

CASA of Walker, San Jacinto & Trinity Counties: Advocate & Companion In-Service Guidelines

CASA Advocates are required to complete a minimum of 12 hours of in-service (CEUs) per calendar year. Companions are required to complete a minimum of 6 hours of in-service (CEUs) per calendar year.

There are a variety of ways to meet this requirement. This guide serves to provide general information and ideas about obtaining in-service credit. Additional opportunities will be communicated throughout the year via email and through our advocate Facebook group (CASA Advocates: Walker, San Jacinto, & Trinity Counties).

On-Site In-Services & Trainings

In-Service Hours Vary

Throughout the year, CASA of Walker County will host a series of on-site and/or virtual training opportunities.

In-services will be announced in the annual training calendar, monthly training newsletter, through emails/texts, and on our advocate Facebook group.

Books & Journal Articles

1-4 In-Service Hours

Reading materials related to child welfare and aligned disciplines are also another great way to complete in-service hours. To earn credit for books and articles, advocates should complete a Training Log in Optima that briefly summarizes the content of the reading and discusses how the materials can be utilized in the advocate's role as a CASA.

- 50-100 pages, 2 CEUs (450+ characters in an Optima Training Log)
- 100-200 pages, 3 CEUs (750+ characters in an Optima Training Log)
- 200+ pages, 4 CEUs (900+ characters in an Optima Training Log)
- Journal/Research Articles – Credits vary depending on the length of the articles

**Characters are letters, numbers, and spaces, NOT WORD COUNT.*

*****To encourage a diverse learning experience, no more than four (4) of the required twelve (12) hours of continuing education may be completed by reading books/articles.***

Conferences/Workshops

In-Service Hours Vary

Other conferences hosted by child welfare organizations, universities, child protective services and so forth are also great options for in-service credit. To earn credit for conference attendance, submit proof of registration and/or attendance and the conference schedule, marking the sessions that you attended.

Webinars/Online Training

In-Service Hours Vary

Webinars and online trainings are a great way to get in-service hours in the comfort of your own home! A great list of Webinars provided by Texas CASA can be found at: www.texascasa.org. Click on the *Learning Center* to view a list of webinars. Additional resources are also available through the CASA College - <https://casacollege.myabsorb.com/>.

*You will have to create an account the first time you use CASA College

University Coursework:

1-3 In-Service Hours

For advocates enrolled at SHSU or other universities, applicable coursework (i.e. Child Abuse & Neglect, Family Violence, Victimology, Trauma & Crisis, etc.) can be applied toward your in-service credits. To earn credit for the course, submit your course syllabus and documentation that shows that you successfully completed the course. You will earn 1 CEU per university course hour completed. (Usually 3 per course)

Questions??

Do you have a book not on these lists that you want considered for credit? Have a webinar/online training you would like considered? Maybe you watched a documentary on Netflix, Hulu, etc. All questions about in-service credits can be sent to Rachel Drake: r.drake@casaofwalkercounty.org, 936-291-2272, ext 106.

In-Service Training Logs

REMEMBER: For an in-service training to count toward your annual in-service requirement, **you must submit an Optima Training Log** and that log must be approved by your CASA Supervisor. When submitting training logs, include a summary of the resource, along with a detailed response of what you learned and how it may apply to your future work as a CASA.

The training log may include:

- What is the main theme/message of the material?
- What did you learn from the material?
- Why is this beneficial to know? How can this knowledge be applied to working a case?
- What would you like to research further based on what you've learned from the material?

The following are examples of good Training Logs:

"I just watched A Mother's Love: A Cancer Hoax Documentary for Medical advocacy training. This clip amazed me because the mother suffered from Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy (MSP), the psychological disorder where the mom made her child appear sick in order to receive attention. But she received over \$35,000. It clearly showed how a family, a church, and a whole community could be taken in by such a scammer although it really is an illness. (I did have to google the case and found out she is serving 6 1/2 years, and dad is serving 4 years for the scam). As a CASA, this could have been avoided by one phone call or visit to a doctor; hence the medical advocacy we provide as a CASA is so very important. WE cannot depend on the care-giver to share medical results or even the health passport...we need to get facts from the medical professional."

(851 Characters for a 1-hour video)

Three More Words, by Ashley Rhodes-Courter is a sequel to Three Little Words. Both are best sellers, and both are autobiographies. Three More Words was written about her life after having been adopted into the Courter Family. It flashed back to many childhood experiences which affected her adult years. She was married and fostering during the period she wrote about. She struggled to adopt another child that she had fostered but was unable. After reading the first book, reading about the separation from the children that she and her husband were able to foster was almost unbearable for me as a reader. She wrote a lot about her weight problems and how they stemmed from her hunger as a child. She overcame many obstacles and is currently a well-known speaker and advocate for child welfare issues. The book is informative and educational while being most interesting. It is highly recommended.

(916 Character for 291-page book, 4 CEUs)