



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF WALKER, SAN JACINTO & TRINITY COUNTIES

VOLUNTEER MANUAL

MISSION

CASA of Walker, San Jacinto & Trinity Counties provides a trained court appointed volunteer advocate to every abused and neglected child in CPS custody that needs one.

VISION

The program's goal is a safe, permanent, nurturing home for every child it serves.

Welcome ...

...to CASA of Walker, San Jacinto, and Trinity Counties! We are honored to have you as a part of our program, and have no doubt that you will do great things in your new role. We are excited to have you as part of the CASA team, and I look forward to working alongside you in serving our children, who need you so, so much!

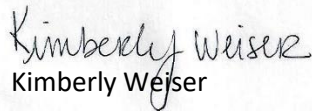
This handbook will outline for you the most basic, essential information that you will need to know regarding our program and services, and the guidelines within which you will be expected to volunteer. While this does not provide you with ALL that you need to know to perform your duties effectively, this will certainly be a useful tool to guide you as you move forward with CASA.

Here at CASA we have an “open door” philosophy – and that means ALL doors are open! While I am always available personally to answer questions, address concerns, and provide support for you as a member of our team, you are also encouraged to utilize your supervisors and your fellow advocates for additional support and assistance. We are all in the same boat, working toward the same goal – no question is too big nor too small for any member of the CASA team to address.

It my sincerest hope that you will find your time with CASA rewarding and fruitful in more ways than you even expect at this time! While I hope to have you with us for many years to come, I also hope that when you leave CASA you will have identifiable growth, both personally and professionally, as a result of your experiences with us. I hope that we are able to successfully utilize all of the skills and talents that you have to offer, in a way that effectively serves CASA and is equally enjoyable and fulfilling for you!

With all that said, I wish you the best of luck as you dive into your new role! I am always available to you for any needs that may arise in your time with us, and hope that you will seek me out often for the support offered!

Respectfully,



Kimberly Weiser

Kimberly Weiser

Executive Director

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Volunteer Bill of Rights

Every volunteer has:

- The right to be treated as a co-worker, and not as “free help”
- The right to a suitable assignment, with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education, and employment background
- The right to know about the organization’s mission, its policies, its people, and its programs
- The right to training for the job, thoughtfully planned and effectively presented
- The right to sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient, and thoughtful
- The right to a workplace that is orderly and suitable for the job to be done
- The right to enhance skills and knowledge
- To right to be heard and to have respect shown for comments and suggestions
- The right to recognition through means of appreciation and by being treated as a bond fide co-worker

Job Description

Court Appointed Special Advocate

Guardian Ad Litem

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

A CASA volunteer is a trained community volunteer appointed by a district or family court judge to speak for the best interests of an abused and/or neglected child in the child welfare system. He/she respects a child's inherent right to grow up with dignity in a safe environment that meets that child's best interests.

A CASA volunteer is an official part of the judicial proceedings, working alongside attorneys and social workers. By handling only one or two cases at a time, a CASA volunteer has time to explore thoroughly the history and circumstances of each assigned case.

PREREQUISITES AND SKILLS

- Must be 21 years of age or older.
- Must have obtained at least a high school diploma or a GED.
- Must successfully complete screening requirements, to include a volunteer application, personal interview, reference checks, and criminal background investigation.
- Has reliable transportation, a current driver's license and current auto insurance.
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- Ability to respect and relate to people from various backgrounds.
- Ability to maintain objectivity.
- Ability to exhibit professionalism in behavior and appearance.
- Must take an oath of confidentiality and be sworn in by a District Judge as a Court Appointed Special Advocate.

TRAINING

- Must complete 30 hours of pre-service training
- Must observe a court hearing before being appointed to a case
- Must complete 12 hours of in-service/continuing education training annually
- Must attend all mandatory volunteer in-services

TIME COMMITMENT

- Required to make a twelve-month commitment to the program
- Spend, on average, 15 hours per month on each case assigned
- Attend all court hearings (approx. 5 per year) to advocate for the child's best interest and provide testimony as needed
- Volunteers are expected to be available for case assignment and to accept cases immediately upon completion of pre-service training, unless other arrangements have been made.

A CASA Volunteer:

- Identifies and advocates for the best interest of the child(ren) at every stage of the case
- Maintains complete confidentiality regarding information about the child(ren), as well as information regarding other parties involved in the case.
- Obtains a first-hand a clear understanding of the needs and situation of the child(ren) by
 - conducting an ongoing review of all relevant documents and records
 - interviewing the child, parents, social workers, teachers and other persons to determine the facts and circumstances of the child(ren)'s situation.
- Has regular and sufficient in-person contact with the child(ren) where they live to ensure in-depth knowledge of the case and make fact-based recommendations to the court.
 - If the child(ren) are placed less than 1 hour away, CASA's will meet in-person with the child at least once every thirty (30) days
 - If the child(ren) are placed more than 1 but less than 3 driving hours away, CASA's will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every three months.
 - If the child(ren) are placed more than 3 driving hours away, CASA's will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every six months.
 - In addition to in-person contact, CASA's will have other types of monthly age appropriate contact with the child(ren) including telephone calls, emails, video conferencing and letters as applicable for the child's age and interests.
- Communicates with the DFPS caseworker after appointment and at least one time per month for the duration of the case.
- Meets in person with the child(ren)'s primary placement provider, in a timely manner, after placement occurs and communicates with the placement provider at least once per month thereafter for the duration of the child(ren)'s case.
- Communicates at least once monthly with his/her CASA supervisor and participates in case conferences as scheduled.
- Advocates for the child(ren)'s best interests in the community through regular contact (at least quarterly) with attorney ad litem, mental health, educational and other community systems to assure that the child(ren)'s needs in these areas are met.
- Seeks cooperative solutions by acting as a facilitator among parties.
- Determines the child(ren)'s permanency plan, accesses the educational portfolio(s) and health passport(s), and makes recommendations regarding permanency, and education and medical services, as appropriate.
- Provides, at every hearing, reports which include findings and fact-based recommendations, including specific recommendations for appropriate services for the child(ren) and, when appropriate, the child(ren)'s family.
- Participates in all case-related meetings.
- Monitors implementation of service plans and court orders assuring 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 in the case
- Maintains complete records about the case, including appointments, interviews and information gathered about the child(ren) and the child(ren)'s life circumstances and returns all records to the program after the case is closed.
- Reports any new incidents of abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse Hotline, the CASA Supervisor, and the assigned CPS caseworker

BENEFITS

Although there are not monetary rewards, there are many benefits to being a CASA volunteer. These include the opportunity to:

- Make a difference in a child's life and future.
- Help a child find permanency in a safe, loving home.
- Assist judges in obtaining a clear picture of a child's life and needs.
- Gain understanding of district and family courts, legal proceedings, and social service agencies.
- Develop/utilize communication skills.
- Utilize your past experience/skills.
- Form friendships with like-minded people.

