

CASA OF SOUTH CENTRAL MISSOURI

VOLUNTEER ADVOCATE JOB DESCRIPTION

A 'volunteer' is anyone who without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the agency. A 'volunteer' must be officially accepted and enrolled by the agency prior to performance of the task. Unless specifically stated, volunteers shall not be considered as 'employees' of the program.

REQUIREMENTS

- 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
- Have the ability to communicate verbally and in written form

RESPONSIBILITIES

A CASA VOLUNTEER...

- Respects a child's inherent right to grow up with dignity in a safe environment that meets that child's best interests
- Visits the child at least once a month and provides supervisor with documentations as to reason why contact was unable to be made if a situation should arise
- Seeks to know and understand different cultural
- Reports any new incidents of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities and the CASASCMO supervisor
- Reviews records and interviews appropriate parties involved in the case, including the child to determine if a permanent plan has been created for the child and whether appropriate services including reasonable efforts, are being provided to the child and family
- Facilitates prompt, thorough reviews of the case, and ensures that the child's best interests are represented at every stage of the case
- Attends court hearings and all other hearings and meetings that pertain to the child
- Maintains complete records and documentation about the case, including appointments, interviews, and information gathered about the child
- Submits signed, written reports and recommendation concerning the case to the CASASCMO supervisor in a timely manner as required for court hearings
- Contacts the CASASCMO supervisor and other parties involved in the case at least once a month
- Maintains complete confidentiality regarding information about the child, as well as information regarding other parties involved in the case
- Exhibits professionalism and appearance

TRAINING

- A CASASCMO volunteer completes a minimum of 30 hours of initial training which includes policies and procedures of the CASASCMO 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 CASASCMO volunteer also observes court proceedings
- A CASASCMO volunteer completes a minimum of twelve hours of in-service training each year

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

- The advocate volunteer does not engage in the following activities
 - Giving legal advice or therapeutic counseling
 - Transporting a child/youth
 - Allowing children into the volunteer's home
 - Making placement arrangements for the child/youth. However, the volunteer may make recommendations to the team if familiar with facility or provider
 - Giving expensive gifts to the child/youth, or the child/youth's family or placement provider
 - Accepting gratuities/bribes or rewards from any party to a case to make a recommendation favorable to the party offering the gratuity or reward