

MINUTES

Nevada Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force

April 4, 2023

9:00am

1. Call to Order – Jane Saint, Vice-Chair

Jane Saint called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Members Present:

Name	Organization
Betsey Crumrine	Division of Child and Family Services
Char Frost	
Cheryl Cooley	Clark County Department of Family Services- CAC
Christine Sullivan	
Cory Martin	Great Basin CAC (Elko)
Jamie Wong	Division of Child and Family Services
Jane Saint, Vice-Chair	State Director, Nevada CASA
Janice Wolfe	Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
Jennifer Spencer	Deputy Attorney-General
Margaret Pickard	
Rachell Ekroos	
Wendy Maddox	
Wonswayla Mackey	Division of Child and Family Services
Tammi Williamson	Washoe County CAC

Members Absent:

Name	Organization
Anglina Blare	Adult Survivor
Desiree Mattice	Sergeant – Dept. of Public Safety
Fran Maldonado	Division of Child and Family Services
Michelle Rodriguez	Family Court Master
Salli Kerr, Chair	Western Regional CAC

Guests:

Name	Organization
Kristy Mills	Great Basin CAC

Staff Support:

Name	Organization
Beverly Brown	Division of Child and Family Services
Bruce Cole (recorder)	Division of Child and Family Services
Dylan Nall	Division of Child and Family Services

2. For Information: Roll Call – Dylan Nall, DCFS

Dylan Nall called the roll. As Salli Kerr was absent, Vice-Chair Jane Saint conducted the meeting.

3. Initial Public Comment (Discussion only: Action may not be taken on any matter brought up under this agenda item until scheduled for action at a later meeting) – Jane Saint, Vice-Chair

No comments.

4. For Information: Review CJA Task Force Goals – Dylan Nall, DCFS

Dylan Nall said that since we have some new people, this is a refresher since we only meet four times a year. Our five CJA task force goals: 1. is to support our CPS workers and stakeholders that are front-and-specialty- discipline-specific with advanced training; this should be prioritized. 2. is support the implementation of our Commercially Sexually Exploited Child (CSEC) Coordinator Response Protocol and provide training and support for the formation of the multidisciplinary teams (MDTs). 3. is to support the establishment of new CACs (the children's advocacy centers), or other multidisciplinary team approaches and improve the capacity of existing CACs to provide a multi-disciplinary response for victims of child sex abuse and exploitation, physical abuse, and child victims with disabilities. Activities may include the development of strategic action plans for project implementation, identification of rural healthcare providers, investigation of funding opportunities for infrastructure and operating costs, and the use of telehealth and telemedicine statewide. 4. is to fund technology requests to improve the investigation, assessment, and prosecution of child abuse and neglect through the use of the latest technology and support the new and existing training technologies. 5. is to identify new or needed changes to policy regulation and or legislation to meet the requirements of federal program improvement plans and other federal and state initiatives, and support training and policy needs related to new and revised policy regulation and legislation.

5. For Possible Action: Review and/or Approve 2023 CJA's NOFO Subcommittee Grantee recommendations – Jane Saint, Subcommittee Chair

Jane Saint moved into the review of the NOFO applications notice of funding. This year we had five applications. First, she thanked the subcommittee that stepped forward to help review all these applications that came in, score them, and then have lively discussions about how we were going to fund the various requests. She thanked Michelle Rodriguez, Jennifer Spencer, Sally Kerr, Desiree Mattice and Laurie Jackson for stepping up and serving on this subcommittee.

The first application was Clark County Children's Advocacy Center. They had requested this year \$48,500. That was an increase over last year's request of just under \$3000. It covers goals 3 and 4. They were wanting this money to train up to 90 CAC and community professional partner professionals in forensic interviewing, and then they also were requesting funding to purchase a high-speed copier for Law Enforcement.

Great Basin Children's Advocacy Center requested \$6300, a decrease from last year's request of 14 and half thousand dollars. What they are looking for is funding for two forensic interviewers seeking Advanced Child Forensic Interviewing (AF): Beyond the Basics, through the National Child Advocacy Center. This request covers goals 1 and 3.

The next group was a new request to our organization, from the Nevada Institute of Forensic Nursing (NVIFN). They are requesting \$14, 362 to aid in the cost of training for their contracted nurses who work with the children under their care. The award would also provide funding for the new technology VALT Cloud system to be used in the soft exam room and mobile unit, allowing for remote interviewing by law enforcement and attorneys. This is admissible in court. This covers goals 3 and 5.