This agreement is entered into for the purpose of providing the best possible advocacy for the child(ren) with whom I work. I fully understand that failure to complete or comply with any of the above requirements may result in my termination from the volunteer team of CASA of Walker, San Jacinto, and Trinity Counties.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Volunteer Supervisor Signature

Date

SECTION 1: Introduction to CASA of Walker, San Jacinto, & Trinity Counties

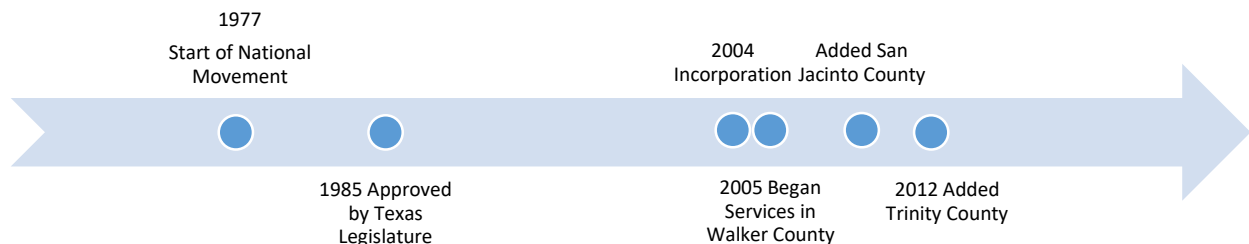
History

CASA is part of a national volunteer movement that began in 1977 when Judge David Soukup in Seattle decided he needed to know more about the children whose lives were in his hands. His solution was to ask community volunteers to act as a “voice in court” for abused and neglected children. These Court Appointed Special Advocate® (CASAs) provided him with the detailed information he needed to safeguard the children’s best interests and ensure that they were placed in safe, permanent homes as quickly as possible. The program was so successful that it was copied around the nation.

The programs made their way into Texas and in 1985, the Texas state legislature passed a bill giving volunteers with court approved training the right to represent abused and neglected children in court. This bill appears as a line in the Texas Family Code, along with a provision for immunity from liability if work is done in good faith. CASA has continued to serve abused and neglected children in Texas for 25 years, providing trained community volunteers for every child who was assigned to the program through the court.

CASA of Walker, San Jacinto & Trinity Counties is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization governed by a volunteer board of directors. The program started as “CASA of Walker County” and was incorporated as a non-profit organization during the summer of 2004. The first Executive Director was hired and the program implemented services under her leadership in January 2005.

CASA of Walker, San Jacinto & Trinity Counties is a member of the National and Texas CASA Associations. There are over 1,000 CASA programs nationwide and 72 CASA programs in the state of Texas.



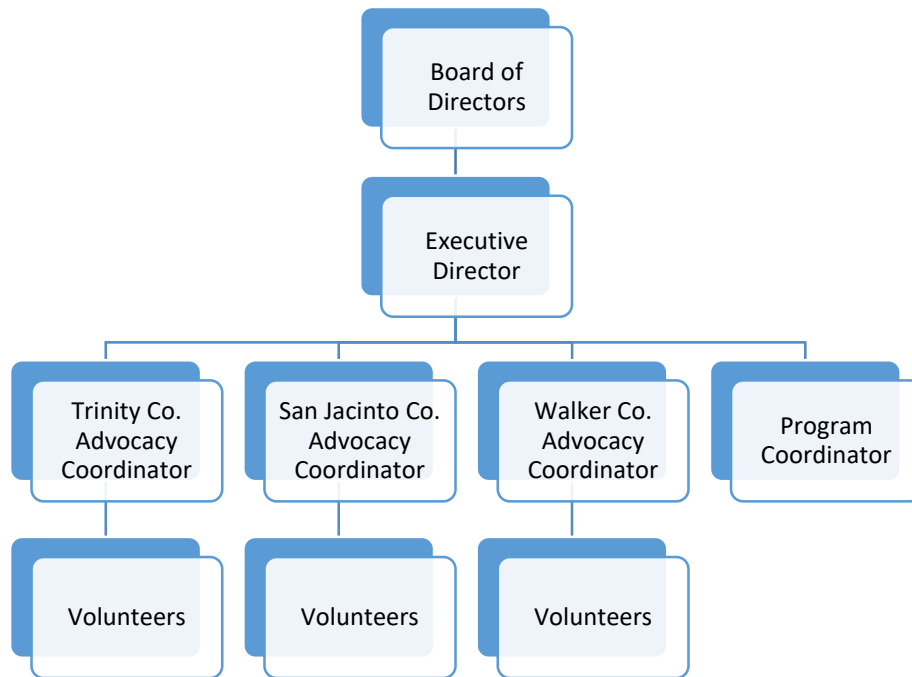
The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is made up of a diverse representation of community volunteers who must have the expertise, commitment, and time to carry out the Mission and Philosophy of the organization. This 9 to 18 member board is the governing body of the organization, and is responsible for determining the direction of long and short term plans, setting policy, establishing goals, and managing the budget.

The Board of Directors employs an Executive Director who serves as the direct line of communication with the board, unless delegated otherwise for a specific purpose. The Executive Director is accountable for keeping the Board of Directors updated.

Organizational Structure

The board of directors is responsible for the overall governing and wellbeing of the organization. They employ an Executive Director who is responsible to the Board for the day to day administration and management of the agency. The Executive Director employees and supervises the necessary staff, who are each individually responsible for implementing programs, services, and a budget that reflect the direction of the board. Every member of staff has a direct supervisor and is always expected to refer to their supervisor for advice, direction, training, and conflict management. Each staff member supervises volunteers, who are the primary individuals responsible for child advocacy within CASA of WST Counties.



Diversity and Inclusion:

CASA of WST Counties is strongly committed to promoting diversity and inclusion. All directors, employees, and volunteers performing work on behalf of CASA are expected to adhere to the laws and regulations that apply to their work activities and demonstrate ethical behavior in all decisions and interactions. CASA is committed to acknowledging and valuing volunteer differences and to creating an environment in which every individual's unique strengths and abilities are developed and valued.

All CASA volunteers share in the responsibility for creating this environment, and are expected to demonstrate mutual respect and acceptance in the work place. At CASA, we believe that utilizing our volunteers' uniqueness enhances communication, problem-solving and decision-making skills, thereby improving organizational productivity and performance. We also believe that if our Board, employees, and volunteers mirror the diverse make-up of our communities and those we serve, we will be able to understand, and more effectively respond to our community's needs.

