

Court Appointed Special Advocate Application Checklist

STEP ONE: Attend an Advocate Information session and complete:

- Volunteer Application
- Request for Child Abuse or Neglect & Criminal Record (**PLEASE DO NOT ENCLOSE PAYMENT FOR THE RECORD CHECKS.**)
- One page autobiography.

FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE PREVIOUS STEPS WILL DELAY PROCESSING OF YOUR APPLICATION.

STEP TWO: Inform your three references that a representative from Voices for Children will contact them.

STEP THREE: A representative from Voices for Children will contact you to schedule an interview.

Note: We cannot schedule an interview until we have received your completed Request for Child Abuse or Neglect/Criminal Record.

STEP FOUR: Voices will send confirmation of your acceptance into the CASA volunteer training class

STEP FIVE: Attend a CASA training cycle. (Please refer to the training schedule.)

STEP SIX: A juvenile court judge will swear you in as a CASA volunteer and you will be ready to be a voice for a child!

All completed materials should be submitted to:

Voices for Children
Attn: Judith Coleman
121 South Meramec, 2nd Floor
St. Louis, MO 63105
jfc Coleman@voices-stl.org 314.615-4594
Fax: 314.615.0621

Questions?

Contact Judith at jfc Coleman@voices-stl.org or 314.615-4594

CASA VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

Purpose

The Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer serves by court order as an officer of the court. The CASA volunteer serves as an advocate for the child's best interests, provides an independent voice for the child, and monitors the case until permanency is achieved. The CASA volunteer works with the case supervisor.

Qualifications

- Open-minded, caring citizen who shares the agency's mission and vision
- Age 21 years or older
- Completion of an application including an autobiographical essay, three references, and background checks
- High School diploma or GED
- Successful completion of 30 hours of CASA pre-service training.
- Sworn in as an officer of the court

Time Commitment

- Commit to serving as an advocate until the child reaches permanency, with a minimum of 1 year
- Dedicate 10-15 hours per month visiting with the CASA child, information gathering, team meetings, court hearings, etc.
- Flexibility to attend court hearings and scheduled meetings during the day

Duties and Responsibilities

- **Conduct an independent investigation of CASA case**
 - Request and review all records and reports relative to the case including, but not limited to, the court files and the CD file
 - Interview all parties to the CASA case
- **Monitor and facilitate progress of CASA case**
 - Ensure the child is adequately cared for and special needs are addressed
 - Maintain contact with all pertinent people in the case
 - Consult with the child's service providers (i.e. therapists, Special School District, etc.)
 - Contact with the CASA child at least once a month to evaluate the child's needs, progress, and wishes
 - Attend all staffings and meetings for the child and the family
 - Follow parents' progress in the Written Service Plans and the court orders
- **Ensure all relevant information is available to the Family Court**
 - Submit written report, including all recommendations, to case supervisor prior to the court hearing.
 - Ensure CASA presence at court
 - Attend all court hearings or notifying case supervisor of inability to attend in cases of emergency
 - Bring accurate, up-to-date case file to all court hearings
- **Keep CASA Supervisor informed of case activity and progress**
 - Maintain regular contact with case supervisor
 - Discuss case advocacy issues and concerns on a regular basis, with a minimum of twice per month
 - Complete a monthly activity report each month and return to case supervisor
 - Keep all case records confidential, accurate, and up to date
 - Record all contacts and activities immediately on case log sheets in case notebook
 - Provide copies of case documentation to and review with case supervisor
- **Professional Development**
 - Complete 12 hours of supervisor approved continuing education training each year
 - Participate in ongoing program and volunteer evaluation with case supervisor

Please indicate the starting date of the training session in which you would like to participate:

CASA VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Questions? Contact Judith Coleman at 314.615.2908 or jfcoleman@voices-stl.org

PERSONAL HISTORY

First and Last Name	Maiden Name/Alias	Date of Birth		
Home Address	City	State	Zip	
Home Phone	Work Phone (<i>If okay to call</i>)	Cell Phone		
Email Address	Race	Gender	Age	

Please list all previous addresses for the past 5 years:

Previous Address	City	State	Zip	
Previous Address	City	State	Zip	

WORK HISTORY

Tell us about your work experience, both paid and volunteer. Start with your current occupation then list in reverse chronological order your employment for the last 5 years.

Current Employer	Job Title	Dates of Employment	FT/PT	
Work Address	City	State	Zip	
Previous Employer/Organization	Job Title	Dates Employed	FT/PT	
Previous Employer/Organization	Job Title	Dates Employed	FT/PT	
Previous Employer/Organization	Job Title	Dates Employed	FT/PT	

Have you ever been fired or asked to resign during your employment? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain. _____

Does your employer offer time off for volunteering? Yes _____ No _____ Please explain criteria for any organized volunteer programs. _____

EDUCATION

Tell us about your education, starting with high school and any college, graduate or post- graduate work completed.