Next was the Nevada Outreach Training Organization. They requested \$19,849 to send 14 people from the Nye County area to San Diego for a training in January of 2024. This covers goals 1 and 3. This is two people from each disciplinary area of child advocacy, forensic interviewers, law enforcement, prosecution, medical, mental health, and Child Protective Services. We will ask them to make a presentation in probably a year from now about that training.

The last group was the Washoe County Health and Human Services. They too are a current grantee. The goals covered were 1, 3, and 4. They are asking for \$40,684 and what they would like to do is again provide training for the child advocacy centers teams to enhance their best practices. The training specifics are for forensic interviewing for five CAC child protection workers, CSEC advocacy course for 10 child welfare staff, Child Welfare League annual conference for five assessment staff, Shared Hope Juvenile Sex Trafficking annual conference for three assessment staff, and then Trauma Informed leadership training for four MDT membership. Additionally, they would like to purchase 2 multifunction printers needed in their medical unit office and the assessment workers office.

The amounts that we have recommended are full funding, but that amount does overstep the \$100,000 that we originally had. Fortunately, Beverly Brown and Dylan Nall announced when we were having our subcommittee meeting that there was some extra money in the budget that was

not being taking anything away from other projects or services and that we had the ability to offer full funding for all the programs. So, with that said, we were very excited to make recommendations for full funding for all the programs who requested. We were very impressed with the quality of the applications this year. It is the recommendation of this committee unless there are any questions, comments, or concerns that we move to fund 100% of the five applications.

Char Frost moved to fund 100% of the applications. Wendy Maddox seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. For Possible Action: Approve the last meeting's minutes – Jane Saint, Vice-Chair

Jennifer Spencer moved the minutes be approved as written. Betsey Crumrine seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7. For Information: CJA 101 Video – Dylan Nall, DCFS

After some technical difficulties, Char Frost was able to pull up the video ("The Children's Justice Act Quarterly Call", dated September 22, 2022) and share it. Lauren Fishman, federal project officer for the Children's Justice Act grant program, was the presenter on the video. This is a program overview and refresher. The idea for this call really came from the CJA grantee leadership team members, who thought that it might be helpful to really take a minute to step back and go into a little bit more of the CJA background for those that either might need a bit of a refresher or for those that just might not have had the opportunity to learn about the program, legislation, the requirements, etc. People could type questions as the chat proceeded. Polls were conducted at the time the video was live to see the roles in CJA attendees had, how long they had been involved in CJA, and related questions.

Ms. Fishman is with The Children's Bureau. The Children's Bureau is the agency that administers the CJA state grant program. They partner with federal, state, tribal and local agencies to improve the overall health and well-being of our nation's children and families. They have an overall budget of approximately \$9.8 billion and provide support and guidance to programs focusing on family strengthening and child abuse prevention, child protection and ensuring that children and youth have permanent family or family connection. The CJA state grant program is located in Section 107 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, or CAPTA. CAPTA was most recently reauthorized in 2010. Since Fiscal Year 2000, \$17,000,000 in CJA funds have been made available for distribution to the states and territories. This funding amount of the 17 million is set in statute. While we hear from folks fairly often about why have we not seen increases in the CJA grant amount in 22 years, it is something that needs to be changed in statute.

The funding for CJA actually comes from the Crime Victims Fund, which collects fines and fees charged to persons convicted of federal crime, and the fund itself is administered by the Department of Justice within the Office for Victims of Crime. The funds for the CJA state grant program then come to The Children's Bureau. How grantees are designated and how funds are distributed for CJA: the CJA grant recipient agency is designated by the Governor of each respective state. Funds are allocated based on a formula. There is a base amount of \$50,000 awarded to each

state or territory, and then an additional amount is awarded based on the number of children under the age of 18.

There is a 15% set aside reserved by the Attorney General for the CJA Partnership for Indian Communities program. So, the overall CJ program is 20 million dollars, three million of that are the 15% awarded to this Partnership for Indian Communities Program. Grantees that are awarded through the Indian Communities Program are in several states.

Who are the CJA grantees in this state program? As said, the governor in each state designates so there is a bit of a variety. While the majority (39 out of 52) are either a child welfare or human services agency, there are seven that are either a Department of Justice or related agency, three that are within a governor's office and another three that are a nonprofit or other entity. The full list of grantees is available on the Child Welfare Information Gateway with contact information that has been provided by each grantee for the main point of contact.

