



Court Appointed Special Advocates of Vermilion County
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CASA Advocate Job Description

General Description

The Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) are trained volunteers whose roles are to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in the Vermilion County Juvenile Court system. Herein the CASA Advocate is referred to as the “Advocate”.

Qualifications

The Advocate must have the following qualifications:

- Age 21 or older
- Possess emotional maturity, stability, and common sense
- Be objective and flexible
- Exhibit self-assurance and assertiveness
- Have the ability to deal with occasional hostility and rejection
- Be able to keep information confidential
- Be able to work within established guidelines
- Have the ability to interview, observe, listen, and analyze written material
- Be able to write clearly and concisely
- Have the ability to make decisions and set goals
- Be willing to commit to the program for a minimum of one year

Accountability

Upon successful completion of pre-service training, background, and reference checks, the Advocate will be formally accepted as an advocate at the official swearing-in ceremony. Advocates are expected to conduct themselves professionally and adhere to the policies as set out in the Advocate Handbook. The Advocate reports directly to their assigned supervisor.

Responsibilities

1. Complete an intensive independent investigation of the case
 - Interview the child and all relevant parties to the case
 - Meet with the child in-person at least once a month
 - Review appropriate records and reports – DCFS, schools, health care, etc.
 - Participate in case conferences concerning the child
 - Observe the child and significant others

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2. Report findings to the Court
 - Provide a written report containing factual information
 - Provide the Court with as clear a statement as possible to what is in the child's best interest.
 - Research/investigate available placement alternatives for the child including, but not limited to, relatives, foster care, and group homes.
 - If appropriate, submit supplemental written reports to the court concerning changes in circumstances, recommendations for modifications in disposition, or compliance with the court orders.
3. Ensure representation of child's best interest
 - Attend all court proceedings to see that all relevant facts are presented
 - Attend appropriate inter-agency meetings regarding the child
 - Monitor the case following a court hearing or decision as designated by the Court
 - Attend ACRs (administrative case review), IEPs (individual education plan) meetings, and any other meetings regarding the child/ren.
 - Continue contact with the child (at least monthly), family, or others (as ordered by the Court) to monitor progress.
4. Attend training arranged by the CASA office
 - Attend pre-service training sessions
 - Attend 12 hours of in-service training per year (continuing education)
5. Consult with the CASA office
 - Review the case plan and set goals
 - Discuss preliminary findings
 - Review progress in the case
 - Review court report
6. Record Keeping
 - Submit volunteer service and in-service hours monthly
 - Maintain complete confidential case file which includes all information collected on the case.
 - Return the case file to the CASA office when the file is closed or I resign.