

“A powerful voice for children in foster care.”

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

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers are appointed by dependency court judges to investigate the circumstances of children who have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. The information they provide to the court assists judges in making more informed decisions about the children who appear before them.

### **Qualifications**

Anyone over the age of 25 who is committed to helping children may apply to become a CASA volunteer. No special educational background is required, but volunteers must have good communication skills, common sense, and good problem solving skills. CASA volunteers need to have access to a car and be able to show proof of state-required automobile liability coverage, and must commit to driving throughout the county to fulfill CASA duties as needed. Volunteers must also undergo a security clearance and be fingerprinted.

There are a few restrictions to becoming a CASA volunteer. A CASA cannot be:

- A current foster parent
- An employee of a group home or residential treatment center for foster children
- In the process of adopting a child through the dependency system
- Involved in a dependency court matter
- Employed by or volunteer with an agency which could present a conflict of interest.

### **Responsibilities**

- Complete the 36-hour CASA of Los Angeles pre-service Training Program.
- Commit an average of 5-6 hours per week to case activities on behalf of the child.
- Maintain regular contact with the child (visit at least once a month).
- Gather information about the child’s circumstances, evaluate the facts of the case independently, and provide recommendations to the court by means of written reports.
- Communicate sensitively and objectively with children, social workers, foster care providers, therapists, teachers, attorneys, parents or other family members who may be involved in the case.
- Maintain and submit monthly documentation of time spent and contacts made on the case.
- Attend court hearings.
- Complete 12 hours of continuing education each year. CASA of Los Angeles provides many educational opportunities including monthly in-service training.
- Fulfill a two-year commitment to CASA of Los Angeles.