

SERVICE DESCRIPTION COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Fourth Judicial District CASA Program is to recruit, train, and supervise volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds to assist the court in protecting the best interests of abused and neglected children and thus improve the system's treatment of this vulnerable population.

Purpose

The Court Appointed Special Advocate serves by court order as an Officer of the Garfield County District Court. The CASA serves on a volunteer basis as an independent advocate for the child's best interests, and monitors the case until a permanent plan is achieved for the child. The CASA is directly responsible to the CASA Supervisor, and come under the rules and guidelines of the Court.

Qualifications:

- A. Age 21 or older.
- B. Completion of CASA application and all criminal background checks.
- C. Participation in pre-service interview.
- D. Successful completion of CASA pre-service training.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- A. Conduct independent investigation of case
 - 1) Read and review all relevant records
 - a) Court's legal file
 - b) State's file (D.A. Office)
 - c) Department of Human Services Child Welfare file
 - 2) Interview all principals in case
 - a) Biological parents
 - b) Child(ren)
 - c) Foster parents or residential facility personnel
 - d) Extended family members, where appropriate
 - e) Others having pertinent information (teachers, physicians, etc.)
 - 3) Maintain all case information in strict confidence
 - a) Give case-related information to parties only
 - b) Ensure security of confidential material in case notebook
- B. Monitor and facilitate progress of case through system
 - 1) Ensure timely development of Service Plan
 - a) Verify that Service Plan is written and filed within guidelines of Court Policy
 - b) Report delays or problems to appropriate party
 - 2) Follow parents' progress in following Service Plan
 - a) Maintain independent personal contact with parent
 - b) Consult with service providers (therapists, etc.)
 - 3) Follow Department of Human Service's efforts to achieve permanence
 - a) Maintain contact with DHS Child Welfare Worker

- b) Attend Family Team meetings
 - c) Monitor implementation of Family Team meeting recommendations
 - d) Report deficiencies to CASA supervisor
 - 4) Ensure child is adequately cared for and special needs are addressed
 - a) Maintain contact with child and foster parents or residential facility personnel
 - b) Consult with service providers
 - c) Report deficiencies to appropriate party
 - 5) Consult with child's attorney regarding case
 - a) Keep attorney apprized of current case developments
 - b) Clarify any legal questions regarding case
 - 6) Consult with other appropriate persons
- C. Ensure all relevant information is available to the Court
 - 1) Prepare CASA report to the Court
 - a) Review DHS, D.A. and Court files
 - b) Make recommendations regarding case
 - c) Turn in court report to the CASA office by assigned date
 - d) Update CASA supervisor on case status
 - 2) Ensure CASA presence at Court
 - a) Attend all court hearings
 - b) Maintain accurate, up-to-date case file
- D. Keep CASA Supervisor informed of case activity and progress
 - 1) Maintain regular monthly contact with Supervisor
 - a) Discuss case advocacy issues and concerns
 - b) Develop appropriate case strategies
 - c) Keep Supervisor informed of illnesses or vacations which would temporarily prevent CASA activity
 - 2) Keep all case records accurate and up to date
 - a) Record all contact and activities immediately on case log sheets in case notebook
 - b) **Turn in Monthly Activity Sheet** by due date
 - c) Review case documentation with Supervisor
- E. Pursue professional development in the areas of child welfare, family issues and related topics to include 12 hours of In-Service Training per year.
- F. **Return notebook and all papers, notes, etc. pertaining to the case to the CASA when the case is dismissed or the CASA resigns. Sign a confidentiality case release form.**