Program purpose: in accordance with Section 107 in CAPTA, CJA grants are awarded to be used to develop, establish, and operate programs that are designed to improve overall assessment, investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect, including cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation. There is a particular focus on limiting additional trauma to the child and the child's family. Overall, you can see that there really is a focus on the front end of the child welfare system. There is a bit of a gray area sometimes as to where those phases end and the appropriateness of different funded activities based on the focus on that front end. That's really an ongoing conversation that she is happy to have as folks are looking at different programs to fund through CJA.

Use of Funds as broken down in the legislation, referred to here as the A, B, and C categories. This provides guidance on how CJA funds can be used: A is activities to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and exploitation, and there is the inclusion of reducing additional trauma to the child's victim and the victim's family. B is the support of experimental model and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and techniques to improve the prompt and successful resolution of Civil and Criminal Court proceedings to enhance the effectiveness of judicial and administrative action in child abuse and neglect cases. C is for the reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols, and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children.

Activities authorized for CJA funds are training development and dissemination; the creation or revision of protocols and tools; the support of child fatality reviews and/or citizen review panels; development and enhancement of child advocacy centers; collaboration efforts both at the local and state levels; and support for ongoing activities of the task force. Again, this is by no means exhaustive, but just a few examples of activities that can be funded through CJA. One other note is that supporting child abuse prevention programs or treatment services is not an appropriate use of CJA funds. This is because of the focus on the front end. The prevention piece is not allowable nor are direct services.

CJA is a formula grant program that the Children's Bureau administers every year. They put out a new program instruction that outlines the requirements the assessment needs, the application submission or due dates and tentative funding amount. They typically release each year's program

instruction in late February or early March, and each year's submission is generally due the last business day in May. Grantees must submit an annual report and an annual application in response to the program instructions that the Children's Bureau puts out to receive the next year's fund. On top of the requirement to submit the annual report and application, grantees must also meet certain eligibility requirements, which include the state receipt of the CAPTA basic state grant, and the establishment and maintenance of the multidisciplinary CJA Task force, as outlined in the legislation.

About the CJA task force. This legislatively required task force is critical to the CJA program. It drives the work of the program through the initial and ongoing assessment process and the resulting recommendations that come out of that assessment process. While there is not specifically required meeting frequency, The Children's Bureau does recommend that task forces meet at least quarterly. The task force structure varies from grantee to grantee. Again, there is no specific outline provided within the Statute about what the task force must look like other than the required membership categories. But the structure really can vary from grantee to grantee, and there's typically a chairperson. There might be co-chairs, some grantees have implemented bylaws which might include term limits for members. Some task forces include governor's appointment. Several task forces use subcommittees that might meet in between the larger task force meetings and that have a particular focus. There are 14 required membership categories. Several grantees choose to add some additional membership categories, whether that's an individual representing the education field, or it might be someone representing a child advocacy center, etcetera.

Ms. Fishman put up a slide with the 14 membership categories that are included in the CJA legislation. She didn't read through all of them but noted that it includes an adult former victim of child abuse and neglect. This is the language that is included within the CJA statute, but you do not need to use that specific language. They know that that is not in many cases the appropriate or appreciated way to refer to an individual with lived experience as a survivor.

The Children's Bureau has implemented a real focus on the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion, ensuring that folks with lived experience are included in all our work. As part of that, a number of task forces have started looking at ensuring that there is appropriate representation and inclusion within the task force.

She then moved on to task force member responsibility. The responsibilities of task force members might vary from grantee to grantee according to bylaws, but overall, there is regular attendance, bringing up to date knowledge and expertise from their respective areas of experience to those task force discussions and activities, actively engaging in ongoing assessment processes. There is also the CJA task force coordinator. This individual is engaging in regular and ongoing communication with The Children's Bureau and generally responsible for completing the timely submission of all required reporting and documentation, annual reports, and applications, and attending the required federal meeting, ensuring that funds are expended in alignment with the CJA requirements and allowable categories, coordinating and tracking task force maintenance and function, and other duties specific to the state needs.