School	Degree	Major(s)	Year Graduated
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School	Degree	Major(s)	Year Graduated
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School	Degree	Major(s)	Year Graduated
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What languages do you speak? _____

SPECIAL INTERESTS, AFFILIATIONS & ACTIVITIES

List your community affiliations (Church, Religious, Professional, Social, Recreational, Civic Groups, etc.)

List current and previous volunteer work (please include any work done with children):

Do you drive? Yes _____ No _____ Do you have regular access to a car? Yes _____ No _____

How did you hear about Voices for Children? _____

Have you ever volunteered with another CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) program?
Yes _____ No _____

When/Where? _____

What was your volunteer role? _____

TIME COMMITMENT

Are you willing to complete a **minimum of 30-hours** of pre-service classroom training? Yes ____ No ____

Are you willing to dedicate **10-12 hours a month** to this position? Yes ____ No ____

Do you have flexibility within your daytime schedule to attend court hearings & meetings? Yes ____ No ____

Are you willing to commit to at least **12 months** of volunteer service? Yes ____ No ____

PRELIMINARY SCREENING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Do you consent to a routine criminal and child abuse/neglect check? Yes ____ No ____

*At Voices for Children, the safety of the children/youth that we serve is at the center of all that we do. Any applicant convicted of or having charges pending for a felony or misdemeanor involving a sex offense, child abuse or neglect or related acts that would pose risks to children or to the CASA/GAL program's credibility, is not eligible to be a CASA volunteer. Applicants with other misdemeanor or felony charges will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. **If you answer yes to ANY of the following questions, PLEASE ATTACH A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER OFFERING AN EXPLANATION FOR EACH, even for traffic violations.***

1. Have you ever been detained by police, or summoned into court?
If yes, please give details including date, place, and nature of offense Yes ____ No ____

2. Have you ever been arrested/charged and/or convicted of a misdemeanor? Yes ____ No ____

3. Have you ever been arrested/charged and/or convicted of a felony? Yes ____ No ____

4. Have you ever been or are you currently on probation? Yes ____ No ____

5. Have you ever been or are you currently on parole? Yes ____ No ____

6. Have you even had any DWI arrests, charges, or conviction? Yes ____ No ____

7. Have you ever been convicted of a traffic violation? Yes ____ No ____

8. Have you ever been the subject of a child abuse/neglect investigation by Children's Division, Division of Family Services, or any other organization? Yes ____ No ____

9. Have you ever worked with children in foster care (personally or professionally) or with families who may have children in care? (e.g. DFS, the court, social service agency, residential placement etc.)
Yes ____ No ____

10. Have you even been denied issuance of a license or had a license suspended or revoked?
Yes ____ No ____

11. Have you ever been arrested/charged or convicted of any sexual misconduct (including pornography)?
Yes ____ No ____

12. Can you think of any reason (e.g. anything from your past) why a judge might be reluctant for you to serve as a sworn officer of the court and a CASA volunteer?
Yes ____ No ____

REFERENCES

Personal References: Please provide the names of two non-family members, who have known you well for at least 1 year. **Please let them know a representative from Voices for Children will be contacting them. Be sure to write CLEARLY and include email address, phone number and how you know the person. If they do not have an email address, please include COMPLETE mailing address.**

1. _____
Name E-Mail Phone Relationship

Address (If no email.)

2. _____
Name E-Mail Phone Relationship

Address (If no email.)

Employer Reference: Please list the name of one person, either current or previous, who has supervised you in a paid capacity. Students may use a professor, advisor etc. **Please let them know a representative from Voices for Children will be contacting them.**

3. _____
Name E-Mail Phone Relationship

Address (If no email.)

In the event of an emergency, who should we contact? _____

Relationship _____ Phone Number(s) _____

I hereby affirm that all of the answers provided on my volunteer application are true. I hereby authorize Voices for Children to investigate my background to determine my fitness as a potential volunteer. I understand that this information will be used only for the purpose of determining my suitability as a CASA volunteer.

Applicant's Signature

Date

*** Any applicant found to have been convicted of any, or having charges pending for, a felony or a misdemeanor involving a sex offense, child abuse or neglect, or related acts that would pose risks to children or to Voices for Children's credibility will not be accepted as a CASA volunteer; and any applicant found to provide false or inaccurate information or who withholds relevant information will not be accepted as a CASA volunteer.**

Criteria used in the selection process of volunteers will be such as to ensure an individual is able to meet the responsibilities of a CASA volunteer. No individual will be rejected because of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, age or marital status.

Prospective volunteer applicants must sign this release of information authorizing Voices for Children to conduct a background screening. This information will be used in determining whether or not an applicant meets the minimum criteria for consideration to become a CASA volunteer. Applicants refusing to sign this release will be rejected.

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION

I, _____ request and authorize you and/or your organization to release any and all confidential and privileged information that you have regarding me to Voices for Children.

