



CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties Volunteer Advocate Job Description

Term of Appointment: One Year (Minimum)

Purpose of Appointment

1. To recommend to the Court, based on fact finding and investigation, the best interest of the child in placement or a child who may be a candidate for placement.
2. To believe in and achieve goal of CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties, that every child has the right to a safe and permanent home.
3. To provide the support and assistance required to assure permanence for children.

Responsible to: CASA Supervisor

Responsibilities of Position:

- Interview all parties, clients and professionals, as well as the child(ren) involved with the assigned case. Investigate institutions and foster homes where children may be placed. Complete an extensive independent review of the case in a timely manner including any documentation at the CASA and CPS offices related to the case.
- Obtain a clear understanding of the child(ren)'s situation and advocate for their best interest in the community through interfacing with mental health, medical, legal, educational and other community systems at least quarterly. Utilize as many factors and contacts as possible in determining the child's best interest.
- Maintain written case records including .appointments, interviews, information about the child (ren) , records reviewed, and time spent on the case.
- Meet the child(ren) face to face in a timely manner after appointment and in person at least once a month. Maintain other types of age-appropriate contact with the children including telephone calls, email, and/ or letters as applicable for the child's age and interests.
- Confer with the CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties Supervisor on a regular basis at a minimum of twice each month and prior to any final decision. Discuss court reports with CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties Supervisor prior to preparing the court report.
- Attend all staff meetings concerning the child.
- Communicate with the CPS caseworker and placement/caregiver at least monthly.
- Seek cooperative solutions among parties by maintaining communication with the child(ren)'s parents, family members, attorneys, teachers, and other service providers.

- Prepare and file court reports 14 days prior to scheduled hearing.
- Advocate for your CASA child(ren)'s best interests and permanency through the court system. Ensure that the judicial and child welfare systems are moving ahead to secure a safe, permanent home for the child(ren). If a child is freed for adoption, work to attain this goal as soon as possible.
- Monitor court proceedings and appear at all hearings involving the child(ren) assigned to you. If the child(ren) will be attending the hearing, explain what is expected to occur and explore the child's current reactions and feelings regarding the upcoming hearing.
- Monitor the case to ensure court orders are being carried out, and that services to the child(ren) and family are being furnished and that placement is appropriate.
- Accept support/resource assignments as requested by the CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties Supervisor.
- Maintain confidentiality of any and all information received and in your possession.

Report Suspected Abuse Immediately: Report any new or suspected incident of abuse or neglect to the **Child Abuse Hotline** 1-800-252-5400. Report these concerns to the CPS caseworker **AND** your CASA Supervisor.

Requirements of Position:

- Must be 21 years of age.
- Fill out an application for position, release forms, and provide at least three references, three of which are not related to the volunteer.
- Receive satisfactory results from a social security number verification, Texas and national criminal record check, Texas and national sex offender check and a Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry Check. Rechecks are required every two years of continuous service.
- Make an appointment at the CASA office for an interview and successfully complete it prior to initial training.
- Appear before the Court Judge to be sworn in as a Court Appointed Special Advocate.
- Complete initial 30 hours of pre-service training course.
- Sign Commitment Agreement to serve at a minimum of one year as a Court Appointed Special Advocate.
- Sign Pledge of Confidentiality
- Commit to a minimum of 10 hours per month investigating, visiting and obtaining information on the case(s) assigned.
- If employed, secure permission from employer for absence from work to attend periodic hearings and/or meetings.
- Obtain a minimum of 12 hours on-going training per year.

Qualification of Position:

- Willingness to work within the guidelines, policies, procedures and standards of CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties, Texas CASA, and National CASA Association.
- Must have ability to maintain objectivity.
- Must have effective communication skills, both orally and in writing.
- Must have conviction of the importance of providing for the best interest of children-at-risk.
- Must have time, interest and energy to do the job.
- Must have access to reliable transportation, a current driver’s license and insurance.
- Must have the ability to stand up for convictions.
- Must have the ability and willingness to receive guidance and direction.
- Must exhibit professionalism in behavior and appearance, demonstrate good human relations skills and work as part of a team.
- Must be respectful of and sensitive toward cultural and ethnic diversities.

I understand and acknowledge the job description, duties and responsibilities of being a Court Appointed Special Advocate for CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties. This agreement is entered into for the purpose of providing the best possible advocacy for the child(ren) with whom I work. I fully understand that failure to complete or comply with any of the above requirements may results in my termination from the volunteer team of CASA of Bell and Coryell Counties.

Signature of CASA Volunteer Advocate

Date

Advocate Supervisor Signature

Date