At this point, Ms. Fishman introduced Karla Tye, who is CJA coordinator for Mississippi's Children's Advocacy Centers. Ms. Tye said she had been with the task force off and on in one capacity or

another since about 2004. The CJA for the state falls under the management of the Children's Advocacy Centers. About six years ago the grant was transferred from Child Welfare Agency to the Children's Advocacy Centers. They completed a strategic planning session to help hit the reset button and reevaluate the focus of the task force and then also give some time to revise their bylaws. This was separate from anything that they did with their three-year plan. They did bring in a consultant to work with them and had surveys beforehand to from their task force members to figure out where they needed to strengthen the areas of their work. They wanted to make sure to have those written out so that it was very clear for task force members what was expected. They also outlined the CJA coordinator's role. This includes coordinating and providing support to the task force, providing support to the committees and other working groups, coordinate the three-year plan, provide updates to the task force on grant activities project and then act as the primary contact with any grantees or prospective grantees.

Their membership is comprised of all the 14 categories that they must have numbers. and they are such a valued part of the task force. However, based on the feedback they got over the years they decided to go ahead and add in what they believe are really valuable permanent representatives. Those include someone from the administration of courts. Many task force members serve on the state child fatality review team. There were gaps in reporting when it came to fatalities or near fatalities. They felt like it was really important to have a representative from this corner on the task force. So that's become one of their permanent members. They also have representation from the Attorney General's Office; that has looked different over the years. They have had someone who was the human trafficking coordinator. They have had someone who's the director of the Children's Division for the Attorney General's office. Then most recently, it is someone who oversees all the training for the prosecutors in the state. You can have up to 30 members. They have the 14 assigned disciplines and then then they can fill in with those three additional permanent slots and then others that may be best based on what the three-year assessment is. They try and have a pretty diverse representation on the board that reflects age, gender, race, ethnicity, geographic areas of the state. The did not see a decrease in attendance, that pretty much remained steady during Covid.

When they have a vacancy, individual task force members can make recommendations. Then the recommendations are voted on by the members, and once they have that approval, they send the recommendations to the Governor's Office for official appointment.

There are three-year term limits but can be renewed so an individual can serve a total of three-year terms for nine years. There is a provision for waiving term limits. They do have officers and that's the Chairperson, Vice Chair, Secretary and past chair and the past chair serves as a mentor to the current chair as well as parliamentarian. They have an executive committee; they have a public policy and legislative committee that reviews policies or legislation which may impact issues that are under the focus of the task force. They have ad hoc committees.

The orientation to the task force is pretty simple. They have an electronic binder of materials that is put together for each new task force member and then Ms. Tye will meet one-on-one during that transition onto the task force.

She then returned the meeting to Lauren Fishman. Ms. Fishman moved on to the Annual Report and Application Requirement. The Children's Bureau publishes an annual program instruction, and that gets sent out to all the grantees. The program instruction each year outlines the programmatic

requirements for award and operation. It details the reporting requirements, including what materials need to be submitted, and there's also legislative citations and references, information related to financial reporting, due dates, tentative allocations, et cetera.

The annual submission and response to the program instruction contains two parts. The first is the program performance report, which includes tasks, initiatives and work completed using funds in the previous year. The second is an application for proposed activities. This would be tasks, initiatives, and work to be completed in the upcoming year.

The first part of the program performance report should include a focus on the programming outputs and outcomes from CJA activities and projects from the prior year. This would include a statement of the needs which the task force had identified, and projects that were funded to address those identified needs, the results of any evaluation work related to CJA, expenditures over the previous year (to the extent possible), and information on task force maintenance over the course of the year.

The annual application, which is the second part, should provide a description of the activities to be supported with CJA Grant funds over the next year. This would be a description of each project to be funded, including the goals and objectives, a budget for each activity, any evaluation efforts related to the project that will be implemented, the extent to which the activity contributes to the reform of state system handling cases of abuse and neglect. This is where those CJA categories A, B, and C come into play. Then how each funded activity will further the implementation of state task force recommendations.

Additional submission components includes some areas where grantees are encouraged but not required to provide information on the ways in which their completed or proposed work aligns with other related work in the state, including Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) or Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR), the Court Improvement Program, Court and Legal Representation Improvement Work, anti-human trafficking efforts, enhanced responses to children and families impacted by domestic violence, and creating an equitable child welfare system.

Some additional requirements are an assurance letter provided each year. This gets signed either by the governor or another authorized official for the grantee agency. There's an anti-lobbying certification which certifies that the grantee has not used funds to lobby the federal government, and then some basic applicant information.

