



**Committee:** Directly to Council  
**Committee Review:** N/A  
**Staff:** Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst  
**Purpose:** To receive testimony/final action - vote expected  
**Keywords:** CASA

AGENDA ITEM #4  
December 14, 2021  
**Public Hearing/Action**

## SUBJECT

Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget; Montgomery County Government; Department of General Services; \$150,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves); CASA Workforce Development and Citizenship Center; and Amendment to the FY22 Operating Budget for the Montgomery County Government Resolution 19-872, Section G, Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Contract Award Status: CASA de Maryland, Inc. Lead Sponsor: County Council

## EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

## COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- This special appropriation was introduced on December 7, 2021.
- There is no Committee recommendation. A motion is required.

## DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

CASA has been one of the County's most important partners in supporting immigrant and Latino residents. They have operated Welcome Centers in Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Rockville that have matched laborers with employers and prevented low wage workers from wage theft and abuse. CASA provides job training, assistance with citizenship, and legal education and representation. CASA has proposed establishing a Workforce Development and Citizenship Center at the site of the Rockville Welcome Center, which is a County-owned facility. This funding will allow the Department of General Services and CASA to complete design work needed for a detailed cost estimate for renovation of the building.

## SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- CASA reports that through the Montgomery County Welcome Centers and centers in Langley Park and Baltimore they place workers in about 11,000 jobs annually, generating more than \$3.3 million in annual earnings for workers and their families.
- CASA will expand its center in Rockville to provide a workforce development program that will help people to obtain longer-term employment at higher wages, increasing self-sufficiency.
- Additional training space will provide instruction in additional areas such as Building Maintenance Engineering, solar panel installation, and jobs in the healthcare industry. Expansion of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) instruction will be provided. Culturally and linguistically competent soft skills/life skills training will be provided.
- Many workers come to the Welcome Centers with skills or certifications from their country of origin that do not translate to the United States' job market. CASA partners with community

colleges and unions. Workers receive industry recognized certificates which increase earnings. CASA also trains workers on how to be safe on the job and exercise their rights as workers.

- At the center, CASA will connect residents with legal education and services, information on citizenship, and other county supports.
- The proposal will allow CASA to fully renovate 4,400 square feet of unused space and fulling finishing 2,100 square feet of space for use as training classrooms.

**Attached:**

Appropriation Resolution

1-2

Council Sponsored Special Appropriation: Racial Equity and Social Justice 3-5

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Resolution No: \_\_\_\_\_  
Introduced: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Lead Sponsor: County Council

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SUBJECT: Special Appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget  
Montgomery County Government; Department of General Services  
\$150,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)  
CASA Workforce Development and Citizenship Center  
and  
Amendment the FY22 Operating Budget for the Montgomery County  
Government, Resolution 19-872, Section G, Designation of Entities for Non-  
Competitive Contract Award Status: CASA de Maryland, Inc.

Background

1. Section 308 of the Montgomery County Charter provides that a special appropriation: (a) may be made at any time after public notice by news release; (b) must state that the special appropriation is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency or to act without delay in the public interest; (c) must specify the revenues necessary to finance it; and (d) must be approved by no fewer than six members of the Council.
2. Montgomery County has partnered with CASA for many years to provide a range of services to immigrant residents and residents who do not speak English as their preferred language. CASA supports the County's response to the COVID pandemic, eviction prevention efforts, provides "Know your Rights" and legal assistance regarding immigration and citizenship, and operates Welcome Centers that provide employment and training services to low-wage and day workers. CASA has effectively eliminated wage theft and abuse for those linking to employment through the Welcome Centers.
3. CASA is proposing renovating and expanding the space it uses in the County-owned building that is the Rockville Welcome Center to create a Workforce Development and Citizenship Center. This Center will provide vocational programs and life skills training that will help residents obtain jobs with improved earnings and stability. As these renovations will be to a County-owned building it appropriate for the County to fund the

detailed design that will produce a final cost estimate. The Department of General Services estimates that \$150,000 is adequate for this task.

4. The public was notified and a public hearing was held.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following actions:

1. A special appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget of the Department of General Services is approved as follows:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$0	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000	General Fund Reserves

2. This resolution amends Resolution 19-872, Section G, FY22 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Award Status to add a new contract with CASA de Maryland, Inc for the purpose of “Design and cost estimate for Workforce Development and Citizenship Center.”
3. The County Council declares that this action is necessary to act in response to a public health or safety emergency and to act without delay in the public interest.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

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Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.  
Clerk of the Council

## **Council Sponsored Special Appropriation: Racial Equity and Social Justice**

### **SUBJECT:**

Special Appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget  
**CASA Workforce Development and Citizenship Center**  
\$150,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)  
Lead Sponsor: County Council

Introduced December 7, 2021; Public Hearing and Action scheduled for December 14, 2021

### **Description and Background**

This special appropriation will provide funding to the Department of General Services to undertake the design work necessary to complete a detailed cost estimate for renovations to the County-owned facility in Rockville to transition from the current Welcome Center to a Workforce Development and Citizenship Center operated by CASA.

