

QUALITY ASSURANCE INDICATORS OF COMPLIANCE

SEPTEMBER 2016 EDITION



STRENGTHENING THE VOICES OF CASA STATEWIDE



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September 2016

Dear Executive Directors and Program Directors:

Indicators of Compliance (IoC) are the foundational or core documents that each CASA/GAL program is required to submit as part of the Quality Assurance Review process. The review includes an evaluation of these documents in order to demonstrate minimum compliance with Texas CASA Standards.

The documents contained in this manual are samples of these required documents. These samples are provided to support programs as they prepare for the review by offering a template for guidance should a program need to revise or create any of these documents. Programs are not expected to have identical Indicators of Compliance. Should a program choose to utilize the format provided, programs are expected to tailor and customize them to meet their needs.

An electronic version of the Indicators of Compliance Manual can be accessed on the Texas CASA website: [CASA College -> Learning Center -> Quality Assurance \(Resource By Topic\)](#).

For additional information, don't hesitate to contact the Program Operations & Resources team at programoperations@texascasa.org.

Texas CASA Program Operations & Resources Team

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NONPROFIT GOVERNANCE

STANDARD 1: PROGRAM MISSION & PURPOSE

Mission Statement

STANDARD 3: INCLUSIVENESS & DIVERSITY

Inclusiveness & Diversity Plan

STANDARD 5: PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

Bylaws

Board Member Roster

Board Member Job Description

Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT : STANDARD 1.A.1.

CASA OF EL PASO, INC. (EL PASO, TX)

CASA of El Paso trains and supports volunteers from the community to advocate for abused and neglected children who need representation in the family court system, striving to provide them a safe and permanent home.

CASA OF COLLIN COUNTY, INC. (MCKINNEY, TX)

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Collin County, Inc. is to provide trained community volunteers to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children involved in the court system. The ultimate goal is for the volunteers to be a voice for these children in court; the result is that each child is placed into a safe, loving home where he or she can thrive.

CASA OF THE ROLLING PLAINS (CHILDRESS, TX)

CASA of the Rolling Plains' mission is to train volunteers to advocate for the best interest of abused and neglected children in the court system; and to ensure them a safe, permanent home as soon as possible.

INCLUSIVENESS & DIVERSIFICATION PLAN : STANDARD 3

A plan to guide and track progress in diversifying the board, staff and volunteers. This may be included in the strategic plan, but must be reviewed at least once a year and revised at least every four years. Carrying out the Goals, Objectives, or Action Steps of a Diversity Plan is most effective when the tasks are delegated among a group, such as a Recruitment and Retention or ad hoc Committee.

KEY COMPONENTS OF A DIVERSITY PLAN

VISION STATEMENT (SAMPLE)

When our CASA program is diverse and culturally inclusive, we can reflect community and child interests and advocate for culturally responsive service delivery.

GOALS

- Express desired OUTCOMES in specific areas of services and/or operations.
- Provide the DIRECTION in which the organization is heading.
- Reflect the organization's priorities for a specific period of time.
- Answers the question "What do we want to accomplish?"

ARE YOUR GOALS SMART? :

Answering these and other discussion questions can help guide the creation of a comprehensive strategic plan:

- ✓ SPECIFIC: Target a specific area for improvement.
- ✓ MEASURABLE: Quantify or identify an indicator of progress.
- ✓ ASSIGNABLE: Specify who will do it.
- ✓ REALISTIC: State what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources.
- ✓ TIME-RELATED: Specify when the result(s) can be achieved.

OBJECTIVES/ACTION STEPS

- Objectives are the operating component of the Goals and answer the question: "What will we do?" or "How will we meet this Goal?"
- Progress toward achieving objectives/action steps should be measurable with timeframes given.

SAMPLE OUTLINE

GOAL ONE: COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Questions for Discussion:

- What are the race and ethnicity demographics of our service area? If we do not know, how can we find out? How often are these statistics updated? Who can collect this data?
- What are the race and gender demographics of the children we serve? How often do we collect this data? Who compiles this data?
- What are the race and gender demographics of our volunteers? How often do we collect this data? Who compiles this data?
- How do volunteer race and gender demographics compare with those of the kids we serve? Are some volunteer demographics overrepresented compared to children served? By how much?

Examples: Need more male, African American and Hispanic volunteers; multi-county programs try to ensure equal county representation; consider LBGT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) recruitment.

- How often should this information be compiled and compared?

Comparing this data helps a program identify demographic group(s) that are underrepresented, and whom to target in strategic recruitment. Community interests are best represented when program volunteers, Board and staff demographics correlate with those of the children served.

GOAL TWO: BUILD COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Questions for Discussion:

- Based on our child and volunteer data, which demographic groups do we want to target?
- Which African American organizations can we partner with? Which community leaders we can invite to the conversation? Can we designate a liaison to these groups from our program?
- Which Hispanic/Latino/a organizations can we partner with? Which community leaders we can invite to the conversation? Can we designate a liaison to these groups from our program?
- Which at LGBT organizations can we partner with? Which community leaders we can invite to the conversation? Can we designate a liaison to these groups from our program?
- Which men's organizations (fraternities, local sports teams, masons) organizations can we partner with? Which community leaders we can invite to the conversation? Can we designate a liaison to these groups from our program?

