
WVCAN Membership Policies

Overview of Membership

1. The mission of the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network (WVCAN) is:
Working together to support hope, healing, and justice for children affected by abuse.
2. The by-laws of WVCAN establish three categories of membership: Active, Developing and Supporting
3. To be eligible for membership services through WVCAN, an organization must be a member in good standing of WVCAN.

Definitions

1. Member in Good Standing – a Child Advocacy Center who has fulfilled the requirements for membership in WVCAN, is current with reporting requirements and dues, and who neither has voluntarily withdrawn from membership nor has been expelled or suspended from membership after appropriate proceedings consistent with the by-laws and policies of WVCAN.
2. Child Advocacy Center - a program that:
 - a. Has taken steps to establish a program in accordance with the components as delineated in West Virginia Code §49-1-3(6)(A) thru (J);
 - b. Serves contiguous counties in West Virginia; and
 - c. Is governed as one legal entity.
3. Official Service Area – the county or counties recognized by WVCAN as served by a given CAC.
4. Satellite – a facility operated by a Member CAC at a site other than the main site of operations.

Membership Requirements

Active Membership

1. Program must be an Accredited Member of the National Children’s Alliance.
2. Program must sign an affidavit certifying compliance with all National Children’s Alliance accreditation standards annually.
3. Program must demonstrate participation in WVCAN membership activities. Minimally, the program must document attendance at Annual Meeting/Retreat of Membership (unless good cause is shown) and participation in at least two of the following: Family Advocacy Networking session, Forensic Interview Peer Review, workgroup of WVCAN, Lobby Day/Legislative Reception, Mentoring Program, or any other relevant activity undertaken by WVCAN.
4. Program must submit required statistical reporting to WVCAN every six months (January to June report; July to December report).
5. Program must utilize Outcome Measurement System and submit required reporting every six months (January to June Report; July to December report).
6. Program must be current with dues assessed.

Developing Membership Requirements

1. Program must be a Developing/Associate Member of the National Children's Alliance.
2. Program must demonstrate progress annually toward becoming an Accredited Member of the National Children's Alliance.
3. Program must submit required statistical reporting to WVCAN every six months (January to June report; July to December report).
4. Program must demonstrate participation in WVCAN membership activities. Minimally, the program must document attendance at Annual Meeting of Membership (unless good cause is shown) and participation in at least one of the following: Family Advocacy Networking, Forensic Interview Peer Review, workgroup of WVCAN, Lobby Day/Legislative Reception, Mentoring Program, or any other relevant activity undertaken by WVCAN.
5. Program must be current with dues assessed.

Supporting Membership Requirements

1. Applicant must be an individual or organization that supports the ideals of WVCAN and the establishment of program set forth in West Virginia Code §49-1-3(6)(A) thru (J).

Pending Status

If a member in any category falls out of compliance with the membership requirements of that category at any time, that member will be placed in a pending status. Examples include but are not limited to: an Accredited CAC being placed on pending status upon re-accreditation assessment, failure to submit required statistical reporting to WVCAN, participation in WVCAN membership activities, etc. The following is the process for pending membership:

1. The program will be notified in writing of its pending status and the areas of non-compliance.
2. WVCAN will provide technical assistance to program, as needed, to address non-compliance issues.
3. The program shall demonstrate participation or submit documentation of compliance with membership criteria to WVCAN.
4. The CAC Directors Committee of the Board of Directors will review pending programs and determine if the program has addressed the areas of non-compliance and may, at that time, recommend the program be restored as a Member in Good Standing.
5. If a program remains out of compliance for a period of 6 months, that program's membership may be revoked. The CAC Directors Committee of the Board of Directors may extend the program's pending status for an additional 3 months in extraordinary circumstances. In no case may a program remain pending for more than 9 months.
6. A waiting period of 6 months from revocation of membership with WVCAN is required before reapplication is permitted. Managing entities of centers re-applying for WVCAN membership must submit written documentation explaining resolution of the issue causing revocation of membership. Examples of managing entities specific to individual organizations include but are not limited to Board of Directors for 501(c)3, Chief Executive Officer of umbrella agency, or designated administrator (not CAC program staff).