Volunteer Recognition:

CASA greatly values the contributions of its volunteers. CASA has several volunteer recognition and appreciation programs throughout the year. An outstanding and committed volunteer base is the hallmark of a strong organization, and CASA is no exception. Our volunteers are recognized for their outstanding quality, dedication, and commitment. Creating our formal recognition programs provide us with more way to celebrate creativity and a commitment of excellence in all of our activities.

SECTION 2: Screening & Training

Criminal Background Checks

The program has established election and screening procedures that include:

- 1) Verification of Social Security number.
- 2) TCIC – Texas criminal record check
- 3) NCIC – National criminal record check/fingerprint
- 4) Texas Public Sex Offender Registry
- 5) National Sex Offender Registry
- 6) TDFPS – child abuse registry
- 7) If the individual has lived in another county and that jurisdiction is not covered by the national criminal background check utilized, the program secures county and state criminal record checks in any county and state in which the person has resided for the previous seven years

Volunteers may at any time view the Criminal Background Check policy, in full, which outlines offenses barring participation in the CASA program.

Frequency of Criminal History Checks

CASA of WST reserves the right to conduct a criminal history check at any time during a volunteer's tenure. Criminal background checks will be conducted at a minimum of once every two years.

Records found on criminal history checks that were not present at the start of volunteer service, may result in dismissal of the volunteer from service with CASA of WST Counties.

Responsibility to Notify

All volunteers are required to immediately notify their supervisor of any criminal charges. In such cases, the Volunteer Supervisor shall inform the Executive Director.

Pre-Service Volunteer Training (PSVT)

In order to increase knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to fulfill the roles and responsibility of a CASA volunteer, all CASA volunteer advocates must participate in at least 30 hours of initial training (PSVT). Each volunteer must spend a minimum of 10 hours of such training in personal contact with and under the supervision of CASA staff, in order for staff to evaluate the applicant's appropriateness to serve as a volunteer. Training is provided by CASA staff members and various professionals from the community such as attorneys, judges, Child Protective Service workers, and others who are participants in child abuse cases.

PSVT will include training regarding:

- 1) Roles and Responsibilities of the CASA volunteer
- 2) Operation of the court, court process, and child welfare system
- 3) Dynamics of families, including mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, and poverty
- 4) Relevant state laws, regulations, and policies

- 5) Relevant federal laws, regulations, and policies to include:
 - a. Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)
 - b. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)
 - c. Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) (with compliance information and resources)
 - d. Multi Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA)
- 6) Confidentiality and record keeping practices
- 7) Child development (as well as the background and needs of children served by CASA of WST Counties)
- 8) The nature and effect of child abuse and neglect
- 9) Permanency planning
- 10) Community agencies and resources available to meet the needs of children and families
- 11) Communication and Information gathering
- 12) Effective advocacy
- 13) Cultural Competency
- 14) Special needs of the children served

Documentation of Training

It is the responsibility of the volunteer in training to document completion of all training (classroom and self-study).

Court Observation

Each volunteer is required to visit the court served by the CASA program while the court is in session (if allowed by the court) to observe abuse/neglect proceedings before appearing in court for an assigned case.

Swearing in as Officers of the Court

Volunteers will be sworn in as officers of the court only after successfully completing (with documentation) the required initial training and all screening requirements.

Continuing Education

Volunteer advocates are required to attend 12 hours of continuing education throughout the calendar year. The number of in-service training hours required for newly trained volunteers will be adjusted (or prorated) dependent on the time of the year that the volunteer was trained.

CASA of WST Counties will provide periodic training opportunities and will notify volunteers of other outside opportunities as they arise.

Volunteers may also acquire continuing education credit from outside sources that they learn of on their own (including college classes) so long as they are approved by CASA staff and are relevant to CASA work (i.e. children's issues, family issues, the legal system, case management, or other relevant topics). Continuing education is documented in the volunteer's file.

Training Manual

Training manuals will be provided to all volunteers at the start of pre-service training. Volunteers may keep the manuals provided following training, or may request to have an electronic version supplied in it's place.

SECTION 3: Confidentiality

CASA of WST Counties believes that we have the moral and ethical responsibility to diligently protect and maintain the confidentiality of those served by our program, as well as employees, volunteers, board members and any others related to the agency. CASA of WST Counties is committed to ensuring the confidentiality of information and materials pertaining to those individuals. Disclosure can be made only under specified conditions for reasons specifically referenced in this policy manual, or relating to legality, grantor requirements, and/or fulfillment of our mission. Persons working in any capacity of this agency may not use their position to obtain or access confidential information.

Confidential information shall include but is not limited to:

- 1) The names and/or identifying information of employees, volunteers, board members, cases, and donors unless the person involved provides written permission.
- 2) All personal information of cases, employees, volunteers, board members and donors, to include home phone numbers, and the addresses of employment, residence, and/or other family addresses.
- 3) Communications, observations, involvement and information made by and between or about cases, employees, volunteers, and board members to anyone outside of this agency.

Volunteers must maintain a professional boundary concerning confidentiality. These individuals must not discuss any individual's records with unauthorized individuals whether on or off duty. By adhering to the confidentiality policy volunteers shall not disclose any of the information listed above to anyone outside of this organization unless authorized by the Executive Director or a signed release of information form. Confidentiality must be maintained even after the volunteer leaves volunteer service with this agency.

The following guidelines govern specific circumstances in which the CASA requests or receives information. However, these guidelines cannot cover every possible situation that may arise. Any questions and/or concerns the advocate has regarding confidentiality or the application of the policy should be discussed with CASA staff. All questions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- If it is necessary to obtain any privileged or confidential information about someone who is directly related to the case but is not the child, the CASA may be required to obtain from that person a written release of information which allows the professional, hospital, or treatment center to discuss the matter with the CASA. When requesting information in these instances, it is imperative that the CASA be careful not to disclose information of a confidential nature.
- While a person may sign a release allowing the CASA to obtain confidential information, he/she may not want to authorize disclosure to the other parties to the case or their attorneys. The CASA should review the signed release form very carefully and seek guidance from CASA staff if there are any questions.

