



# WHAT IS A CASA?

(COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE)

## FOR VOLUNTEERS

CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocate. As a CASA, you are not paid for your time. You are a highly trained volunteer who will be assigned to a Dependency and Neglect case by the court. As the CASA, you will gather information and submit objective reports to the court and all parties involved. The information you gathered and present will help the judge to make decisions about what is in the best interest of the child(ren) involved in your case. As the CASA, you are trained to be a collaborative member of the professional team. Most importantly, as a CASA, you serve as the “eyes and ears of the court” and will stay involved until the child or children are in a safe, permanent home.

As a CASA you have four primary roles/goals:

- Gather** information about the child or children,
- Report** to the court by submitting a written report detailing the information gathered, including concerns and recommendations,
- Advocate** for the child or children’s best interest, and
- Monitor** the child or children in the case to ensure they are receiving the services and advocacy needed.

As the CASA Volunteer	As the CASA Volunteer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>You will</b> talk to people who may have information about the child or children on their case. These people can include parents, foster parents, relatives, school personnel, therapists, doctors, social workers, attorneys, etc.</li> <li>● <b>You will</b> get to know the child(ren) and their family.</li> <li>● <b>You will</b> be a consistent and supportive adult in the child(ren)’s life. <b>You will</b> be a friend to and an advocate for the child(ren).</li> <li>● <b>You will</b> take notes and submit a written, objective report to the court, which may include concerns or recommendations.</li> <li>● <b>You will</b> get copies of all the court documents and educational information on the case, and should be included in the meetings and communications about the case.</li> <li>● <b>You must</b> maintain confidentiality at all times.</li> <li>● <b>You will</b> represent the child or children’s best interest, and is a voice for the child or children in court.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>You will not</b> give legal, psychological, or medical advice.</li> <li>● <b>You will not</b> investigate the allegations of abuse and/or neglect</li> <li>● <b>You will not</b> make judgments regarding the opinions of professionals on the case, but you can offer your perspective.</li> <li>● <b>You will not</b> supervise visitation between the child(ren) and parents.</li> <li>● <b>You will not</b> hold any responsibility for the transportation of family members or the child or children.</li> <li>● <b>You are not</b> associated with the Department of Human Services or the courts - you are independent of both.</li> </ul>