



Volunteer Description

CASA of the Parkland

Location: 24th Circuit, MO

(Madison, Ste. Genevieve, St. Francois, Washington Counties)

MISSION:

The mission of CASA of the Parkland is to recruit, train, and support community volunteers who assist the courts in protecting the best interests of abused and neglected children in the 24th Circuit.

REQUIRED SKILLS:

- Ability to keep all client and court information confidential
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing
- Ability to respect and relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural, educational) in a variety of settings
- Ability to transport self to a variety of locations
- Ability to deal with hostility, anger and other emotional attitudes
- Ability to maintain objectivity
- Ability to gather and record factual information accurately
- A basic understanding of child development
- A basic understanding of family relationships

SUMMARY OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Complete an intensive independent review of each case:

- Speak with the child and relevant adults
- Review appropriate records and reports
- Observe the child and significant others

Report findings to the court:

- Provide a written report containing factual information
- Attend court hearings concerning the child
- Participate in case conferences concerning the child

Ensure representation of the child's best interest:

- Attend all court hearings to see that all relevant facts are presented
- Attend appropriate interagency meetings regarding the child
- Monitor the case for compliance with all court orders

- Consult with CASA staff on a regular basis

Advocate for the child:

- Provide recommendations to the court as to the well-being of the child
- Present the child's wishes and needs to the court
- Communicate with the child about the court process as necessary

Remain independent while working as a team with the Department of Social Services, Juvenile Office, attorneys, counselors, and other agencies involved:

- Attend court hearings involving the case
- Attend Family Support Team meetings involving the child
- Attend other meetings related to the child
- Remain objective

Keep consistent contact with the child, relatives, foster parents, Children's Service Worker, Juvenile Officer, and CASA staff until the case has been formally closed by the court:

- Visit or talk with the child at least once a month to observe whether the child's needs are being met
- Observe parties involved in the case to make certain all court orders are being followed
- Monitor the progress of the goals outlined in court

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Be 21 years of age or older
- Successfully complete screening requirements which include a written application, personal interview(s), 3 references, a child abuse registry check, and a criminal background investigation
- Have adequate time to devote to the training and assigned case activity requirements (including a minimum of one child-visit per month) for a minimum of eighteen months

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- A CASA volunteer completes a minimum of 30 hours of initial training which includes policies and procedures of the CASA program, Department of Social Services and Juvenile Court dynamics and human behavior associated with child abuse and neglect, relevant local, state, and federal laws; permanency planning and family preservation, cultural diversity, communication, and interviewing skills; and the roles and responsibilities of a CASA volunteer. As part of training a CASA volunteer also observes court proceedings.
- A CASA volunteer completes a minimum of twelve hours of in-service training each year after the first year of training.

THE NATIONAL CASA ASSOCIATION AND CASA OF THE PARKLAND ARE COMMITTED TO BEING AN INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING WORKPLACE. No individual will be rejected because of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.