- A CASA is not allowed to disseminate documents to any of the parties, their attorneys, and or collateral sources that are covered by state and federal confidentiality laws. These documents generally include drug and alcohol evaluation/records; mental health treatment evaluations; rape crisis center information; and some criminal histories. Those covered by federal law usually are stamped, “This information has been disclosed to you from records whose confidentiality is protected by Federal law (and) prohibits you from making any further disclosure. A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is NOT sufficient for this purpose.
- A CASA should not promise a child or any party to the assigned case that his/her statements will be kept secret or confidential.
- A CASA shall never visit with the child while in the presence of any of the CASA’s family members, unless covered by the Qualified Spouse Confidentiality Policy.
- The CASA must disclose confidential information learned during the course of an investigation in three circumstances:
 - 1) When consulting with the CASA staff or Attorney Ad Litem of the child who must be provided all significant case specifics known to CASA.
 - 2) When ordered by the court in a hearing or trial.
 - 3) When the CASA thinks that there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered physical and/or sexual abuse.
- A CASA may disclose confidential information and discuss case specifics in two circumstances:
 - 1) When the person whom the information concerns is a legal adult who has signed a Release of Information form.
 - 2) When the court orders the disclosure.
- The CASA may discuss a case in hypothetical terms for purposes of illustration at professional meetings designed to address issues promoting the best interest of the children. The CASA shall not, however, mention the names of any individuals involved in the case or provide facts, which may identify the case or parties.
- The CASA agrees to return all information he/she has gathered, together with any printed materials or notations relevant to any and all cases to which he/she has been assigned at the close of a case or when service to CASA ends.

The CASA advocate, upon acceptance of this manual, accepts all responsibility for maintaining confidentiality and the private nature of all records and information. The advocate is personally responsible and liable for any violations of this policy.

Qualified Spouse Confidentiality

In an effort to promote the well-being of children served by CASA, this policy is in place to allow qualified spouses and others with a direct relationship to a sworn-in CASA, (hereafter referred to as qualified spouse) to have limited access to a child(ren) being served by an advocate. A qualified spouse is one who has submitted to a personal interview, child abuse background check and a criminal background check to be executed by CASA, and has participated in PSVT, Chapter 1 and either Chapter 3 or 4. In addition, the qualified spouse will be required to sign a policy outlining guidelines the CASA Advocate and qualified spouse must adhere to when having contact with the child served by CASA.

In the course of having contact with a CASA child, a qualified spouse may obtain privileged or confidential information about the child or another person directly related to a case. Just as a sworn-in advocate, a qualified spouse is prohibited from sharing or repeating any information received from any other person. Information that is relevant to the case, should however be shared with CASA staff. All information received should be held to the highest level of confidence at all times.

Guidelines are in place to assist sworn-in advocates and their qualified spouses in knowing what boundaries are appropriate when having contact with children served by CASA. These guidelines will be discussed during the personal interview with a CASA staff member.

SECTION 4: Volunteer Status

Volunteers can be classified in one of five categories, listed below.

Active

An active volunteer is currently appointed to and working a case.

Inactive

An inactive volunteer is a volunteer who is currently not assigned to a case, and is not fulfilling any other duties of a CASA volunteer (in-services, contact with supervisor, etc.). A volunteer may be inactive for a period of up to 6 months (see Leave of Absence Below).

Inactive Participant

An inactive participant is a volunteer who is currently not assigned to a case, but continues to meet all annual continuing education requirements (and submit documentation of such), maintains quarterly contact with his/her supervisor, and attends all mandatory volunteer trainings/in-services. Volunteers may stay classified as an inactive participant for a period of up to 18 months, less the number of months spent in a period of inactivity (i.e. if the volunteer takes a 3 month leave of absence, he/she may remain an inactive participant for up to 15 months). Generally, inactive participants are available for appointment to new cases, unless alternatively agreed upon with his/her supervisor.

Ineligible

An ineligible volunteer is a volunteer who is currently not eligible to be assigned to a case due a period of inactivity greater than permitted by the requirements above. An ineligible volunteer will need to complete 15 hours of Pre-Service training as a refresher course, and meet one-on-one with a program supervisor before reinstatement as an active advocate.

Dismissed

A dismissed volunteer is a volunteer who has been asked to leave the CASA program. Any volunteers dismissed from the program will be considered ineligible for future reinstatement as an advocate.

Leave of Absence

A volunteer may request a leave of absence from all duties associated with CASA of WST Counties at any time. The length of the leave may be up to six (6) months from the beginning date of the leave. After six months, the volunteer will no longer be eligible to return to his/her duties as a CASA volunteer unless

he/she resumes status as an Inactive Participant, is assigned to case and returns to Active status, or completes the 15 hours of required training.

SECTION 5: Working your Case

Personal Appearance

In order to project a positive and professional environment, CASA volunteers are expected to maintain a good general appearance and be well groomed at all times when conducting CASA business. Clothing should be neat and clean, not distracting and conducive to a professional image. See-through and/or otherwise sexually provocative is prohibited.

When appearing in court, at meetings, scheduled staffings or other meetings related to CASA work, a professional appearance is expected. Attire should be in a manner enhancing the dignity of the court. In these settings, the following attire is prohibited:

- T-shirts (and/or any clothing) printed with any message
- Attire that reveals underwear or midriff
- Anything low cut or unbuttoned showing considerable chest
- Strapless, spaghetti strap or tank tops, unless covered with a jacket/sweater.
- Sagging/baggy pants, shorts, sweat pants, or athletic attire
- Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing

Contact Guidelines

- Reflect children's feelings without evaluating them and let them know it's okay to have unpleasant or negative feelings.
- Respect children's attachments to their parents. Remain neutral and non-judgmental about their parents. Do not express your opinion of their parents even if asked.
- Treat children with respect. Do not talk down to them or criticize them.
- Tell children that what happened is not their fault. With older children who have been in therapeutic treatment and/or state care, confirm the need to accept past problems and assume responsibility for their future.
- Listen with respect.
- Respond to questions. When you do not know the answer, say so. If the question is about their legal action, encourage them to contact their attorney. If the question is about services, encourage them to contact their CPS case worker. Confer with the case supervisor to assist you if you are uncertain about the answer to a question.
- Use reinforcement such as "I see" or a nod of your head to encourage responsiveness.
- Begin with general, open-ended questions such as "Tell me about..." Use closed questions that can be answered with "yes" or "no" or a short answer when you need specific information or when you are not receiving responses to more general questions.

Restrictions

CASA Volunteers may not:

- Allow a child to visit his/her home or visit any home other than the child's current placement
- Give legal advice or therapeutic counseling
- Make placement arrangements for the child

- Give money or expensive gifts to the child, the child's family, or caregiver
- Take or accompany a child on an overnight outing
- Participate in any activity which is likely to result in a conflict of interest or expose the program or volunteer to criminal or civil liability
- Allow a child to come into contact with someone the volunteer knows has a criminal history involving violence, child abuse, neglect, drugs, or a sex-related offense.
- Authorize medical treatment for the child(ren).
- Give the child(ren) medications or any types of vitamins.
- Give treats or feed the children without consulting the caregiver for dietary restrictions.
- Probe or introduce the specifics of abuse. Be especially careful when discussing issues in sexual abuse or other potential criminal cases.

