



BEST PRACTICES FOR PRE-SERVICE TRAINING ACROSS MULTIPLE COUNTIES

FROM TEXAS CASA

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DETERMINE WHICH OF THE THREE APPROVED CURRICULA BEST FITS YOUR PROGRAM'S NEEDS

Our team is here to support you in finding the right curriculum and training schedule for your program. For one-on-one support in navigating the differences between these options, reach out to training@texascasa.org!

Keep in mind that programs are required to deliver an approved pre-service training curriculum in full, including following the curriculum's required number of in-person training hours. Each curriculum is designed so that programs can easily drop in their program-specific information, including local processes for court report writing, case documentation, volunteer policies, etc.

Texas CASA has approved the following three pre-service training curriculum options:

Option 1: Texas CASA Traditional Classroom Curriculum

- Delivered through in-person sessions, this curriculum requires approximately 28 hours of face-to-face training, broken down into eight classroom sessions of three to three-and-a-half hours each.
- Required pre-work: there is approximately one hour of required reading, videos and other pre-work prior to each of the eight classes that trainees are expected to complete in order to fully participate in class.

Sample schedule for the traditional classroom curriculum:

Week one, Tuesday: Session 1 - The CASA/GAL Role

Week one, Thursday: Session 2 - The Well-Being of a Child

Week two, Tuesday: Session 3 - Trauma, Resilience and Communication Skills

Week two, Thursday: Session 4 - Mental Health, Poverty and Confidentiality

Week three, Tuesday: Session 5 - Substance Abuse, Diversity and Disproportionality

Week three, Thursday: Session 6 - Domestic Violence, Bias and Cultural Competence

Week four, Tuesday: Session 7 - Educational Advocacy, Older Youth and LGBTQ Youth

Week four, Thursday: Session 8 - Moving Forward as an Advocate

Strengths of this curriculum:

- Because of the extensive time in the classroom, this curriculum offers the highest level of learner engagement and dialogue with the training team and facilitates strong screening practices.
- This option enables trainees to establish a strong sense of community with peers in their training cohort, which strengthens trainee retention.

Option 2: Texas CASA Blended Curriculum

- Delivered through a blend of in-person sessions and e-learning courses, this curriculum requires approximately 14 hours of in-person training as well as eight hours of immersive e-learning courses.
- Pre-work: there is approximately one hour of required reading, videos and other pre-work that trainees are expected to complete prior to each of the four classes as well as prior to each of the four e-learning courses.

Sample schedule for the blended curriculum:

Week one, Tuesday: Session 1 in person - The CASA/GAL Role

Week one: Complete the e-learning course for Session 2: The Well-Being of a Child

Week two, Tuesday: Session 3 in person - Trauma, Resilience and Communication Skills

Week two: Complete the e-learning course for Session 4 - Mental Health, Poverty and Confidentiality

Week three, Tuesday: Session 5 in person - Substance Abuse, Diversity and Disproportionality

Week three: Complete the e-learning course for Session 6 - Domestic Violence, Bias and Cultural Competence

Week four: Complete the e-learning course for Session 7 - Educational Advocacy, Older Youth and LGBTQ Youth

Week four, Thursday: Session 8 in person – Moving Forward as an Advocate

Strengths of this curriculum:

- When training across a large geographic area, this option requires less commuting for learners.
- This curriculum allows for greater flexibility for learners to complete online sessions on their own schedule, as long as they are able to complete each course before attending the next in-person session. It is important that the sessions and e-learning courses be completed sequentially as designed, as the information builds on previous sessions.
- Using dynamic "hear from a peer" videos, immersive case studies and interactive quizzes throughout, this curriculum offers a high level of online learner engagement.

Option 3: National CASA Flex Curriculum

- Delivered through a blend of in-person sessions and Moodle-based online learning, this curriculum requires 15 hours of in-person training as well as 15 hours of instructor-monitored online learning.
- This curriculum costs programs \$75 per training cohort and requires creating a Moodle classroom through National CASA.

Sample schedule for the flex curriculum:

Week one, Wednesday: Session 1 in person

Week one: Complete required Moodle homework

Week two, Wednesday: Session 2 in person

Week two: Complete required Moodle homework

Week three, Wednesday: Session 3 in person

Week three: Complete required Moodle homework

Week four, Wednesday: Session 4 in person

Week four: Complete required Moodle homework

Week five, Wednesday: Session 5 in person

Strengths of this curriculum:

- When training across a large geographic area, this option requires less commuting for learners.
- This curriculum allows for greater flexibility for learners to complete online sessions on their own schedule, as long as they are able to complete online work on the timeline required by their facilitator.

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CONSIDER CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR MAKING YOUR TRAINING AS ACCESSIBLE AS POSSIBLE

- When training people from multiple counties together in one pre-service cohort, consider identifying community spaces in each county where you can hold your in-person sessions. This way, trainees can trade off commuting to the training site. Houses of worship, libraries, recreation centers and other community partners may be able to share their conference room or training space with you.
- As you plan your training schedule for the year, consider offering training cycles at different times of the week in order to make the training accessible to people with varying schedules. A best practice is to alternate daytime training cycles with evening and/or weekend training cycles. Some programs have also found success in offering intermittent fast track training cycles, where they schedule all sessions within two weeks rather than spread out over four to five weeks.

- Outside of makeup sessions, it's best to avoid training new advocates one-on-one. A central principle of adult learning is engagement, and people tend to learn most effectively when they are part of a dynamic community of learners where they are able to participate in group activities and multi-directional dialogue and discussion.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
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