CASA proposes to expand its center in Rockville to provide a workforce development program that will help people to obtain longer-term employment at higher wages, increasing self-sufficiency. The proposal will allow CASA to fully renovate 4,400 square feet of unused space and fulling finishing 2,100 square feet of space for use as training classrooms. Additional training space will provide instruction in additional areas such as Building Maintenance Engineering, solar panel installation, and jobs in the healthcare industry. Expansion of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) instruction will be provided. Culturally and linguistically competent soft skills/life skills training will be provided.

Many workers come to the Welcome Centers with skills or certifications from their country of origin that do not translate to the United States' job market. CASA partners with community colleges and unions. Workers receive industry recognized certificates which increase earnings. CASA also trains workers on how to be safe on the job and exercise their rights as workers. At the center, CASA will connect residents with legal education and services, information on citizenship, and other county supports.

CASA reports that through the Montgomery County Welcome Centers and centers in Langley Park and Baltimore they place workers in about 11,000 jobs annually, generating more than \$3.3 million in annual earnings for workers and their families.

CASA provides services to educated people about citizenship and assist them with the process. This can include an eligibility analysis, preparing the preparing citizenship application (completing N-400 Form). In addition to citizenship services, CASA provides assistance completing the application for the certificate of citizenship, and for renewing or replacing the green card.

## Data

Data from the Montgomery County 2019 Racial Equity Profile for Montgomery County<sup>1</sup> completed by Jupiter Independent Research Group for the Office of Legislative Oversight includes the following data that is relevant to the CASA proposal to increase job training, education that includes professional certificates, assistance with job placement, training in life skills, and classes for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). The proposal is expected to increase people's ability to gain stable employment with higher earnings. Earning potential is impacted when a person has no or only high school degree or GED.

<b>Poverty by Race/Ethnicity 2017</b>	<b>Under 18</b>	<b>All Ages</b>
White	3.4%	4.0%
Asian	5.8%	5.8%
Black/African American	18.7%	11.2%
Latino/Hispanic	15.8%	11.1%
Other	20.2%	14.6%

The American Community Survey reported that the 2017 median income for White households was \$119,426 compared to \$72,587 for Black households and \$71,847 for Latino households.

<b>No High School Degree or GED 2017</b>	
White	5.6%
Asian	8.1%
Black/African American	5.4%
Latino/Hispanic	31.6%
Other	38.2%

<b>Only High School Degree or GED</b>	<b>Under 18</b>
White	10.6%
Asian	9.7%
Black/African American	22.2%
Latino/Hispanic	23.2%
Other	27.3%

<b>Dropout of School in Grades 9 to 12</b>	<b>Under 18</b>
White	2.1%
Asian	0.9%
Black/African American	6.3%
Latino/Hispanic	13.8%
Other	4.7%

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2019%20Reports/RevisedOLO2019-7.pdf>

The Urban Institute report, *Racial Inequities in Montgomery County: 2011-15*<sup>2</sup>, says that American Community Survey data shows that more than half of Black and Hispanic families had annual incomes of less than \$75,000 compared to 16% of White families.

Regarding income from employment, this same report says, of those age 16 and older, 49 percent were working full time in Montgomery County...Of those working full time, Black and Hispanic workers were more likely to earn less than \$35,000. A little less than half of Hispanic residents and one-third of black residents aged 16 and older in Montgomery County working full time earned less than \$35,000, compared with only 10 percent of whites.

The Latino Health Initiative Blueprint for Latino Health 2017 – 2026<sup>3</sup> says, “We are hard workers with high unemployment levels.” It further notes that Latinos have higher unemployment levels than the population in general and as compared to the white population and that about 60% of Latinos in Montgomery County work in services (34%), natural resources, construction, and maintenance (19%), and production, transportation, and movement of materials (7%). Recommendations in the Blueprint include, “the county, non-profit organizations, and employers should provide Latinos with opportunities for internships, clinical practice, and practical job experience, as well as stepping stone job opportunities.”

Written by: Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/95386/2017.12.28\\_montgomery\\_county\\_finalized\\_4.pdf](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/95386/2017.12.28_montgomery_county_finalized_4.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.lhiinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Blueprint-Outreach.pdf>