



## Continuing Education (CE) Training Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is CE training?**

CE training is continuing education (CE) for CASA volunteers. Volunteers should continue to improve their skills while they serve as GALs. CASA Guardians ad Litem (GALs) are required to complete 12 hours of CE training each calendar year (January-December).

### **When does this requirement start?**

It begins immediately after you are sworn in, but the hours are prorated during your first year:

- If you attend the **Winter** Pre-Service training, you are required to complete 9 hours of CE training for the first year and then 12 hours the following years;
- If you attend the **Spring** Pre-Service training, you are required to complete 6 hours of CE training for the first year and then 12 hours the following years;
- If you attend the **Summer** Pre-Service training, you are required to complete 3 hours of CE training for the first year and then 12 hours the following years;
- If you attend the **Fall** Pre-Service training, you are required to complete 0 hours of CE training for the first year and then 12 hours the following years;

Hours must be completed between January 1 and December 31 of each year. On a quarterly basis, Volunteers must complete 3 hours of Continued Education hours so that they are on track by the end of the year.

### **What topics meet the criteria for CASA CE training?**

Topics that meet the criteria must fall under Ohio's Rule 48. **Rule 48** of the Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio (Sup.R. 48) governs Guardian ad litem standards in Ohio. These are the topics under Rule 48:

- (a) Basic human needs, stages of child development, and the impact of trauma;
- (b) Communication skills, including but not limited to communication with children and adults, interviewing skills, methods of critical questioning, use of open-ended questions, understanding the perspective of a child, sensitivity,

building trust, multicultural awareness, diversity, and confidentiality;  
**(c)** Child abuse, neglect, dependency, unruliness, delinquency, and assessing risk and safety;  
**(d)** Family and child issues, including but not limited to family dynamics, substance abuse and its effects, basic psychopathology for adults and children, and domestic violence and its effects, including assessing for lethality and safety;  
**(e)** Legal processes, available community agencies and resources, methods of service, records checks, the role of a guardian ad litem in court, local resources and service practice, report content, mediation, and other types of dispute resolution processes;  
**(f)** Any other topic that concerns the role of the guardian ad litem to help determine the best interest of the child.

### **How do I submit my training hours to CASA?**

Go to "Training Log" tab in Optima. Add a new training and enter the topic/type of training and the number of hours onto Optima. Choose the topic & type of training from the drop-down boxes.

1. **ENTER RELEVANT INFORMATION:** Write a short narrative into the open text box in Optima. This can be used for books, movies, webinars, online training, videos and podcasts OR live trainings. An Optima CE entry breakdown is appended to this document. In your narrative, **briefly** answer the following:
  - Title of self-study/training and author/hosted by/streamed on;
  - If applicable the name of the training, who hosted it, and the relevant trainers;
  - Briefly summarize the content of the Independent Study or CASA Hosted Event
  - List at least two things you have learned or learned more about;
  - How will you apply this knowledge as a GAL (hypothetical or case-specific)?
2. **EMAIL CERTIFICATE:** If there was a certificate of completion or other documentation of your attendance, please email your certificate to [Morgan.Bommer@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:Morgan.Bommer@franklincountyohio.gov) for our files.

### **Does CASA do any CE training?**

Yes, CASA and the CASA Peer Training Team present 4-6 CE programs each year. Registration for these programs is done through Eventbrite or Google Docs. You will receive an Eventbrite invitation for each CASA CE training with a link after registration. Trainings are conducted both in-person and virtually on a platform such as Zoom. Volunteer Gatherings, held multiple times per year, count toward the requirement. Gatherings are an opportunity for GALs to give and get support from peers and are also hosted both in-person at cafes around the community and on Zoom.

Additionally, excellent trainings are hosted by Ohio CASA (<https://ohiocasa.org/courses-list/>). Simply sign up to take Ohio CASA's free courses on their website and you will have access to a variety of subjects such as:

- Trauma in Childhood
- Engagement and Interview Techniques
- Understanding/Navigating CPS
- Delinquency and Human Trafficking
- Diversity/Equity & Bias Training
- Gender and Sexuality
- Addiction: Narcotics 101 and Psychology of Substance Abuse
- Post Emancipation, Bridges, & Young Adult Services

The National CASA/GAL Association (<https://nationalcasagal.org/>) also has some great trainings that will be counted towards CE hours. However, because this is a national program spanning many jurisdictions, some training material is not specific to Franklin County/Ohio. Please ensure that trainings are relevant to our area/the area that children are placed in.

### **What are other ways I can accrue CE hours?**

CASA accepts many trainings from outside organizations and opportunities. If you see a live training opportunity outside of this, let us know what it is you would like to do and we will let you know if it will fulfill CE training hours. As long as the subject matter falls under Rule 48, it will likely be approved. Also, some educational programs or training at your place of employment might also count toward your requirement. Please contact the Director of Volunteer Management for approval.

