

MARYLAND CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

Membership Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines, benefits and responsibilities for membership in Maryland Children's Alliance (MCA). This policy reflects a commitment to provide child victims of abuse, trauma and maltreatment access to quality and qualified care anywhere in Maryland through nationally accredited children's advocacy centers (CAC) and multidisciplinary teams (MDT) that support victims' capacity to survive and thrive.

Membership in MCA follows the established membership levels of the National Children's Alliance (NCA) including differentiating between CACs and MDTs. Membership in MCA supports continued growth and capacity of local jurisdictions to establish and maintain accredited Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC) and to identify and strengthen those jurisdictions that do not have qualified CACs but who are working on behalf of child victims through multidisciplinary teams (MDT) that meet NCA standards.

Policy: MCA and each member jurisdiction or entity associated with MCA understands their responsibilities and benefits. MCA is run by established by-laws and led by the Executive Board.

Membership Benefits

The following are some of the many benefits available from and through MCA:

- Networking with other members of MCA and other organizations associated with MCA;
- Training and technical assistance provided by MCA;
- Funding for Accredited Centers to attend annual NCA Leadership Conference;
- CAC Operations Notebook;
- CAC Orientation Template;
- Marketing materials;
- Participating in MCA committees;
- Voting rights within the Alliance (except for Satellite centers who are represented for votes by their host CAC);
- Collaborative meetings with elected officials;
- Access to the Members Only section on the MCA website;
- Letters of support from MCA for grants, NCA accreditation, membership status;
- Funding for specific supplies and materials when funding is available;
- Scholarships to training when funding is available.

Levels of Membership:

MCA follows National Children's Alliance's four levels of membership for CACs and/or MDTs: (1) Accredited CACs, (2) Associate/Developing CACs, (3) Affiliate MDTs and (4) Satellite.

Membership in MCA requires annual completion of the membership application/ renewal and payment of annual dues. Chapter Director oversees the administration of this process. The Executive Committee reviews and determines status of completed membership applications and necessary attachments from aspiring Affiliate and Satellite entities concerning MCA membership status. Additionally, a site visit may be completed by one of the executive committee members and/or the Chapter Director.

The following are MCA's criteria for each level of membership:

Accredited Member is a children's advocacy center serving a jurisdiction in Maryland which has attained accreditation from the National Children's Alliance by meeting each of the ten NCA standards. The Accredited Member CAC agrees with and supports the mission and practices of the Maryland Children's Alliance.

Associate/Developing Member is a children's advocacy center serving a jurisdiction in Maryland actively working toward NCA Accreditation and recognized as an Associate/Developing Member by NCA. Requirements for the Associate/Developing Member include having a functioning MDT that includes Law Enforcement, Child Protective Services, Prosecution, Medical, Mental Health and Victim Advocacy; signed interagency agreements and MDT protocols. The Associate/Developing Member is working toward implementation of all NCA Standards of Accreditation. The Associate/Developing Member agrees with and supports the mission and practices of the Maryland Children's Alliance.

Affiliate Member is available to a local multi-disciplinary team within an organization serving a jurisdiction in Maryland that is working to improve services for abused children through a collaborative approach to intervention and has been given this membership status by the National Children's Alliance. Requirements for the Affiliate Member include having a functioning MDT that includes Law Enforcement, Child Protective Services, Prosecution, Medical, Mental Health and Victim Advocacy; signed interagency agreements and MDT protocols, and child forensic interviews are conducted in a neutral and child-focused setting.

The Affiliate Member agrees with and supports the mission and practices of the Maryland Children's Alliance.

Satellite Member is a child friendly facility offering onsite forensic interviews and victim advocacy services under the sponsorship and oversight of an NCA Accredited Children's Advocacy Center and Accredited member of MCA. MCA membership supports the NCA requirements for the host CAC (holding accreditation) and the Satellite. The Satellite Member can participate in trainings and other benefits of membership; but for purposes of voting on official MCA business, only the host CAC can vote. The Satellite Member agrees with and supports of the mission and practices of the Maryland Children's Alliance.

Membership Procedures

- A prospective member must complete the membership application process and be approved by the executive committee. A member changing NCA status does not need to complete a new application.
- The Chapter Director will send acknowledgment to the applicant after receiving a membership application.
- The Chapter Director will review all applications for completeness and forward copies to the President of the chapter.
- The President will review the application with the executive committee to determine if the basic requirements are met for membership into the MCA. If further information is needed prior to bringing the application to the Board, a site visit may be scheduled and completed by one of the executive committee members and or the Chapter Director. The site visit will consist of a tour of the facility and a meeting with the program manager and others as appropriate.
- A report will be made to the executive committee with a recommendation regarding membership. This recommendation will be voted on by the committee. A majority vote will determine approval or rejection. This vote must occur within 60 days of the application date.
- All applicants will be informed in writing of their membership status.

Membership Responsibilities

- Annual membership application
- Annual dues payment in a timely manner
- Provide data to MCA at least twice a year
- Write letters of support as requested

Voting

Each Accredited, Associate/Developing and Affiliate member organization will have one vote in matters requiring a membership vote. Satellites are governed by their Accredited Center and therefore, do not have a separate vote.

Dues

The executive committee will determine a dues schedule. Annual dues will be paid in full within 60 days of the invoice. All members will adhere to the MCA dues schedule in order to remain in good standing. The executive committee will evaluate and set dues annually.