	23,327
Forensics Interviews Conducted On-site	46,508
Child Abuse Cases Reviewed by Multidisciplinary Team	36,351
Training Sessions Provided to Local Advocacy Centers	100
Local Programs	71
Counties Receiving Full Services	208

4. Oversight

HHSC provided oversight of contracts by evaluating contractual compliance and ensuring fiscal controls. HHSC completed contract monitoring activities during fiscal year 2019, with no major findings for either contractor and one minor finding for Texas CASA.

HHSC reviewed the operation and make-up of the Board of Directors, policies and procedures, detailed general ledger and payroll journals, timesheets and activity logs, personnel files, and local program monitoring files.

Contract oversight activities indicated that services are being provided in accordance with programmatic and contractual requirements. Oversight activities remain ongoing to ensure that contracted providers continue to meet all program requirements, as well as the needs of Texas children.

5. Conclusion

Since the transfer of the Children’s Advocacy Programs in 2015, HHSC has been committed to promoting collaboration with Texas CASA and CACTX. This effort seeks to ensure the protection of abused and neglected children through family advocacy, victim support, comprehensive case management, forensic interviews, specialized medical and mental health services, assistance with the legal system, and giving children a voice in the process.

The 86th Legislature appropriated exceptional item funding for the 2020-21 biennium for the Children’s Advocacy Programs, with CASA receiving an additional \$3,500,001.00 and CAC receiving an additional \$19,999,999.00. HHSC has awarded these funds and will continue to work with Texas CASA and CACTX in the 2020-21 biennium to serve the children of Texas.

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Name
CAC	Children’s Advocacy Centers
CACTX	Children’s Advocacy Centers of Texas
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocates
CPS	Child Protective Services
DFPS	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
HHSC	Health and Human Services Commission
LBB	Legislative Budget Board
Texas CASA	Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates