

CASA Volunteer Job Description

CASA of Kay and Noble Counties' Court Appointed Special Advocate

BASIC FUNCTION

A CASA volunteer is a trained community volunteer appointed by a district court judge to speak for the best interests of an abused child. A CASA volunteer is an official part of the judicial proceedings, working alongside social workers and attorneys. By handling only one or two cases at a time, a CASA volunteer has time to thoroughly explore the history and circumstances of each assigned case.

SUPERVISION

Direct supervision and guidance is provided by CASA Program Staff, either Program Director or Advocate Coordinator. CASA volunteers report monthly to supervisor(s) in person, by phone or by written report.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Complete an extensive, independent review of each case:
 - ◆ Meet face to face with child at least once a month (twice a month is recommended.)
 - ◆ Speak with the child and relevant adults- parents, family members, DHS caseworkers, school officials, doctors, and others involved in the child's life that might have facts about the case.
 - ◆ Review appropriate records and reports, including medical and school records.
 - ◆ Observe the child and significant other parties.
- Report findings to the court by submitting formal reports to the judge at every scheduled case review:
 - ◆ Provide a written report containing factual information to the CASA Program office seven business days prior to review hearings.
 - ◆ Attend court review hearings concerning the child— two to four per year.
- Ensure representation of the child's best interests:
 - ◆ Attend all relevant court hearings to see that all relevant facts are presented.
 - ◆ Attend appropriate interagency meetings regarding the child.
 - ◆ Participate in case conferences concerning the child.
- Monitor case following a court hearing or decision as designated by the court:
 - ◆ Ensure that the judicial and child welfare systems are moving ahead to secure a safe, permanent home for the child.
 - ◆ Ensure that court-ordered services are provided to the child and family.
- Consult regularly with the supervising staff member concerning assigned case:
 - ◆ Develop an advocacy plan.
 - ◆ Review progress and reports.

TRAINING/SUPPORT PLAN

- Volunteers are required to attend approximately 30 hours of pre-service training and 12 hours of in-service training annually.
- Volunteers follow guidelines established by the National CASA Association.
- Volunteers have access to additional training opportunities offered by other agencies.
- Volunteers receive direct supervision and guidance from program staff.
- Volunteers are encouraged to call their volunteer coordinator at any time with questions/concerns.

TIME COMMITMENT

- Volunteers are asked to make a twelve-month commitment to the program.
- Volunteers are expected to be available for case assignment and to accept cases immediately upon completion of pre-service training, unless other arrangements have been made.
- Volunteers, on average, spend 8–10 hours a month on each case.

Knowledge and Skills

- Ability to keep all information gathered (client and court) confidential.
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- Ability to respect and relate to people from various backgrounds.
- Ability to transport self.
- Ability to maintain objectivity, utilize good judgment and maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Does not require specific educational training beyond a high school diploma or GED.
- Must be 21 years of age or older

BENEFITS

Although we cannot provide you with monetary rewards, there are many benefits to being a CASA volunteer. These include the opportunity to:

- Make a difference in the life and future of a child who has been a victim of abuse and/or neglect.
- Help a child find permanency in a safe, loving home.
- Assist judges in obtaining a clear picture of a child's life and needs.
- Gain an understanding of district and family courts, legal proceedings, and social service agencies.
- Develop/utilize personal communication skills.
- Develop/utilize leadership skills.
- Utilize your past personal or professional experience/skills.
- Form friendships with like-minded people in your community.
- Have access to training statewide.