

## WVCAN Member Legislative Agreement

### WVCAN Legislative Values Statements:

WVCAN will only develop, support, and oppose legislation for support that directly pertains to Child Advocacy Centers, child abuse investigations, prosecution, treatment, prevention of child abuse, or the functioning of multidisciplinary investigative or treatment teams. In legislation pertaining to above topics, the following evaluative guides will be utilized in decisions regarding WVCAN support:

1. New initiatives should coordinate with existing programs and systems to maximize use of funds and personnel
2. Initiatives should enhance existing partnerships, not undermine those partnerships
3. Initiatives should provide positive outcomes for child victims of abuse in WV and/or the full network of Child Advocacy Centers (rather than a specific location)

**Purpose of Agreement:** In order to effectively reflect these values, the Board of Directors recognizes that an agreement is necessary to ensure coordination, communication, and trust between WVCAN and its local member centers. The Board further recognizes that a clear and consistent message from a united front of both WVCAN and CACs is vital to successfully delivering public policy outcomes that will benefit child victims of abuse, the CAC movement, and the ability of all member centers to more effectively serve children.

The intent of these protocols is to ensure that WVCAN is representing the best interests of the entire statewide membership as well as the overall mission of the CAC movement in West Virginia. Therefore, these protocols lay out requirements and expectations for both WVCAN and member centers.

### Expectations for WVCAN:

The following process for WVCAN serves to ensure that local centers are kept informed of developing WVCAN statewide policy initiatives and are given an opportunity to provide input. It is the goal of WVCAN to develop and support policy platforms that represent the best interests of the overall membership and sustainability of the movement.

1. Prior to and during the Regular Legislative Session and Interim Meetings, WVCAN will use the above values statements to evaluate legislation and make recommendations.
2. Prior to each Regular Legislative Session, WVCAN will work with Member CACs to develop a legislative agenda that reflect the initiatives and plans the organization wishes to take forth to the Legislature. This plan will be presented and approved by the WVCAN Board of Directors.
3. If time allows, when evaluating legislation WVCAN will consult with Member CACs about proposed legislation. In addition, relevant partner agencies and organizations will be consulted.
4. If time does not allow formal consultation, the WVCAN CEO and/or the WVCAN staff designee will consult with the Executive Committee of the Board and evaluate legislation using the above values statements.

5. WVCAN will, to the extent possible, make local centers aware of legislative contacts made by WVCAN with members representing their district.
6. WVCAN will provide regular updates to Member CACs on legislative activities taken during Regular Legislative Session and Interim Meetings.

**Local Member Program Expectations:**

The following agreements for local member programs, as part of their membership responsibilities and obligations, serves to ensure that our movement presents a unified front that prioritizes the values stated above.

1. Agree to support and promote, whenever possible, the legislative agenda and policy statements of WVCAN distributed prior to a legislative session and/or interim.
2. Agree to put the interests of the entire West Virginia CAC movement before individual local interests in the event the two conflict. This requirement should take into consideration the legislative platform of WVCAN and the consideration this platform is required to give to the overall success of the CAC movement in WV.
3. Agree to seek opportunities to visit with key local legislators about WVCAN initiatives and their local program when requested.
4. Agree to notify WVCAN of all legislative contacts, to the extent possible, in advance of such contact and via a post-action debrief.
5. In order for WVCAN to support a local initiative or piece of legislation as part of the statewide platform, local centers shall submit such agenda to WVCAN where it will be approved through the process outlined above under "Expectations for WVCAN."
6. In the event that WVCAN does not approve a local center's initiative as part of the WVCAN statewide agenda, the local center may proceed but commits to (1) taking into consideration the best interests of CACs statewide; and (2) ensuring that in all related communications and actions, it is clearly stated that such action is being taken separate and apart from WVCAN and its membership, avoiding any and all implication that the local initiative is being advanced by WVCAN and/or other CACs.
7. For CACs who are a program under a larger organizational umbrella, it is understood that this agreement pertains only to the CAC program and not the entire organization. This agreement is not intended to supersede or undermine any requirements related to legislative activities these programs are subject to from their umbrella agencies.