This information is necessary in order to determine my qualifications and suitability to be a court appointed special advocate, which entails my working with children that have been abused and/or neglected. Because children will be entrusted to my care, it is vital that Voices for Children gather knowledge and verify all information about me. It is for the children's protection that all background inquiries are comprehensive and necessary.

I fully understand that the information you provide may be of a sensitive, confidential and privileged nature, and reflects upon my worthiness to become a volunteer. I hereby release you and your organization from any liability and damage, which may result from your providing the requested information to Voices for Children. Furthermore, I acknowledge that the information you furnish will be kept confidential and available only to Voices for Children and to me, upon my request.

Any questions relating to the release of information about me should be directed to Voices for Children c/o Cheryl Latham, CASA Program Director.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Return completed applications to:

Voices for Children

Attn: Judith Coleman

121 South Meramec, 2nd Floor

St. Louis, MO 63105

Telephone: (314) 615-4594 Fax: (314) 615-0621 Email: jfcoleman@voices-stl.org

Missouri State Highway Patrol / Missouri Department of Social Services
REQUEST FOR CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT / CRIMINAL RECORD

TYPE OF SERVICE (Check ALL that apply) See reverse side for further instructions. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (1) CD Central Registry Child Abuse Search Only - No Charge <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Name Search - \$9.00 (Criminal record, child abuse, or neglect, central registry search) <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Fingerprint Search <input type="checkbox"/> \$14.00 (Authorized Statute 210.487) <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 (All other request)	TYPE OF DAYCARE PROVIDER <input type="checkbox"/> (1) License <input type="checkbox"/> (2) License Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Registered
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IDENTIFYING DATA (Please type or print information legibly in ink.) The subject of the request must complete the next section and sign.

APPLICANT'S NAME (Last, First, MI, Jr., Sr., III)

MAIDEN NAME	DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YY)	STATE OF BIRTH	SEX	RACE
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ALIAS NAME(S)	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER / STATE
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ADDRESSES FOR PAST 5 YEARS

STREET	CITY	STATE	STREET	CITY	STATE

Have you ever been found guilty to or been convicted of any criminal act in this state or any state?

YES (Complete section below) NO, I have not been found guilty to or been convicted of any criminal offense in this state or any state.

DATE	CITY	STATE	COUNTY	CIRCUMSTANCES (Identify charges, attach separate page, if necessary.)

Have you ever been substantiated as a perpetrator in any child abuse or neglect report made to the Children's Division in this state or any state?

YES (Complete section below) NO, I have not been substantiated as a perpetrator in any child abuse or neglect report.

DATE	CITY	STATE	COUNTY	CIRCUMSTANCES (Attach separate page, if necessary.)

The information provided is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand it is unlawful to withhold or falsify information required on this form. I grant permission to the Department of Social Services to obtain any and all information needed to process my request and to use the information as permitted by law.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT (REQUIRED IN INK)	DATE
SIGNATURE OF REQUESTOR (Required in ink)	DATE
TITLE OF CHILD CARE PROVIDER	TELEPHONE
STATE AGENCY	STATE VENDOR OR CONTACT NO. (if applicable)

CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX

<input type="checkbox"/> CHILD CARE RELATED EMPLOYMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DOH / CCB CHILD CARE BUREAU	<input type="checkbox"/> SCHOOLS / PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
<input type="checkbox"/> CHILD CARE RELATED VOLUNTEER	<input type="checkbox"/> DMH / DMH VENDOR	<input type="checkbox"/> CD CONTRACT PROVIDER
<input type="checkbox"/> CD LICENSURE	<input type="checkbox"/> HEALTH CARE	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____

COMPLETE RETURN ADDRESS (REQUIRED ON EACH APPLICATION) Complete your mailing label below Confidential Mail	SEND FEE & FORM TO: Missouri State Highway Patrol Criminal Records and Identification Division P.O. Box 9500 Jefferson city, MO 65102								
<table border="1"> <tr><td>AGENCY NAME</td><td><i>Voices for Children</i></td></tr> <tr><td>ATTENTION</td><td><i>Cheryl D. Latham, CASA Program Mgr.</i></td></tr> <tr><td>ADDRESS</td><td><i>920 No. Vandeventer</i></td></tr> <tr><td>CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE</td><td><i>St. Louis, MO 63108</i></td></tr> </table>	AGENCY NAME	<i>Voices for Children</i>	ATTENTION	<i>Cheryl D. Latham, CASA Program Mgr.</i>	ADDRESS	<i>920 No. Vandeventer</i>	CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	<i>St. Louis, MO 63108</i>	
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY / ESSAY

Please **type** a one-page / 500 word autobiography as part of your application submission. Prospective advocates should send this **typewritten** document **along with the application**. It should include the following:

- Tell us about yourself by discussing what influenced your decision to become a CASA.
- Describe how you believe your service as an advocate will benefit you and the children you would serve.
- Include any specific skills, qualifications, and experiences you might have with children, youth and the juvenile justice system.
- Do not substitute a resume for this written autobiography. If you wish, you may attach a resume in addition to the application and biography.