

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DCF 3/27/2023

LRB Number	23-2240/1	Introduction Number	AB-0104	Estimate Type	Original
Description expanding the Court-Appointed Special Advocate program and making an appropriation					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill allocates \$3.4m per SFY, starting with SFY24, to the Department of Justice to expand funding to the Wisconsin Court Appointed Special Advocate Association to expand the existing Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, and to create two new CASA county programs in 2023 and two new CASA county programs in 2024. Funding may also be used to expand services in counties that already have a CASA program.

Current funding is provided to the Wisconsin CASA Association by the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) and distributed from the appropriation under s. 20.455(5)(es) as authorized in s. 165.967. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) does not currently have a contractual or financial relationship with the Wisconsin CASA Association or local CASA programs. This estimate assumes the funding provided under this bill will be appropriated via its current funding authority and that there would therefore be no change in funding for DCF.

The Wisconsin CASA Association supports local CASA programs that enlist volunteers as a liaison between the legal and child welfare system to advocate for the needs of children who are the subject of CHIPS (children in need of protection or services) proceedings. The expansion of CASA programs to additional counties throughout the state as provided under this bill may impact the child welfare experience of children served by CASA program volunteers.

However, the department is unable to estimate the extent to which the funding under this bill may affect state, county, or tribal costs for out-of-home care. Therefore, the state and local fiscal effect is indeterminate.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications