



Court Appointed Special Advocate Volunteer Position Description

Job Title:	Court Appointed Special Advocate Volunteer	Position Type:	Volunteer
Department/Group:	Program/Reports to Advocate Supervisor	Average Hours/Week	2-5 hours/week; 10-15 hours/month
Supervision Responsibility:	N/A	Travel Required:	Weekly travel to child's placement, optional in or out of state travel 1-2 X/ per year for conferences
Minimum Qualifications:	Must be 21 years of age and meet qualifications below	Level/Salary Range	N/A
Date posted:	Ongoing yearly training sessions	Posting Expires	N/A
Contact	Raquel Brace, Program Manager Phone: 517-331-9316, Email: raquelbrace@casaforkidsinc.org Address: 3303 W Saginaw St Suite B2, Lansing MI 48912		
Mission:	The mission of CASA for Kids, Inc. is to provide volunteer advocates to work independently for the best interests of each child of service coming within the jurisdiction of the Michigan Barry, Eaton, & Ingham County Courts.		
General Description/Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advocacy to ensure the best interest of children in the system due to abuse or neglect. • Provide independent, factual information to the court regarding children in the assigned case. • Factually and objectively report findings and observations to the court in a Court Report. • Monitor assigned case until the terms of the court order have been fulfilled and the child has permanency (average 1.5-year commitment). 			
Qualifications: Required Skills/ Knowledge, Personal Qualities:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be at least 21 years of age. • Must have access to transportation. • Must successfully pass screening requirements which include a written application, personal interview, three personal references, criminal background check, and Child Abuse Central Registry check. • Must successfully complete at least 30 hours of initial CASA Training. • Must be able to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. • Must be polite and professional with dealing with other interested parties in the case. • Must be able to respect and relate to people from various backgrounds (cultural, economic, and educational). • Must be able to gather and record factual information accurately. • Must be able to maintain objectivity. • Must be able to keep the child's best interest as the priority. • Must be able to keep information confidential and work within established program guidelines. • Must be able to remain on an assigned case until it closes. 			
Duties and Responsibilities:			

- Complete 30 hours of training with additional court room observation time prior to being assigned a case.
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters related to CASA cases.
- Visit face to face with each assigned child weekly, and make other contacts as necessary.
- Obtain a first-hand clear understanding of the child's needs and the situation by reviewing all relevant documents or records and meeting with the child, parents, placement, caseworkers, social workers, and teachers.
- Obtain information from mental health, educational, and other community systems involved with the child to ensure the child's needs are met in these areas.
- Participate in other meetings regarding the child (i.e. Family Team Meetings, school meetings).
- Maintain ongoing communication with the foster care worker, guardian ad litem, care taker and other involved professionals.
- Complete an independent assessment of each case and report information, significant case developments, and fact based recommendations in a Court Report.
- Make recommendations for specific appropriate services for the child and, when appropriate, the child's family.
- Make recommendations concerning permanency for the child and/or monitor progress towards the identified permanency plan.
- Discuss all recommendations concerning the case with Supervisor prior to submitting them in a Court Report.
- Submit completed Court Reports in the accepted report format to the Supervisor 10 days prior to each scheduled hearing date. The Supervisor will distribute the report to all parties.
- Attend court hearings for the case and provide court testimony on behalf of the child's best interest.
- Monitor and follow up on case progress and compliance with court orders and the service plan.
- Maintain complete case records, including appointments, meetings, and information gathered about the child and the child's life circumstances.
- Return case file to the program upon case closure.
- Report suspected child abuse and neglect to the CASA Supervisor, Centralized Intake for reporting suspected abuse and neglect, and to the child's foster care worker.
- Consult/meet regularly with Supervisor concerning assigned case.
- Participate in a minimum of 12 hours of ongoing training annually.
- Attend an annual face-to-face evaluation session with Supervisor.
- Complete the CASA Volunteer Monthly Progress Report.
- Report hours on a monthly basis.
- Report any changes in background check status.

Parameters:

- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from serving on cases where they may know any of the parties or have an interest in the outcome other than the best interests of the child.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from providing direct services to clients or families unless previously authorized to do so by the CASA Director. Direct services include, but are not limited to therapeutic counseling, supervising visits, providing legal advice, providing mental health advice, and arranging appointments such as medical or counseling appointments.
- CASA Volunteers do not provide diagnoses for medical, educational or psychiatric needs.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from questioning a child regarding a precipitating incident or allegation involving child abuse or neglect.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from talking with a judge about a case unless in court where all dialogue is recorded.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from obtaining information regarding parents without a signed consent form.

- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from making promises to clients regarding outcomes of hearings, placement of children or other issues defined by Court order or agency role descriptions.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from withholding information or promising to keep a secret.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from violating the child’s confidentiality.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from transporting children.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from having a child at their home.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from using court orders or their CASA ID to access any information other than information for their assigned case.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from discussing information with the media.
- CASA Volunteers are prohibited from representing the organization with the press or through other official correspondence, including use of the organization’s letterhead.

CASA is an Equal Opportunity Organization. I have received and reviewed the CASA Volunteer Position Description and I certify that I am able to complete the essential functions of the position with or without accommodations.

Signature

Date