Membership Application

Initial Application Process

1. The CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors shall oversee the administration of the membership application and renewal process. The WVCAN Board of Directors makes final determination of membership at a regular meeting.
2. For a program to be eligible for state funding through the Division of Justice and Community Services, that program must be an Active or Developing Member of WVCAN. The application must be submitted 60 days prior to the final board meeting of the calendar year in order to be considered for state funding the following fiscal year.
3. A program must document official service area on initial application. A one-county service area is encouraged for new program applicants. If a CAC wishes to initially serve multiple counties, an explanation of intended service provision must be provided, and financial support must be demonstrated for a multi-county service area.
4. In order for a new CAC in West Virginia to be eligible for benefits through WVCAN, a CAC's membership application must be approved by the Board of Directors. All completed applications must be submitted 60 days prior to a full board meeting. Applications are accepted on a year-round rolling basis.
5. When a membership application is received by WVCAN, a receipt of acknowledgement will be sent to the applicant.
6. WVCAN staff will review all applications for completeness and forward copies of the application to members of the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Feedback and consultation will be provided by WVCAN staff for incomplete applications.
7. In the case of Developing Membership, when the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors determines the basic requirements have been met, a site visit will be scheduled. The site visit will be conducted by a WVCAN representative and will consist of a tour of the facility and a meeting with the CAC personnel and others, as deemed appropriate.
8. The CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors will review and reach recommendation prior to the Board of Directors' final consideration. All membership application presentations must take place at a physical board meeting. No online or conference call votes will be taken regarding membership.
9. The Board of Directors will make a decision with consideration of the recommendation of the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors.
10. Any applicant may appeal a decision of membership to the WVCAN Board of Directors using the grievance procedure outlined in these policies.
11. All applicants will be informed in writing of their membership status after the Board of Directors has reached a decision about membership. Notification will occur no later than two weeks after the Board meeting.

Renewal Process

1. A renewal packet, including the dues notice, will be sent to all member programs annually by April 15 and must be returned with dues by May 15. Continuing membership is contingent upon timely payment of dues and submission of renewal packet.

2. All current member programs are required to maintain membership standards for their category of membership, which shall be certified annually with the renewal packet. A site review of Active and Developing Member programs will be performed, as needed.

Extension of Official Service Area Process

1. Applications for extension of official service area are accepted on a rolling basis. However, in order for the CAC to be eligible for additional county served money through the JCS CAC Grant, the application must be submitted on or before December 31st.
2. In order to be eligible for formal recognition of efforts to expand a CAC's official service area, the program must provide to WVCAN the following:
 - a. Written narrative outlining board approved plans for expansion that demonstrates program's ability to provide full array of comprehensive services required of all CACs within 3-year timeframe without compromising existing program services.
 - b. Fully-executed Interagency Agreement for expanded service area, including signatures from agency heads of law enforcement, child protective services, prosecution, and the CAC clearly committing to Child Advocacy Center model. Signatures from victim advocacy, mental health, and a member of the medical community are also encouraged.
 - c. Demonstrated financial support to serve the additional county for at least the first year of service.
 - d. It is preferred that the applying CAC be accredited prior to officially extending its service area; however, if the home CAC is not yet accredited, that CAC must demonstrate its plan toward becoming accredited while extending official service area and ensure that extension will not jeopardize the home CAC's progress toward accreditation.
3. The CAC's written documents outlining the protocols of the program and multidisciplinary team for expanded service area (or revised center written documents that include provisions specific to new service area) must be submitted with the membership renewal and dues the following year.
4. The CAC must consistently provide the full array of services for cases included in its specific case criteria (outlined in CAC written documents) on a consistent basis 3 years from initial official service area extension, and these services must be reflected in statistical reports submitted to WVCAN.

Dispute Resolution

1. Any member or applicant program shall have the right to file a grievance regarding matters that are properly subject to the dispute resolution process. Matters relating to the amount, assessment or payment of dues are not properly subject to the grievance process. Prior to filing a grievance, the aggrieved party must first make a good-faith effort to informally resolve the matter at issue through direct communication with the CEO of WVCAN. If the matter at issue is not satisfactorily resolved through informal efforts, the aggrieved party may file a formal written grievance. All such grievances shall be submitted in writing to the Chair of the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors. All grievances must be submitted not later than 20 days after the date of the incident complained of. Failure to file a formal written grievance within the requisite 20-day filing period shall result in a dismissal of the grievance. All formal grievances, and all written communication related thereto shall be maintained on file at the WVCAN offices.