### **If I take a class at a university or college will those count toward my CE requirement?**

Yes, but you must provide a college transcript with grades. The subject matter must fall under Rule 48. Please email Morgan Bommer-Guinn at [Morgan.Bommer@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:Morgan.Bommer@franklincountyohio.gov) to determine credit hours awarded.

### **If I attend an outside organization's training, what does CASA need so I can obtain credit for the training?**

Preferably, we would like a certificate of completion or a written validation from the organization. Additionally, when entering outside trainings into Optima, please follow the appropriate write-up steps as listed in this document. Please send any certificates of completion/transcripts or related materials to Morgan Bommer-Guinn ([morgan.bommer@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:morgan.bommer@franklincountyohio.gov)) and enter your hours into Optima.

### **Can I read books/articles, listen to educational podcasts, or watch documentaries?**

Yes, this would be seen as and listed in Optima as an Independent Study: **GALs may only receive 6 HOURS CE from books per year.** If this was material that was promoted by CASA of Franklin County/Ohio CASA/National CASA, go ahead and enter your hours into Optima. If you found out about this training outside of CASA, look to see if it falls under Rule 48 Guidelines (listed above) and email CASA for approval. Please review the

last page about how to log these hours into Optima. **GALs may only receive 6 HOURS CE from books/podcasts/recording per year.**

### **Is there a list of the most commonly used trainings that are pre-approved?**

- Trainings offered by CASA of Franklin County/ CASA Peer Training Team
- Trainings and Conference offered by Ohio CASA/GAL Association or National CASA
  - Attending the **Celebrate Kids! Ohio CASA Conference** in mid-September
- **Ohio CASA Virtual Trainings:**(<https://ohiocasa.org/>). View online courses and sign up at <https://ohiocasa.org/courses-list/>.
- **Ohio Supreme Court Judicial College** on-line training (**e-Academy**) offers many free courses.
  - To register, visit <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/ohiocourtEDU/register/> to create a username/password.
- Community Speakers, Events and Workshops – as distributed by CASA/Ohio
- Books in the CASA of Franklin County **Resource Library**
- Training and other classes – school courses or other training pertinent to work as a CASA may be approved by the Volunteer Director on a case-by-case basis (email CASA for approval!).
- The Trials of Gabriel Fernandez (Netflix Documentary Series)
- Outside Online Resources with free training:
  - <http://www.nationalcac.org> National Children's Advocacy Center (child sexual abuse prevention focus)
  - <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/training>: National Child Traumatic Stress Network
  - <https://www.childtrauma.org/>: The Child Trauma Academy E-Resource
  - <https://www.thehrcfoundation.org/professional-resources/all-children-all-families-training-program>: The Human Rights Campaign- All Children-All Families Training Program
  - <https://www.learningforjustice.org/professional-development>: Southern Poverty Law Center- Learning for Justice

### **What happens if I do not fulfill my training requirements?**

Ohio law requires all GALs, whether private attorneys or CASA GALs, to have at **least 6 hours of GAL specific training annually**. The **National CASA standard is 12 hours**, however. CASA reserves the right to remove a volunteer from an active case or terminate any volunteer for lack of training. However, we are very flexible and encourage all volunteers to contact the CASA Office to discuss your particular situation. We will most likely be able to remedy any issues. Volunteers can contact Morgan Bommer-Guinn, Director of Volunteer Management, at [Morgan\\_Bommer@Franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:Morgan_Bommer@Franklincountyohio.gov).

# HOW TO ENTER CE HOURS INTO OPTIMA

**DO NOT SUBMIT THIS FORM:  
THIS IS A RUN-DOWN OF THE INFORMATION TO ENTER INTO OPTIMA**



Use the prompts/drop-down boxes on Optima and enter the following info:

- **Start date/completion dates and hours.**
- **Training Topic:** There are multiple categories to choose from. Please choose the topic that you think best describes the CE entry
  - CASA Hosted: Anything directly hosted by CASA of Franklin County, Ohio CASA, or National CASA/GAL Association for Children.
  - Independent Study: Any CE that was NOT hosted by CASA
- **Type of CE** (training, recorded webinar, book, podcast, article, streaming, etc.):

**THEN: In the open text box in Optima, enter the following information**

1. **Title of self-study/training and author/hosted by/streamed on:**  
Example: The Trials of Gabriel Fernandez streamed on Netflix
2. **Briefly summarize the content of the self-study:**  
Example: The Trials of Gabriel Fernandez follows the story of a little boy who was subjected to horrendous abuse at the hands of his mother and step-father, resulting in his death and the lack of accountability from those in the child-protection field.
3. **List at least two things you have learned or learned more about:**  
I learned that there was very little accountability for the workers on his case and that the system has gaps that children can fall into easily. If there had been a more comprehensive intervention (and removal), Gabriel may not have died.
4. **How would you apply what you learned as a GAL?**  
This helps me learn why I need to be accountable to the children I work with and hold others to also be accountable for our involvement in their lives.

**EMAIL ANY CERTIFICATES, TRANSCRIPTS, OR COMPLETION EMAILS TO MORGAN**