



## Advocate Coordinator Job Description

**Organization:** Alabama CASA Network, Inc. (Court Appointed Special Advocates)

**Status:** Full Time Position

**Organization Mission:** The Alabama CASA Network, Inc. exists to provide every abused, neglected or abandoned child in Alabama a competent, caring volunteer to advocate for the child's best interest in court.

CASAs (Court Appointed Special Advocates) volunteer to advocate for children who are involved in Dependency proceedings and often in the foster care system. These volunteers make the deepest commitment a volunteer can make: they dedicate their time and energy to building close, consistent relationships with foster youth ensuring their rights are protected and their voices heard. Visit Alabama CASA Network, Inc. at [www.alabamacasa.org](http://www.alabamacasa.org) to learn more about our work.

*To apply, please send cover letter and resume to Maggie Blaedow, Executive Director – [Maggie@alabamacasa.org](mailto:Maggie@alabamacasa.org). No phone calls, please.*

### Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in child development, psychology, sociology, social work, education or a related field. Extensive experience may be substituted for degree.
- Experience required (volunteer or paid) in any of the following areas: social services, child advocacy, volunteer supervision, training, non-profit management, volunteer CASA or guardian ad litem, child welfare, education, mental health.
- Necessary skill sets for success include community-building, relationship-building, organizational and administrative skills including budget management, and volunteer/employee supervision.
- Must be willing to work non-traditional hours.
- The ability to handle highly sensitive issues a must.

### Organizational Relationships

- Serves as coordinator of Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) services.
- Reports to the Executive Director of the Alabama CASA Network (ED) or Program Manager of \_\_\_\_\_ County (PM).
- Responsible for supervision of CASA advocates.
- Assists in training and continuing education of CASA advocates
- Provides community awareness and educational activities.
  - Assists in conducting mandated reporter education trainings as requested by counties, agencies and organizations within the judicial circuit.
  - Conducts speaking engagements as requested by ED / PM (i.e. Advocate recruitment, public service announcements, etc.)
  - Assist in writing grants for CASA.
  - Acts as child advocate in public child welfare forums.
  - Community presentations as requested by ED/PM.

### **III. Description of Key Responsibilities**

- Recruits and screen advocates\* on an ongoing basis to ensure that a sufficient number of CASAs are available for case assignment.
- Assists in providing pre-service and in-service training for advocates and facilitating peer support groups.
- Supervises CASA Advocates and assists them when necessary.
- Coordinates case assignment with the ED, PM, court, and DHR.
- Reviews and edits Advocates' court reports to ensure accuracy and content.
- Serves as liaison between the CASA program, local constituent groups and community organizations as directed by ED PM.
- Collaborates with ED and PM on advocate recognition.
- Participates community education efforts.
- Works in cooperation with the Executive Director, Director of Development, Program Manager, Board of Directors, or appropriate Court official in the areas of resource development, public awareness, and planning/evaluation.
- Maintains program and advocate files and records.
- Ensures background screens are completed on advocates.
- Maintains accurate records of advocate hours to use for grant reporting purposes.
- Prepares proposals and submits reports as required.
- Enters Data into CASA Manager.
- Performs related duties, as required and requested by the Executive Director, Program Manager, Director of Development, Administrative Business Manager or Board of Directors of the Alabama CASA Network.

\*Advocate duties may include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting an independent investigation by reviewing all pertinent documents and records and interviewing the child, parents, social workers, foster parents, teachers, therapists, daycare providers and other relevant persons to determine the facts and circumstances of the child's situation. To do this effectively, volunteer advocates spend considerable time getting to know children and gaining their trust.
- Determines the thoughts and feelings of the child about the situation, considering the child's age, maturity, culture and ethnicity and degree of attachment to family members, including siblings. Also, to be considered are continuity, consistency and a sense of belonging and identity.
- Seeks cooperative solutions by acting as a facilitator among conflicting parties to achieve resolution of problems and to foster positive steps toward achieving permanence for the child.
- Provides written reports at every hearing which include findings and recommendations. The report documents the extent of the volunteer's investigation, lists each source of information and includes sufficient facts to justify the recommendations. (Reports are written by the advocate volunteer and approved by the Advocate Coordinator and Program Manager prior to being submitted to court.)
- Appears at all hearings with staff, to advocate for the child's best interests and provide testimony when necessary.
- Explains the court proceedings and the role of the CASA advocate to the child in terms the child can understand.
- Makes recommendations for specific, appropriate services for the child and the child's family and advocates for necessary services which may not be immediately available.
- Monitors implementation of case plans and court orders, checking to see that court-ordered

services are implemented in a timely manner and that review hearings are held in accordance with the law.

- Informs the court promptly of important developments including any agency's failure to provide services or the family's failure to participate. The CASA volunteer should ensure that appropriate motions are filed, by attorneys on the case, on behalf of the child in order that the court can be made aware of the changes in the child's circumstances and can take appropriate actions.
- Advocates for the child's interests in the community by bringing concerns regarding the child's health, education and mental health, etc. to the appropriate professionals to assure that the child's needs in these areas are met.

**Candidates must successfully complete the local and federal criminal background checks, sex offender background checks, and Child Abuse Registry clearances.**

**EEO Policy Statement:** The Alabama CASA Network provides equal employment opportunity for all employees and applicants for employment and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of age, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions), color, race, national origin, ancestry, religion, marital status, family care status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis protected by federal and state laws.