Court Reports and Recommendations

When required by the Court for upcoming hearing, volunteers are expected to submit properly completed court reports to supervisors in a timely manner, prior to the court date. Supervisors will notify volunteers when court hearings require reports, and will include any related deadlines. After or upon submitting his/her report, the CASA volunteer is responsible to discuss all recommendations concerning the case with his/her supervisor prior to submission of the recommendations to the court. The CASA may make amendments to such report based on the results of this discussion, and submit the final report to the courts and necessary parties. A CASA volunteer has final authority regarding recommendations - A program supervisor may only alter the report or recommendations with knowledge and agreement of the appointed CASA Volunteer.

Attendance at Court Hearings

While in court, the CASA will provide verbal testimony when necessary. CASA Volunteers should communicate with the child(ren) prior to any hearing that the child(ren) will be attending. He/she should explain what is expected to occur and explore the child's current reactions and feelings regarding the upcoming hearing.

After the hearing, the CASA should:

- 1) Ensure that court-ordered services are provided to the child and family.
- 2) Ensure that the judicial and child welfare systems are moving ahead to secure a safe, permanent home for the child.
- 3) Help the child understand the court process.
- 4) Participate in planning or treatment team meetings involving the child in order to keep informed of the child's permanency plan.

Courtroom Conduct

All persons should respect the authority of the presiding judge and shall rise when the Judge enters the courtroom and whenever the Judge leaves the courtroom for recess and adjournment. All persons in the courtroom during any hearing shall be attentive to the proceedings of the Court and shall refrain from any action which is disruptive of the Court proceedings. When Court is in session, all persons, before entering into the courtroom, shall turn off beepers and telephones.

Case Notes and Monthly Reports

It is imperative for volunteers to keep records regarding their activities and the proceedings on their case. Volunteers do this by maintaining and submitting their Monthly Summary Report and their Time/Mileage Log. These reports are due to CASA Supervisors by the 4th of each month for the preceding month. Once received, the CASA Supervisor will review the submissions for accuracy, date and sign as received and approved, and file each in the appropriate location(s).

In addition, all CASA volunteer advocates should keep case notes which serve as an additional record of the CASA volunteer's efforts on behalf of the children. This documentation should be kept in the volunteer's confidential case file to be used at a later date for court report writing and for testifying.

Crime Victim's Compensation

Training

CASA of WST Counties Volunteers will receive instruction during Pre-Service Volunteer Training about Crime Victims Compensation rights, requirements, restrictions, benefit claims, and applications. They will be given copies of brochures explaining CVC rights and application forms in English and in Spanish so that they can assist any clients who may qualify for CVC services. This assistance can involve various activities including directly assisting the victim or their "caregiver" in filling out the benefit claim, referral to another victim service agency or entity that will fill out the required claim information, and follow-up notification to the victim or their family when the child victim is placed outside of CPS custody.

Qualification for CVC

Upon acceptance of a new case, CASA of WST Counties volunteers will research qualifications for Crime Victims Compensation and will report their findings to their supervisor. The Supervisor will document in the case file if the case qualified for claim assistance, and any action taken on the part of the program.

Filing a Claim

A claim should be filed when there is reason to believe there has been a criminally injurious act to the child such as sexual assault, child endangerment or physical abuse and such a crime has been reported to law enforcement. When a child's case documentation submitted to the CASA program indicates that there were possible criminal violations by the parent(s) that may have included elements of child endangerment and these violations were reported to law enforcement, then a claim should be filed. The OAG will investigate the case and determine if elements of endangerment did exist and if the child is eligible for benefits.

Follow Up for Qualified Families

- If the case qualifies for CVC assistance, the program will contact the family to assist with application completion for all child victims.
- If the child is permanently placed in a foster home the volunteer will follow up to tell the permanent caregiver the information about the child's benefits and how to file a claim.
- If the child finds a permanent home and is placed out of CPS custody, the program will notify the new family that a claim was submitted and the child may be eligible and approved for future CVC benefits.

These actions will also be documented on the CVC Documentation Form in the case file.

SECTION 6: Supervision & Correction

Case Conferences and Supervision

CASA Volunteer Supervisors are easily accessible and provide timely and thorough guidance to CASA volunteers. CASA Volunteer Supervisor will be available to meet with volunteers as needed, but no less than one (1) time per month. Supervisors will ensure that case progress is reviewed on a regular basis and will verify accurate completion of all written case records. Advocates are encouraged to take advantage of case conferences to ask questions, address concerns, and discuss anticipated recommendations for upcoming court hearings.

Evaluation

Volunteer Supervisors will conduct an in-person review of a volunteer's work at case closure, or annually for cases lasting longer than 12 months. This evaluation will consider case highlights, actions taken by the volunteer, volunteer strengths, and opportunities for improvement, and will be documented in writing and kept in the advocate's file.

Caseload

Initially, CASA volunteers will be assigned one case each. However, a volunteer may be assigned an additional case if he/she indicates willingness to carry multiple cases, and the Volunteer Supervisor feels that volunteer would be capable to manage multiple cases adequately. When assigning cases, the nature and difficulty of the tasks assigned, the work and time required to serve each child or to complete each task, past and current performance of Minimum Expectations of Service, and any additional responsibilities held by the volunteer, will be considered.

A volunteer will generally not be assigned more than two cases at a time. An exception may be granted at the discretion of the Volunteer Supervisor, with approval from the Executive Director. However, the decision to permit a higher caseload shall be documented, with justification for and reasonableness of the exception. A volunteer may not be assigned to more than 5 cases for any reason or exception.

Only one CASA will be assigned to a case, except in cases where two CASA volunteers are married and wish to serve together on one case.

Upon appointment and agreement to take a case, CASA volunteers are reminded they are committing to stay actively involved for the duration of Court involvement, or a minimum of one year.

Problem Solving & Corrective Action

Corrective action will be taken when a volunteer fails to follow agency policy or procedure and/or when the volunteer's performance fails to meet minimum expectations. Corrective action will also be taken when the volunteer's actions generate a need for problem solving action, including failure to submit reports and/or failure to attend required trainings. Corrective actions are applied in fairness and in the interest of correcting inappropriate or unproductive behavior.