The Annual Grant Award applications are reviewed by the Children's Bureau, and it gets reviewed by Ms. Fishman as well as staff and the Regional Office of The Children's Bureau. Once they review and approve, it goes to the Deputy Commissioner for the administration on Children, Youth and Families. The awards are then made by the ACS Office of Grants Management. These awards are made by September 30th of each year. Notifications of award are provided via e-mail.

Ms. Fishman then touched on the three-year assessment requirement. In its initial application for CJA funding every state submits an assessment documenting a comprehensive review of the state's child welfare work. Review is then done every three years thereafter to ensure that the work of CJA programming is responsive to the state's current respective child welfare needs. Then, based on

findings of that assessment process, a set of recommendations is made by the task force. When the three-year assessment is due, the state must provide documentation when at the same time that the annual report and application is submitted to document this task force did complete this comprehensive review and evaluation, and then made recommendations in each of the categories A, B, and C.

There's a variety of mechanisms that grantees use to complete this comprehensive assessment. This might include conducting surveys, secondary data analysis, taking advantage of other information sources that already exist in your state that might be relevant for your purposes, focus group partner interviews for retreats, and number of grantees find it helpful to bring in third party facilitation to help them complete the process, etcetera. There must be at least one recommendation in each of those AB and C categories, and each activity funded over the next three years has to be in alignment with at least one task force recommendation.

The Children's Bureau Federal Project Officer, which is Ms. Fishman, provides ongoing monitoring and she reviews all annual submissions, all 52. The regional office staff of the Bureau also reviews annual submissions for the states over which they have purview and Grants Management provides financial oversight. They have an annual grantee meeting which in the past have been conducted in person. In the last few years, it's been virtual. They do not know yet for this year's grantee meeting.

The video was ended. Jane Saint thanked Dylan Nall for providing it. It was a great orientation for new members. One of the things they did talk about were subcommittees and ad hoc committees. One that we do have that we need to be working on is our bylaws. Jane and Dylan have talked in the past about looking at ways to increase the membership to get a broader range of opinions and thoughts, so that might be something that we can also look at going forward.

Beverly Brown agreed this is for good for new members. They do the CJA 101 call every year, and she thought what we can do is just put the link in our welcome letter and start providing that to new members as they come on.

Jane Saint said she thought one of the best things that we could do as a task force is to be more engaged as members of the task force, and take some of the burden off Dylan Nall, who does so much for us, so we're not just showing up for a quarterly meeting and listening that we can actually engage in conversations.

Jane said that last week she was on a call with national CASA, a webinar on some legislative issues and it was brought up that one of the reasons VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) funding is going down in the next go around is because they're just has not been as much money being put into VOCA. Is less money going in, does it mean there's less crime? Doesn't seem like it here in this state.

No one commented.

8. For Information: Grantee Updates for FY 2022 – Jane Saint, Vice-Chair

Jane Saint said we asked the grantees to make a presentation, and since Cheryl Cooley popped up, would she please update us on what's happening in Clark County.

Cheryl Cooley said April is Child Abuse Prevention month. They are really excited about some of the awareness work they are doing. They have some PSA's that are coming up to just pepper in their social media, their nonprofit has paid for some video PSAs, and they finished their last class for the fiscal year with forensic interviewing. They have had have a lot of staff turnover between CPS and law enforcement, and so constantly having to teach and train. She thanked for the furniture. They actually can move in and it's not clunky and falling everywhere and falling apart.

Jane thanked Cheryl for the opportunity visit the CAC in Clark County.

There was no one from either Washoe County or Great Basin to give a report.

The Great Basin people had to leave the meeting earlier. Cheryl Cooley was able to say that Great Basin is still building that new building. So, they're really excited about that. She also said that that Christie was on from Nevada Outreach Training Organization (NOTO) and had to get off. They just hired a new child and family advocate though and are getting that person on boarded and getting the multi-disciplinary (MDT) going.

9. For Information: Announcements – Jane Saint, Vice-Chair

There were no announcements.

10. Final Public Comment (Discussion only: Action may not be taken on any matter brought up under this agenda item until scheduled for action at a later meeting) – Jane Saint, Vice-Chair

There were no comments.

11. Adjournment – Jane Saint, Vice-Chair

Jane Saint reminded the Task Force that the next meeting is July 11. Dylan noted that she has not had much interest expressed about the By-Laws subcommittee. She would like to have at least five members. Jane Saint agreed to serve, and Rachelle Ekroos agreed to chair it.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.