

CASA of Northeast Tennessee

Volunteer Job Description



BASIC FUNCTION

A CASA volunteer is a trained community volunteer appointed by a juvenile court judge to speak for the best interests of an abused and/or neglected child. A CASA volunteer is an official part of the judicial proceedings, working alongside attorneys and social workers. 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 the volunteer coordinator(s). CASA volunteers fill out a monthly supervision sheet.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Complete an extensive, independent review of each case:
 - Meet face to face with child at least twice a month.
 - Speak with the child and relevant adults (parents, family members, school officials, doctors, and others involved in the child's life that might have facts about the case).
 - Review appropriate records and reports.
 - Observe the child and significant others.
- Report findings to the court by submitting formal reports to the judge at every scheduled hearing/review:
 - Provide a written report containing factual information to the CASA program office seven business days prior to every hearing.
 - Attend court hearings concerning the child.
- Ensure representation of the child's best interests:
 - Attend all 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 volunteer coordinator concerning assigned case:
 - Develop a case plan.
 - Review progress and reports.

TRAINING/SUPPORT PLAN

- Volunteers are required to attend approximately 35 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 required to make a twelve-month commitment to the program.
- Volunteers are required to attend all court hearings on their cases.
- 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 10–15 hours a month on each case.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

- Ability to keep all clients and court information 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.
- A basic understanding of child development and family relationships.
- Good common sense.
- 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 juvenile courts, legal proceedings, and social service agencies.
- Develop/utilize communication skills.
- Develop/utilize assertiveness.
- Utilize your past experience/skills.
- Form friendships with like-minded people in your community.
- Have access to training statewide.