CASA of WST Counties has a system of progressive correction. However, based on the seriousness or frequency of the concern, a supervisor may enter directly into any level of corrective action including:

1. **Reminder** – CASA of WST Counties understands the scope of responsibilities carried by program volunteers, and realizes that all volunteers will make mistakes, miss deadlines, or miss certain

responsibilities. Because of that, all supervisors will make efforts to provide frequent group and individual reminders to volunteers to proactively address potential concerns, and to offer opportunities for volunteers to make improvements through his/her own desire to excel.

2. **Warning or Reprimand** – a supervisor may provide verbal counsel to a volunteer to advise him/her of problems or concerns, to make expectations clear, and to give the volunteer opportunity for improvement. When giving verbal warning, supervisors will document such warning in the advocate’s file.
3. **Performance Counseling** – The purpose of performance counseling is to address any concerning behaviors, and to develop a problem solving plan of action to amend the behavior(s). A performance counseling meeting will include written documentation to define the issue that a supervisor is expecting a volunteer to correct or improve.

Performance Counseling documentation should include the following:

- Date of counseling session
- Explanation of purpose for counseling session (with incident dates where applicable)
- Review of applicable job objectives, policy, or procedure
- Volunteer’s response to the issue/incident being addressed
- Outcome of the session to include expectations of the supervisor for change by the volunteer
- Signatures of both supervisor conducting counseling and the volunteer being counseled

The supervisor will discuss the concern with the volunteer and ensure that the expected manner of behavior and/or performance is made clear. The supervisor and volunteer may work together to develop a specific plan of action showing steps each will take for implementing improvements

4. **Performance Counseling with Probation** - At the supervisor’s discretion (with consultation with the Executive Director) counseling may include up to a 90 day probation period. This probation period can be used to allow the volunteer:

- To pursue additional training deemed necessary to improve performance
- To refresh his/her perspective, and regain objectivity, energy, and commitment to the program
- To follow through on established goals for improvement
- Time to decide if he/she would like to continue service with the program and follow the guidelines set forth

The volunteer will be expected to resume his/her responsibilities at a stipulated date and time; Upon or prior to his/her return, the plan of action and/or goals will be reviewed with his/her supervisor, and expectations for future conduct will be further clarified. Follow-up reviews occur as needed until the plan for improvement is completed and there is consistent, positive response to expectations.

5. **Dismissal** (See Probation and Dismissal in Section 10)

The objective of Corrective Action is to change behavior patterns that negatively affect children served, job performance, or the smooth and efficient operation of the work environment. Corrective Action is

used to correct problems, prevent recurrence of problems, and prepare volunteers for satisfactory service in the future.

CASA of WST Counties hopes that any performance concerns can be corrected at an early stage benefiting both the volunteer and the organization. However, CASA of WST Counties retains the right to determine, in its sole discretion, what corrective action serves the best interests of CASA of WST Counties and to take that action.

Grievance Procedures

Misunderstandings or disagreements may arise in any organization. CASA of Walker, San Jacinto & Trinity Counties values and wishes to promote a cooperative and pleasant volunteer environment.

We therefore encourage an open atmosphere where concerns, grievances, suggestions, and questions can be discussed with supervisors and staff members. We strive to ensure consistent and honest treatment of all volunteers and as such, staff and volunteers are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. Many problems or concerns can easily be addressed simply by discussing them openly.

When problems continue where volunteers believe action is necessary beyond open discussion, the following steps should be followed:

- 1) Any grievance should first be heard by the volunteer's staff supervisor. A formal grievance should be discussed within 30 days of the time of the incident or the volunteer waives their rights to continue with the grievance under this policy. Often, no action past this is necessary.
- 2) If the volunteer is not satisfied with the supervisor's resolution, or if the supervisor is unable to offer resolution, a written grievance should be filed with the Executive Director. The written grievance should contain the following:
 - a. a description of the problem
 - b. the date of the incident(s)
 - c. name(s) of individual(s) involved in or witnessing the incident(s);
 - d. the volunteer's suggested resolution and
 - e. the date the grievance is filed with the volunteer's signature.

The decision of the Executive Director is final.

Although not all problems can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, it is through open discussion of problems that staff and volunteers develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important to the operation of an efficient and harmonious environment that benefits all parties.

SECTION 7: Conduct

Sexual Harassment

CASA of WST Counties is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes or comments based on a person's sex, race, ethnicity, race, gender identity, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation or other legally protected characteristics will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment in any manner or form is expressly prohibited. All claims of sexual harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Anyone who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action commensurate with the severity of the offense up to and including immediate termination.

Definitions and Explanations

Sexual harassment may take numerous forms. It includes verbal or physical conduct, such as sexual advances or requests for sexual favors that are unwelcome.

There are two types of sexual harassment:

- 1) *Quid pro Quo*: Occurs when sexual favors are required or demanded of a volunteer as a condition of assignments or as the basis for assignment decisions affecting that volunteer.
- 2) *Hostile work environment*: Occurs when verbal or physical conduct of an offensive sexual nature permeates the work environment to the extent that it interferes with the volunteer's work performance and seriously affects his or her psychological well-being.

In addition to sexual advances or a demand for sexual favors, the following may also constitute sexual harassment:

- 1) Verbal: Sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, or sexual jokes.
- 2) Non-verbal: Display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures or obscene gestures.
- 3) Physical: Unwanted physical contact of any kind.

If a volunteer feels he/she has been treated in violation of this policy, he/she should immediately report the alleged act to his/her supervisor and the Executive Director. The conduct should be reported directly to the Executive Director if the alleged perpetrator is the volunteer's supervisor. If the alleged perpetrator is the ED, the report should be given to the Board of Directors.

CASA will immediately investigate all complaints of harassment and discrimination in as discreet and confidential a manner as possible. If unlawful discrimination or harassment is determined to have occurred, CASA will take prompt corrective action against the offending individual. The corrective action may consist of verbal or written warnings or other actions, up to or including termination.

CASA will not tolerate retaliation of any kind against volunteers who report incidents of any kind of illegal discrimination or harassment. However, in the event the investigation reveals that the allegation was false or made in bad faith, appropriate corrective action will be taken.

Inappropriate Behavior, Abuse, & Molestation

Any incident of unacceptable verbal/non-verbal discipline of a child that occurs while conducting CASA business will be considered child abuse and appropriately reported to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Any volunteer who is alleged to have engaged in any form of child abuse or molestation will be reported to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and immediately removed from participation in casework for the duration of the investigation. If child abuse allegations are substantiated, the volunteer will be subject to immediate termination.

