



## COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE SAN JUAN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

### CASA JOB DESCRIPTION

A CASA is a volunteer appointed by the court to identify and advocate for the best interest of a child who has been neglected or abused. In order to do this, the CASA volunteer 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 San Juan CASA volunteer 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 eight to ten hours a month).
  3. Ability to work with a child, family members, and professionals using tact, concern, and basic human relations skills. Ability to communicate both verbally and in writing - making verbal and written reports to the court, to the San Juan CASA Program Director; and to other persons as needed.
  4. San Juan CASA Volunteers are from a variety of professional, educational and ethnic backgrounds.
  5. Ability to transport self to a variety of locations.
  6. Must be a minimum of 21 years of age to serve as a San Juan CASA volunteer.
- II. Requirements of a San Juan CASA volunteer:
  1. Attend basic training sessions, approximately 30 hours in length.
  2. Maintain strict confidentiality of client and court information. Sign an oath of confidentiality
  3. Attend in-service training sessions on an on-going basis, twelve hours per year.

4. After basic training, serve at least one child until a Permanency Plan has been implemented, often a period of one year. Have monthly in-person contact with the child/ren to ensure in-depth knowledge of the case and make fact based recommendations to the court.
5. Keep the San Juan CASA Program staff informed of all activities, and attend monthly supervision with San Juan CASA Case Supervisor. Keep records of hours and mileage on Contact Logs and turn them in monthly to the San Juan CASA Program office.
6. Maintain an up-to-date and complete file on each case assigned. Maintain all records safely and securely.
7. Attend CASA volunteer group meetings to share ideas and concerns with other CASA volunteers. Attend any meetings concerning the child and his/her parents such as Treatment Team meetings, Citizen Review Boards, Pre Hearing meetings.
8. Be aware of deadlines and timetables involving an assigned case, and turn in all reports on time.
9. Complete evaluations which may be requested in order to monitor the entire San Juan CASA Program.

### III. Specific Duties of a San Juan CASA volunteer:

1. Upon assignment to a case the CASA volunteer will obtain first hand a clear understanding of the needs and situation of the child by: reviewing all relevant documents and records of the case, visiting the child, family members, foster family, teachers, social worker, GAL, ICWA 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 five days prior to the court hearing.**
3. Appear in Court as needed for review hearings. Continue follow-up contacts, visit child/ren monthly, submit supplementary reports, and make new recommendations as needed. Bring any significant changes in the family situation to the attention of the court. Ensure that reviews by the court are done on schedule.

