

Volunteer Job Description



The mission of Yamhill County CASA is to speak up for the best interests of abused and neglected children who are under the jurisdiction of the court.

Yamhill County CASA respects and celebrates diversity including race, ethnic origin, national origin, religion, political belief, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, marital status, age, and the presence of a sensory, mental, or physical disability. We also value diversity of viewpoints, life experience, talents, and ideas.

What is a CASA volunteer?

A CASA volunteer is a trained community volunteer appointed by a Judge to speak for the **best interest** of an abused and/or neglected child. A CASA volunteer works as an official part of the judicial proceedings, working alongside attorneys and social workers. The CASA volunteer ensures that the court ordered services are provided to the child and family.

What is in it for you?

You can change a child's story by helping them find a safe, stable, and loving home. You will gain an understanding of the juvenile dependency court system and other community services. This volunteer opportunity will help sharpen communication skills and build relationships with like-minded people in our community.

What is in it for the child or children you are advocating for?

Research has shown that children with a CASA volunteer are more likely to find a safe, permanent home. They are more likely to be adopted and are half as likely to reenter care. They tend to get more services and spend significantly less time in care. When you volunteer, children in care have a consistent role model, tend to do better in school, and tend to be more hopeful than children without a CASA.

All Casa Volunteers are Required to:

- Be at least 21 years old
- Have a background free of violent crimes and crimes against children
- Have good communication skills
- Maintain confidentiality

Preferred qualities include:

- A knowledge of child development and family relations
- An ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing
- Ability to be objective and respectful
- Keen observation skills

Roles and Responsibilities

As defined by Oregon Statue 419.112B, and how our program facilitates the statue

- Investigate all relevant information about the case
 - Complete an extensive, independent review of each case to gain a clear understanding of the needs and situation of the child(ren)
 - Meet face-to-face with the child(ren) a minimum of once every thirty days

- In addition to the child(ren), interview adults involved in the child(ren)'s life that could provide facts about the case such as parents, family members, school officials, doctors, ODHS caseworkers, resource parents, etc.
- Advocate for the child or ward, ensuring that all relevant facts are brought before the court
 - Submit a Court Report to CASA staff containing a description of family strengths, case progress since it last came before the court, concerns, and recommendations two weeks prior to each hearing or review based on facts and not opinions or bias
 - Speak in court to promote the child(ren)'s best interests including the right to safety, respect and permanency
 - Seek cooperative solutions among parties with the child(ren)'s best interests in mind
- Facilitate and Negotiate to ensure that the court, the Department of Human Services, if applicable, and the child or ward's attorney, if any, fulfill their obligations to the child or ward in a timely fashion; and
 - Meet with ODHS caseworkers, attorneys, and other case parties
 - Negotiate with case parties to implement services for the child
- Monitor all court orders to ensure compliance and to bring to the court's attention any change in circumstances that may require a modification to the court order
 - Attend all hearings, reviews, and interagency meeting regarding the child(ren)'s case
 - Inform the court promptly of important developments in the case
 - Ensure that the court ordered services are provided to the child(ren) and family

Additional Responsibilities & Requirements

A CASA volunteer will notify CASA staff of potential conflicts of interest with a case. A CASA volunteer will report any suspected abuse or neglect, following laws regarding mandatory reporting. A CASA volunteer will notify staff of any planned absences at scheduled meetings or hearings, changes of address, and any injuries or accidents that occur during volunteer activities. A CASA volunteer will submit Monthly Case Reports to staff that include case details, hours worked, and mileage traveled. A CASA volunteer will return all hard copies of case files, thumb drives, and notes to the office when a case is closed. A CASA volunteer is expected to commit to the program for at least the life of an assigned case.

Training & Continued Support Plan

- Direct support and guidance is always available from CASA staff and peer coordinators
- All applicants must complete 30 hours of Preservice Training before appointment as a court appointed special advocate
- Once appointed, CASA volunteers are required to attend 12 hours annually of additional in-service training and education. This can be achieved by:
 - Attending monthly CASA trainings offered through the program
 - Attending training opportunities offered by other agencies
 - Independent study utilizing books in the office library or watching relevant documentaries or lectures