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COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE SAN JUAN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

CASA JOB DESCRIPTION

A CASA is a volunteer appointed by the court to ensure that the needs of a child who may have been neglected or abused are met. In order to do this, the CASA must look into the facts of the case, recommend a course of action to the court, facilitate the resolution of the presenting problems, and monitor progress toward established goals.

I. Qualifications of a CASA are:

1. Interest in children, their rights, and special needs.
2. Time to devote to training sessions, investigation and follow-up of a case assigned (a one-year commitment averaging three to five hours a week.).
3. Ability to work with a child, family members, and professionals using tact, concern, and basic human relations skills.
4. Ability to communicate both verbally and in writing - making verbal and written reports to the court, to the CASA Coordinator; and to other persons as needed.
5. Ability to transport self to a variety of locations.
6. Must be a minimum of 21 years of age to serve as a CASA volunteer.

II. Requirements of a CASA:

1. Attend basic training sessions, approximately 20 hours in length.
2. Maintain strict confidentiality of client and court information.
3. Attend in-service training sessions on an on-going basis, fifteen hours per year.
4. After basic training, serve at least one child until a permanent plan has been implemented, often a period of one year.

5. Keep the CASA staff informed of all activities, and attend monthly supervision with CASA Case Supervisor.
6. Maintain an up-to-date and complete file on each case assigned.
7. Attend CASA group meetings to share ideas and concerns with other CASAs.
8. Be aware of deadlines and timetables involving an assigned case, and turn in all reports on time.
9. Complete evaluations, etc. which may be requested in order to monitor the entire CASA Program.

III. Specific Duties of a CASA:

1. Upon assignment to a case, interview the child, family members, foster family, teachers, social worker; and other interested parties to determine the facts. (Some interviews are by phone. By necessity some must be in person. In addition, any home suggested as a permanent or temporary placement for the child must be visited.)
2. Prepare a written report stating findings and a recommendation for a permanent disposition of the case, and **submit the report no less than a week prior to the court hearing.**
3. Appear in Court as needed for review hearings. Continue follow-up contacts, submit supplementary reports, and make new recommendations as needed, until a final disposition is made.
4. Bring any significant changes in the family situation to the attention of the court. Ensure that reviews by the court are done on schedule.