

## **CASA VOLUNTEER ADVOCATE**

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a screened, trained, qualified volunteer whom a Douglas County Juvenile Court Judge appoints to a case to amplify the voice of and advocate for children impacted by the child welfare system. All CASA Volunteer Advocates shall commit to CASA's Guiding Principles and Responsibilities, and CASA is here to help you every step of the way.

### **CASA VOLUNTEER ADVOCATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Meet with the child(ren), in person, at least once every 30 days.
- Assess the child's physical, mental, emotional, behavioral, and educational needs.
- Attend family team meetings and other case-related meetings with case professionals.
- Obtain, first-hand, a clear understanding of the needs and situation of a child by:
  - Establishing contact, interviewing, and maintaining contact with the child, parents, social workers, teachers, guardians ad litem, and any other relevant persons involved in the child's life; and
  - Conducting ongoing review of all relevant documents and records concerning the child and family.
- Timely document child visits and interactions with persons involved in the child's life in CASA's case management system.
- Collaborate and coordinate with legal, child welfare, and other partners to ensure service provision that is in the child's best interest.
- Make recommendations for permanency and for services for the child and child's family.
- Monitor service plans and court orders to ensure timely implementation to expedite permanency.
- Provide timely reports to your advocate coordinator for the court which include information and recommendations about the child's needs and best interest.
- Appear at juvenile court hearings to advocate for the child's best interests and provide testimony.
- Regularly review case(s) with your advocate coordinator.
- Report any incident of child abuse or neglect or any situation in which the volunteer has reason to believe that a child is in imminent danger to appropriate authorities and the advocate coordinator.
- Complete 12 hours of continuing education annually to improve knowledge and skills.
- Timely disclose any conflict or potential for conflict of interest.
- Take an oath of confidentiality and respect a child's right to privacy by maintaining confidentiality.

### **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- Complete a written application, interview, and background check.
- Successfully complete the 30-hour, pre-service training and attend a swearing-in ceremony.
- Commit to 10-12 hours per month for a minimum of 2 years.
- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Maintain reliable transportation, a valid driver's license, auto insurance, a phone number, and an address.
- Have working knowledge of or ability to learn Microsoft Word, Outlook, and Email.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to maintain objectivity, confidentiality, and professionalism.