

# **Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)**

## **Volunteer Role Description**

**Introduction:** A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a trained community volunteer appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interests of abused or neglected children in foster care. CASAs provide critical support by ensuring that the children are placed in safe, permanent homes as quickly as possible. They serve as the child's voice in court and collaborate with attorneys, social workers, and other service providers to achieve the best outcomes for the children.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

- 1. Child Interaction:**
  - Visit the child(ren) at least once a month.
  - Explain the CASA role to the child(ren) and their caregivers.
  - Advocate for the child in the community and court.
- 2. Information Gathering:**
  - Conduct independent investigations by speaking with the child, parents, guardians, caregivers, and relevant adults.
  - Review all records related to the child's case, including court documents, medical records, and school reports.
  - Collaborate with the child's case manager, attorney, and other service providers to gather comprehensive information.
- 3. Court Involvement:**
  - Prepare written reports for all court hearings and testify if necessary.
  - Attend and actively participate in all court hearings and relevant meetings.
  - Make independent, objective recommendations to the court in the child's best interest.
- 4. Case Monitoring:**
  - Monitor the implementation of court orders and service plans.
  - Ensure that the child's needs are being met and that the case progresses towards permanency.
  - Consult regularly with the CASA supervisor or coordinator to develop and review the CASA case plan.
- 5. Confidentiality:**
  - Maintain strict confidentiality of all case-related information.

### **Qualifications/Requirements:**

- A sincere concern for the welfare of children.
- Must be at least 21 years of age.
- Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing.
- Objectivity and the ability to relate to people from diverse backgrounds.
- Must complete a comprehensive 40-hour pre-service training program, followed by 12 hours of continued learning annually.

- Ability to commit to the program for at least 18 months or until the case reaches permanency.
- Must pass a criminal background check and federal fingerprinting.
- Volunteers are required to transport themselves to various locations as needed.

### **Training and Supervision:**

- Pre-service training is developed by National CASA and adapted by the local CASA program. It includes 30 hours of classroom training and 10 hours of court observation.
- Ongoing supervision and support are provided by program staff.
- CASA volunteers are expected to participate in regular in-service training to maintain and enhance their skills.

### **Time Commitment:**

- CASA volunteers are expected to dedicate approximately 10-15 hours per month to their cases, which includes visiting the child, preparing court reports, and attending hearings and meetings.
- The volunteer's commitment is crucial, as continuity of advocacy until case closure is in the best interest of the child.

**Conclusion:** CASA volunteers play a vital role in ensuring that abused and neglected children do not become lost in the judicial system. By speaking up for the child's best interests, CASAs help secure safe, permanent homes where these children can thrive.

Northeast Georgia CASA is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program



Northeast Georgia CASA  
11 N. Sage Street  
Toccoa, GA 30577  
706-886-1098