

FAQs

CASA of Mesa County



What is a CASA Volunteer?

CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocate. CASA volunteers are appointed by the court to advocate for a child. They learn about the needs of the child by regularly speaking with the child and everyone in their life, including relatives, foster parents, teachers, medical professionals, attorneys, social workers and others. CASAs use the information they gather to report back to the Court about the child's needs, the status of the case and the well-being of the child.

Is Training Provided for CASA Volunteers?

Yes. All CASA Advocates complete 30 hours of pre-service training - 15 hours of training in a classroom setting and 15 hours online. Volunteers learn about child welfare issues from experts in the field. They learn about working with the court system and the Department of Human Services. They learn about case assessment, permanency planning, interviewing techniques, and writing court reports, among other topics.

Continuing support is provided to volunteers through monthly in-service training, conferences, workshops and webinars. Support is also available through Peer Coaches, experienced volunteers who coach new volunteers as they begin their first case.

What Kind of Background or Experience is Required?

No specific educational background or professional experience is required. CASA Volunteers are dedicated individuals over the age of 21 who have a strong desire to advocate for abused children. Interested individuals must complete an application, provide recommendations, complete an interview with staff, and successfully pass a background check.

How Much Time is Required to be a CASA Volunteer?

Each case is unique. More time is spent in the beginning of a case, researching files and court documents and conducting interviews. CASA Volunteers schedule their own time, with the exception of required attendance at court hearings and team meetings. Once familiar with the case and the parties involved, a CASA volunteer spends an average of 4 - 8 hours a month. Many CASA Volunteers balance full-time or part-time employment with their CASA duties.

How Long Does a CASA Volunteer Remain on a Case?

The CASA Advocate continues with the case until the child is either returned home or adopted. Every case is different, but the average case lasts 18 to 24 months. Often children are moved from one foster care home to another, and can experience changes in case managers, judges, or schools. One of the primary benefits of a CASA Advocate is to be the one consistent person who is there for the child throughout the entire process.

How is a CASA Volunteer Different from an Attorney or DHS Case Manager?

The CASA Advocate is part of the judicial proceedings, working alongside attorneys and case managers as an appointed officer of the court. Unlike attorneys and social workers, however, the CASA Advocate speaks *exclusively* for the child.

How Does a Child in Foster Care Get a CASA Volunteer?

The Judge presiding over an active Dependency and Neglect case may choose to appoint a CASA to the case. Additionally, any person or agency having knowledge of the facts of a dependency case can request that the Judge appoint a CASA. Assignment of a CASA Advocate is made by CASA of Mesa County, based on availability.

Speak Up
for an abused child

970.242.4191
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