

Court Appointed Special Advocate Case Work Policy

POLICY

Each Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) will be assigned to a case that involves one or more children. Through the duties of a CASA, the CASA will advocate in court for the best interest of the child, which is a safe permanent home.

PROCEDURE

1. CASA is assigned to a case by the CASA Program Manager.
2. CASA meets the child/children at least once a month. The Court expects you to know the child/children and advocate for the child/children. The CASA should help the child understand the court proceedings and relay any messages from the child to the judge.
3. CASA interviews those that work with the child to get a better idea of how the child is being effected. Interviews may include, Child Welfare case worker, foster parents, teachers, counselors, doctors, dentists, anyone with knowledge of the child.
4. The CASA will keep a case file that will include written factual notes of interviews and observations. Other materials included in the case file are court orders, court reports, and evaluations. File shall be kept in a secured manner, and remain confidential. Case files may be subpoenaed as a legal document.
5. The CASA will help keep all parties focused on the permanent plan for the child/children.
6. The CASA will participate in any planning or treatment team meeting regarding the child/children in order to keep informed of the progress regarding the permanent plan for the child/children.
7. The CASA will participate in the Citizen Review Board (CRB) process for the case. If the CASA needs to attend the CRB by phone, they must let the CASA Program Manager know 3 days in advance so arrangements can be made with the CRB Coordinator.
8. If the case plan for the child/children is adoption, the CASA shall serve as a part of the Adoption Committee for the child/children with access to Home Studies and other confidential materials.
9. The CASA will attend all court hearings for the case. Court Reports will be given to the CASA Program Manager at least 2 days prior to the court hearing.
10. The CASA has the right to request hearings and to subpoena, examine, and cross examine witnesses. CASAs may also file motions. This needs to be done in conjunction with the CASA Program Manager.
11. The CASA will be supervised by the CASA Program Manager. The CASA Program Manager serves as a consultant, guide, resource person, mentor, and supervisor. Contact with the CASA Program Manager should be no less than once a month.
12. A CASA's involvement with the case continues until either the case ends, the judge has determined that a CASA is no longer needed for the case, or the CASA resigns in writing from the case.
13. All of the CASA's records, including notes, must be returned to the CASA program when the case closes.

14. It is never appropriate for a CASA to initiate contact with a child or family once the appointment to the case has ended. Oregon Revised Statutes provide legal protection for CASAs by stating that CASAs "...shall be immune from any liability for acts or omission or errors in judgment made in good faith in the course and scope of that person's duties or employment as part of a CASA volunteer program." (ORS 419a.170(5)). This means that the CASA is protected only as long as you are acting within the role as a CASA and are legally appointed to the case. Once the CASA's appointment has ended, the protection has ended.