2. Upon receipt of a written grievance that has been timely filed as required in paragraph 1 above, the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors shall consider the matter set forth in the grievance, and shall provide the aggrieved party with a written response to the grievance not later than 20 days following receipt of the written grievance by the Committee. Receipt of the written grievance in the WVCAN office shall constitute receipt by the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors.
3. Following receipt of the written response of the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors as provided for in paragraph 2 above, the aggrieved party shall have the right to request an appeal hearing. Such request for an appeal hearing shall be made in writing and shall be directed to the CEO of WVCAN not later than 10 days following receipt of the written response of the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors as provided for in paragraph 2 above.
4. Upon receipt of a written request for an appeal hearing that has been timely filed as set forth in paragraph 3 above, the President of the WVCAN Board of Directors shall appoint an ad-hoc Grievance Committee to consider the appeal. Such Committee shall consist of not less than 3 nor more than 5 members of the Board of Directors. The Grievance Committee shall conduct a hearing on the appeal, which hearing shall be held not later than 30 days following receipt of the written request for an appeal hearing. The President shall appoint a Chairperson of the Grievance Committee, who shall be responsible to schedule and preside over the appeal hearing. The scheduling and location of the appeal hearing shall be at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Grievance Committee, within the time parameters set forth herein. If circumstances so require, members of the Grievance Committee or witnesses may be permitted, in the discretion of the Chairperson, to participate via telephone, video conference, or similar mediums; provided, however, that in all appeal hearings the aggrieved party shall be required to appear by its Executive Director or by some other person authorized by its Board of Directors or governing body to appear on its behalf.
5. The Chairperson of the Grievance Committee shall preside over the appeal hearing. The aggrieved party shall have the right to submit its argument in support of its appeal in summary form, or through the presentation of witnesses and/or documents. The Rules of Evidence shall not apply, and no formal record of the hearing shall be required. The Chairperson of the Grievance Committee may place reasonable time limits on the submission of evidence/argument by the aggrieved party. The Chairperson may also continue the appeals hearing for submission of further argument/evidence as the circumstances may reasonably require.
6. Upon the conclusion of the appeal hearing as provided for in paragraph 5 above, the Grievance Committee shall present the WVCAN Board of Directors with its written recommendations regarding disposition of the grievance at the next regularly-scheduled meeting of the Board. Upon consideration of the recommendation of the Grievance Committee, the Board of Directors may affirm the decision of the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors in whole or in part; it may reverse the decision of the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors in whole or in part; or it may take such other action as may be appropriate in the circumstances. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be as dictated by a majority of the Board members then present and voting. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final and not subject to further appeal.
7. In computing any period of time prescribed by the grievance procedure set forth in the foregoing paragraphs, the day of the incident from which the designated period of time begins to run shall not be included. The last day of the period so computed shall be included, unless it

is a Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday, in which case the last day of the period shall be the next business day.

8. Under no circumstances shall an aggrieved party be entitled to representation by counsel at any stage in the grievance process.

Miscellaneous

Dues

1. The Board of Directors of WVCAN is authorized to levy dues on behalf of the organization. Dues must be paid in full by June 30 for the Member to remain in good standing.
2. Current dues are:
 - a. Active Member: \$500
 - b. Developing Member: \$300
 - c. Supporting Member: \$60

Organizational Decision-Making

1. WVCAN Membership makes decisions by consensus, as outlined in the organizational by-laws. Active and Developing Members have official representation in the consensus decision-making process. Supporting members may participate in discussion but may not block a decision.

Support Letters for NCA Membership

1. WVCAN members may request a chapter support letter when they are applying for NCA membership. The member making the request must consider the below requirements *prior* to requesting a support letter. The requests must be made in writing to the CEO 30 days before the letter is needed. The CEO will report the request to the CAC Directors Committee of the WVCAN Board of Directors.
2. Chapter support letters may be requested *after*:
 - a. A program Director or Board President has fulfilled the NCA requirements of the level of membership requested and can provide, to WVCAN, documentation those requirements are being fulfilled (i.e. Associate/Developing or Accredited). These levels are listed on the NCA website.
 - b. A site visit by WVCAN staff may be conducted, at the discretion of WVCAN's CEO.