
COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

OBJECTIVE

To advocate for children who come to the attention of the juvenile court primarily as a result of abuse or neglect, or dependency.

QUALIFICATIONS

Volunteers must be 21 years of age and have successfully completed screening requirements; which include an application, personal interview, three references, and a criminal and child abuse background check. Volunteers should also be willing to dedicate 10-15 hours per month to this obligation, although it may not take this much time.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- A CASA volunteer respects a child(ren)'s inherent right to grow up with dignity in a safe environment that meets that child(ren)'s needs and best interests.
- A CASA volunteer ensures that the child's best interests are represented at every stage of the case.
- A CASA volunteer reports any new incidents of abuse or neglect to the CASA supervisor and the appropriate authorities (WCH, DCFS, LCFS caseworkers, supervisors, etc.).
- A CASA volunteer gathers records (IA, most recent Service Plans) meets and interviews appropriate parties involved in the case, including the child(ren), biological parents, foster parents, and help create/monitor a permanency plan for the child(ren) and whether appropriate services, including reasonable efforts, are being provided to the child(ren) and family.
- A CASA volunteer if possible, attends all juvenile court hearings, Child & Family Team Meetings, Administrative Case Review, and all other hearings and meetings which pertain to the case.
- A CASA volunteer maintains complete records and documentation about the case, including appointments, interviews, and information gathered about the child(ren), biological and foster parents (as deemed necessary) through the Optima electronic data collection system.
- A CASA volunteer submits recommendations concerning the case to the court in a signed, factual, written report.
- A CASA volunteer maintains contact with CASA supervisors, biological parents, agency case workers/supervisors, and other parties involved in the case, especially the child(ren), **at least once a month.**
- A CASA volunteer maintains complete confidentiality regarding information about the child(ren), biological parents, as well as information regarding other parties involved in the case.
- A CASA volunteer exhibits professionalism in behavior and appearance.

- A CASA volunteer cannot be related to any parties involved in the case assigned to him or her or employed in a position and/or agency that might result in a conflict of interest.
- A CASA volunteer does not provide direct services to any parties that could lead to a conflict of interest or potential liability, or cause the child(ren) or family to become dependent on the CASA volunteer for services that should be provided by other agencies or organizations.

TRAINING

A CASA volunteer completes a 30-hour initial training course, which includes but is not limited to:

- Dynamics and human behavior associated with child abuse and neglect
- Policies and procedures of the CASA program, Department of Children and Family Services, and the Macon County Juvenile Court
- Relevant local, state, and federal child welfare laws
- Permanency planning and Family Preservation
- Cultural Diversity, sensitivity, and knowledge of various cultures & ethnicities
- Communication, interview skills, and advocacy
- The role and responsibilities of a CASA volunteer
- Learning & utilizing the Optima computer system for documentation & reporting

As part of their training, a CASA volunteer also observes a juvenile court proceeding. A CASA volunteer completes a minimum of 12 hours of in-service training each year, following their first year of service.

TIME COMMITMENT

Once assigned to a case, a CASA volunteer makes a commitment to:

- Maintain monthly contact with the child(ren), biological parents, child welfare agency caseworker, school/daycare (as needed).
- Maintain and monitor the case until a permanent placement is obtained for the child(ren) involved.

SUPERVISION

The CASA volunteer works under the guidance and supervision of a CASA Advocate Supervisor having at a minimum monthly contact.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Macon County CASA is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination as an Equal Opportunity Employer. It is the objective of this organization to assure equal opportunity in all aspects of recruitment and employment of employees and/or volunteers. Further, it is the policy of Macon County CASA to maintain and promote nondiscrimination regarding race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry, marital status, gender, physical or mental handicap unrelated to ability, sexual orientation, religion, political philosophy, unfavorable discharge from military service or age in all phases of employment or volunteer practices and facilities in accordance with all applicable laws and Executive Orders.