



CASA Volunteer Description

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) are appointed by the Presiding Judge, County Family Part, to ensure that the best interests of the child are met. In order to do this, the CASA must investigate the facts of the case, recommend a course of action to the court or Child Placement Review Board, facilitate the resolution of the presenting problems, and monitor the progress toward the established goals.

Qualifications of a CASA:

1. Interest in children, their rights, and special needs
2. Minimum age of 21
3. Ability to communicate orally and in writing-making oral and written reports to the Court, to the CASA supervisor and to other appropriate individuals.
4. Ability to pass both background and State Central Record Bureau checks.
5. Have four favorable references from sources other than relatives

Requirements of a CASA:

1. Training:
 - a. Attend an orientation session (approximately 2 hours)
 - b. Attend all basic training sessions (approximately 28 hours)
 - c. Attend court observation (approximately 4 hours)
 - d. Complete 12 hours in-service training sessions per year
 - e. Attend case review sessions as scheduled
2. Responsibilities:
 - a. Monthly visitation with child/children involved in your case
 - b. Maintain a complete, legible, up-to-date case file on each assigned case
 - c. Keep abreast of all deadlines and timetables involved in your case.
 - d. Turn in reports on time
 - e. Devote sufficient time to investigation and follow-up of assigned case.
3. Supervision:
 - a. Maintain communication with CASA supervisor on all case activity
 - b. Meet regularly for supervision

- c. Periodic assessments with CASA supervisor: initial 3 month review, plus an annual review after one year.
- 4. Confidentiality:
 - a. Maintain strict confidentiality in accordance with CASA SHaW's policies.
- 5. Commitment:
 - a. Minimum one year commitment

Specific duties of a CASA:

- 1. Investigate:
 - a. Gather all relevant facts through personal interviews and a review of all records, documents and clinical data.
 - b. Upon assignment to a case, interview interested parties (child, family members, foster family, teachers, doctors, therapists, social service worker, etc.) to determine facts.
 - c. Make agency visits to observe parent-child interaction.
 - d. Make visits to homes suggested as permanent or temporary placement.
 - e. Research alternatives available for the child (relatives, foster placement, etc.).
 - f. Work with relevant parties to develop a permanency plan for the child.
- 2. Advocate and Recommend:
 - a. Ensure that all relevant facts are before the court at hearings, through written reports and possibly direct testimony.
 - b. Prepare a written report stating findings and a recommendation for permanent disposition of the case.
 - c. Submit the report to supervisor no fewer than ten days prior to the court hearing.
 - d. Appear in Court/Child Placement Review Board hearings to make recommendation and observe what is decided with regards to the case.
- 3. Facilitate and Monitor:
 - a. Ensure that the court, social service representatives and legal counsel fulfill their obligations to the child in a timely fashion.
 - b. Assist in the implementation of any plan prescribed by the court (whether recommended in the CASA report or not).
 - c. Continue contact with the child, family and others to monitor progress towards goals decreed by the court.