If any volunteer advocate has reason to believe a child has been mistreated or has reason to believe that a child is in imminent danger, that person has an obligation to comply with the Texas Family Code

261.101 regarding the requirement to report child abuse and neglect. Child abuse can be reported to TDFPS at 1-800-252-5400.

Conflict of Interest

Each volunteer is expected to work for the best interests of the agency's mission at all times. Each volunteer has an obligation to avoid any activity, agreement, business investment or interest, or other situation that could be construed as a conflict with the agency's best interests or as an interference with the volunteer's duty to serve the agency and/or its clients to the best of his/her ability.

- 1) No volunteer will receive from an individual or agency any form of commission, rebate, or other remuneration for referring clients for services or any other business transaction.
- 2) No volunteers are allowed to have any direct or indirect financial interest in the assets, leases, business transactions, or professional services of the program
- 3) A CASA volunteer shall not provide direct services to a child or his/her family that could lead to a conflict of interest or potential liability or cause a child or family to become dependent on the volunteer for services that should be provided by other agencies or organizations.

CASA Volunteers may not:

- 1) Serve as a foster, foster/adopt, or adoptive parent for any child whose conservatorship is through DFPS, unless the volunteer is related to the child or placement occurred prior to June 1999.
- 2) Serve as a DFPS mediator, nor have any contractual relationship with DFPS.
- 3) Be employed in a position and/or agency that might result in a conflict of interest.

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

Volunteers should avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest, as this affects the corporation's good standing in the community and its ability to fulfill its mission. Volunteers shall disclose to the Executive Director their relationships and interests which present a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest as soon as they arise.

Should any volunteer not disclose a conflict of interest prior to the act then disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including dismissal.

Public Relations

Online Communication & Social Media

For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation blogs, wiki's, and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, Tumblr, and YouTube. This policy applies to all uses of social media, including personal use, by CASA of WST Counties volunteers, as their position with CASA is likely well known within the community.

Any volunteer who elects or is asked to represent CASA of WST Counties on social media sites is encouraged to be respectful of the audience, the CASA of WST Counties program, and CASA personnel. Users should avoid content that is contradictory or in conflict with CASA of WST Counties and should always be respectful of CASA staff and volunteers. This includes not only the obvious (avoidance of ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.), but also the careful

consideration of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory. It is never okay to publish confidential information on social media.

For all social media participation, users should consider not only topics posted, but also items commented on, discussed, or engaged in alternate ways. Volunteers should avoid engagement in arguments on social media, particularly arguments relating to contradictory issues.

Volunteers should not use social media profiles to defame or embarrass CASA employees, volunteers, child victims or their families, or to act in any way that would interfere with his/her commitment to program volunteers or the children served. If a volunteer's social media participation creates unnecessary controversy surrounding or within CASA of WST Counties, it will be addressed and he/she may face disciplinary action or dismissal.

Media Relations

No volunteer CASA of Walker, San Jacinto & Trinity Counties will speak with the media without first obtaining approval from the Executive Director as to the purpose and content of the interview. The Executive Director of CASA and a designated member of the Board will serve as primary media spokespersons. Any media contact by a volunteer to publicly air a grievance is prohibited.

Crisis Management

All inquiries from the media, planned or unplanned, including but not limited to the press, television, and radio, regarding CASA of WST Counties are to be directed to the Executive Director. Comments to the media regarding CASA, or any case handled by CASA of WST Counties, are to be made by the Executive Director only, except by express permission of the Executive Director.

Alcohol/Drug Use

CASA of WST Counties prohibits the illicit use, sale, attempted sale, conveyance, distribution, manufacture, cultivation, dispensation, purchase, attempted purchase, and possession of illegal drugs, intoxicants, or controlled substance, at any time and in any amount or in any manner. Illicit drugs include all drugs for which possession is illegal under federal or state law, including prescription drugs for which the individual does not have a valid prescription.

CASA of WST Counties prohibits the use of prescription medications for which the volunteer does not have a valid prescription, and the use of prescription medication in a manner inconsistent with the prescription.

The purchase, consumption, and possession of alcoholic beverages in facilities under the control of CASA of WST Counties are strictly prohibited except in cases where approval has been sought from the Board of Directors (i.e., in cases of fund raising).

SECTION 8: Safety

Safety Guidelines

CASA volunteers should always use common sense in the performance of their duties and should never put themselves in a situation that does not feel safe. The CASA staff is available to discuss safety questions or concerns. Advocate safety is of utmost importance.

The following safety tips should help in making decisions, but advocates should use their own judgment to assess situations:

- Be certain you have a correct address before visiting a home or other placement.
- Confirm the date, time and location of your visit before proceeding to the visit. If the family does not have a phone, try contacting them via mail or speak with them in person at a court hearing or supervised visit.
- Visit unverified placements (i.e. homes of respondent family members and relatives who have not been thoroughly checked out) only with your CASA Supervisor.
- Take a cell phone with you. If you do not have one, borrow one.
- Carry identification
- Do not wear expensive clothes and jewelry; Drive an inconspicuous car if possible.
- Use *67 to block Caller-ID services when calling from home. If the number you are dialing does not accept anonymous calls, use a cell phone or call from the CASA office.
- If you must leave a message, give the CASA phone number.
- Do not give your CASA child your home number. Use your CASA number. If you feel compelled to give your CASA child a telephone number, use your cell phone number.
- Give your numbers to professionals such as caseworkers and therapists only at your discretion and with the understanding that the number does not become a part of the case record and will not be made available to others.
- If anyone asks why you won't give out your home information – blame us. Let them know it is one of the strict agency policies that you agreed to uphold when you became a CASA volunteer.
- If the neighborhood does not look or feel safe, do not go through with the home visit, even if you have an appointment set.
- Only make home visits during the daytime if possible.
- Do not let children visit your home or know your home information. Your home is not a temporary housing option if placement falls through, even for one night.
- Always know your location and call 911 if there is a problem.

Accidents & Incidents

An accident means that a volunteer or another person with them, in the course of CASA business, was injured while performing official duties of the agency. An incident means that something occurred, in the course of performing CASA business that is of a critical nature or caused serious concern but has not resulted in injury.

When an accident or incident occurs, the volunteer needs to report to their supervisor within 48 hours of the time the accident or incident occurred. The Volunteer Supervisor will complete an accident/incident report to document the circumstances and any other necessary information.

Firearms and Weapons

The possession of firearms, dangerous weapons or explosives on the property of CASA of WST Counties or while engaged in the duties or functions a volunteer of CASA of WST Counties is prohibited. This prohibition includes those weapons carried under license issued by the State of Texas. Violations of this policy may result in removal from volunteer service. Law enforcement agents are exempt from this policy.

Harassment & Discrimination

CASA of WST Counties is committed to maintaining the highest level of professional conduct in the working environment. In keeping with this commitment, any form of discrimination or harassment that would have the effect of creating a threatening or hostile situation for volunteers or others will not be tolerated. All incidents of discrimination or harassment should be reported to the Executive Director for immediate investigation.

SECTION 9: Travel & Transportation

Transportation

It is the policy of CASA of Walker, San Jacinto & Trinity Counties that volunteer advocates are prohibited from providing transportation for the children whom they serve as advocates.

Driver's License

All CASA Volunteer Advocates must provide CASA of Walker, San Jacinto & Trinity Counties a current copy of their driver's license. As their driver's license is updated, new documentation should be provided to the CASA office.

Insurance

CASA of Walker, San Jacinto & Trinity Counties is unable to provide liability insurance for our volunteers. In the event that a third party is injured or sustains a loss, the volunteer's automobile insurance policy will be the primary policy.

If volunteers drive their personal vehicle for CASA business, they must have their own automobile insurance that meets the legal requirements for the State of Texas. CASA does not provide liability insurance that covers any injuries a volunteer may sustain.

Financial Responsibility

Volunteers are responsible for the direct costs of general repairs, maintenance, and fuel for their vehicle(s). When appropriate, volunteers may request reimbursements for agency related vehicle use.

Case Visits Exceeding 100 Miles

CASA is generally unable to reimburse volunteer for volunteer-related travel. However, when CASA volunteers must travel more than 100 miles one way (or 200 miles round trip) to visit the children they are assigned to, they may request reimbursement for their mileage, as long as funding allows. The Executive Director shall be responsible for notifying staff, volunteers and board members when there is no funding available for this purpose. When approved, mileage will be reimbursed at the board approved rate.

Frequency of Requests: Volunteers may request travel reimbursement in order to meet the minimum standards of visiting the children on their caseload (i.e., for children within one hour driving distance, visits shall be once a month; for children one to three hours away, once a quarter; and for more than three hours away, once every six months). Reimbursement for trips that are made more frequently than the minimum standards must be authorized by the Executive Director and deemed necessary for the child's best interest in order to be paid.

In cases where airfare, car rental and other related expenses would total less than the cost of mileage, volunteers may request reimbursement for the less expensive method of travel. In this instance, volunteers and staff shall seek out the best possible value in order to be good stewards of the agency's funds.

SECTION 10: Leaving CASA

Volunteer Exit

We hope that volunteers will find a rewarding and enjoyable volunteer experience with CASA; however, we realize that for one reason or another, sometimes the volunteer relationship must end. If you voluntarily decide to resign from the program, please give as much notice as possible, in writing, to your supervisor. Written notice should include the date of the notice, the reason for resignation and the last day that you intend to work your case.

Probation and Dismissal

The Executive Director has the authority to place volunteers on probation or to dismiss a volunteer when it is believed that the volunteer is unable to fulfill his/her role as a CASA and/or abide by all CASA policies and standards.

While violation of any policy outlined in this manual could justify cause for probation or dismissal, the following actions, if not addressed or improved upon, specifically may result in probation or dismissal:

- Loss of or lack ability to formulate objective opinions
- Acting in an unprofessional manner (treating other volunteers, staff, or other professionals in a demeaning, belittling, rude, or hostile way)
- Difficulty communicating (either orally or in writing) in such a manner that is preventing effective advocacy on a case
- Failure to submit required documentation per the given deadlines
- Making recommendations to the court without consultation with and approval from CASA staff
- Acting in a way which undermines the credibility of CASA
- Allowing personal victimizations, history, or viewpoints to affect or interfere with advocacy on an assigned case
- Engaging in any of the restricted activities listed in Section 5 of this manual.

Appropriate grounds for immediate dismissal of a CASA volunteer include, but are not limited to:

- Taking action without program or court approval that endangers the child or is outside the CASA program's role
- Breaching confidentiality
- Engaging in ex-parte communication with the court
- Violating a program policy, court rule or law
- Failing to complete required pre-service or in-service training
- Failing to demonstrate an ability to carry out assigned duties effectively
- Falsifying a volunteer application or misrepresenting facts during the screening process

- Having allegations of child abuse/neglect brought against them
- Engaging in criminal activity
- Experiencing an irresolvable conflict of interest

If a volunteer is dismissed from the program, CASA will contact all the parties involved in the case and discuss next steps to ensure the best interests of the child(ren) served are met.

Volunteers may also be dismissed for alternative reasons, if the volunteer's behaviors are deemed to be inappropriate, inadequate, or disruptive for an ongoing period. Supervisors will make all efforts to develop improvement plans with volunteers and to create opportunities for success. However, should the concerning behaviors continue, or expectations not be met, a volunteer may be asked to leave the program.

Exit Interview

Upon leaving CASA's service, you may be asked for your comments concerning your period of volunteerism. Your input helps us to establish our policies, procedures, work environment, and other variables affecting your volunteer experience with us. Exit interviews will be coordinated through the Executive Director, or his/her designee.

References and Recommendations

It is the policy of CASA of WST Counties not to provide references or service information regarding former volunteers without the volunteer's written consent. Should a volunteer desire a reference or recommendation, he/she should indicate so in writing to the program.

Volunteer Records

The CASA program maintains a written record for each volunteer that contains, at minimum, as appropriate:

- 1) Application
- 2) Documentation of personal interview
- 3) Reference documentation
- 4) Documentation of all records checks
- 5) Emergency and identifying contact information
- 6) Training records
- 7) Job description
- 8) Dates of service
- 9) Performance evaluations and any other applicable documentation related to performance
- 10) Documentation of volunteer status
- 11) Copy of volunteer's current driver's license

Volunteer personnel records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

Volunteers may make arrangements with their supervisor to review their records and may request additions and corrections by speaking with the Executive Director or his/her designee; the Executive Director (or designee) may or may not allow the changes to be made to the volunteer's record. The CASA

program retains the record after a volunteer has left the program in accordance with the program's records retention policy. All volunteer records are stored in locked cabinets or closets.

Volunteer Manual Acknowledgement

I _____ have reviewed, read, and understand all matters set forth in the Volunteer Manual for CASA of WST Counties, and I agree to abide by all provisions. I realize that changes in the policies may be unilaterally implemented by the Board of Directors.

Nothing in these policies is to be construed as a contract or a provision guaranteeing a specific term or tenure of volunteerism. I understand that my volunteer relationship with CASA may be dismissed at any time, with or without notice or cause.

I specifically agree to all terms and conditions described in the text of this Volunteer Manual.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Volunteer Supervisor Signature

Date