GOAL THREE: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF DIVERSE VOLUNTEER ADVOCATES

Questions for Discussion:

- Based on our child and volunteer data, which demographic groups do we want to target?

- Based on the measured demographic differences between volunteers and children served, what should our INCREMENTAL recruitment goals for each group be?
- How can the community partnerships we have/want to establish help with recruitment?
- What resources can we use?
 - Partnerships
 - Social media
 - Word of mouth
 - Newspapers, radio, TV
 - Cultural festivals

GOAL FOUR: INCLUSION

If an individual does not feel welcome or accepted in an organization, they will choose to contribute their talents to one that is. In order to successfully recruit and retain volunteers, staff and board members from diverse backgrounds, a program must be welcoming of people with various demographics.

An inclusive workplace also encourages Courageous Conversations when conflicts arise around race, gender, LBGT, poverty, etc. Such conversations and conflicts can facilitate growth when people feel empowered to “speak their truths.” Inclusion results when all people are encouraged to be their full selves, no matter their identities.

Questions for Discussion:

- Would we benefit from additional cultural competency trainings for Board, staff and volunteers to help us become more inclusive?
- Reflecting on our organizational practices, if I belonged to one or more of the groups below, would I feel welcome on the board? As an employee? As a volunteer?

	Website	Brochures	Office décor, ADA	Are there others in the CASA like me?	Anti-harassment, discrimination, and EEO policies	Ways we talk about _____ community
Millennial						
LBGT						
African American						
Hispanic/Latino						
Male						
Any socio-economic class						

SAMPLE DIVERSITY PLAN FORMAT

OBJECTIVES/ ACTION STEPS Specific, measurable activities to achieve goal.	WHO (Person(s) or Group(s) Responsible)	WHEN (Timeline)	HOW The way change is observed; data collected to measure progress
GOAL # : (The DIRECTION in which the organization is heading)			
ACTION STEP 1: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 2: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 3: (insert step)			
GOAL # :			
ACTION STEP 1: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 2: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 3: (insert step)			

**Additional information & resource: <http://www.nonprofitinclusiveness.org/consider-comprehensive-inclusiveness-initiative>

(CASA PROGRAM, INC.)
A NONPROFIT CORPORATION

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this Corporation shall be *(CASA Program, Inc.)* ("Acronym").

ARTICLE II: MISSION

(CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Program, Inc.) provides trained volunteers who are appointed by the court to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children.

ARTICLE III: OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES

(CASA Program, Inc.) is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to provide trained volunteer advocates for abused or neglected children involved in the legal systems of *(X, Y, and Z)* Counties in Texas, with the goal of achieving a permanent living arrangement for each child which will serve that child's best interest. *(CASA Program, Inc.)* will endeavor to provide trained volunteer advocates in all dependent/neglect-foster care cases assigned by the courts.

ARTICLE IV: NON-PARTISAN ACTIVITIES

This Corporation has been formed under the Texas Nonprofit Corporation laws for the purposes described above, and it shall be nonprofit and non-partisan. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall consist of the publication or dissemination of materials with the purpose of attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office or for or against any cause or measure being submitted to the people for a vote.

ARTICLE V: DEDICATION OF ASSETS

The properties and assets of this nonprofit Corporation are irrevocably dedicated to charitable purposes. No part of the net earnings, properties or assets of this Corporation, upon dissolution or otherwise, shall inure to the benefit of any private person, individual or any member or Director of this Corporation. Upon liquidation or dissolution, all properties, assets, and obligations shall be distributed and paid over to an organization dedicated to public benefit purpose, provided that the organization continues to be dedicated to the exempt purpose as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law, as the Board of Directors shall determine.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICES

SECTION 1. PRINCIPAL OFFICE. The principal office of the Corporation shall be located in *(X)* County, Texas.

SECTION 2. REGISTERED OFFICE AND AGENT. The Corporation shall maintain a registered office and registered agent in the State of Texas as required by the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act. The registered office may be, but need not be, identical with the principal office of the Corporation in the State of Texas, and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Board of Directors.

SECTION 3. ADDITIONAL OFFICES. The Corporation may have, in addition to its principal office, other offices as determined by the Board of Directors or as the affairs of the Corporation may require.

ARTICLE VII: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECTION 1. GENERAL POWERS. The Board of Directors, hereafter the "Board," is responsible for the overall policy and direction of (CASA Program, Inc.). Under the authorization of the Board, day-to-day operations, activates and affairs will be managed by the Executive Director of the Corporation, hereafter "ED," and staff.

SECTION 2. CONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD. The Board of Directors shall be constituted as follows:

- a. The Board shall consist of at least nine (9) and not more than (#) Directors.
- b. Board members will reside or work in the counties served by the program.
- c. One CASA volunteer may be appointed as a Director by the Board. This volunteer shall have successfully completed required training and be considered in good standing.
- d. The remaining Directors shall be elected by majority vote at (*when*) meeting of the Board. Any vacancy occurring in these positions shall be filled by the Board.
- e. The ED will serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Board.

SECTION 3. BOARD MEMBER BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS. All board members must complete a written application, a personal interview, and consent and release forms to conduct appropriate background investigations. All applicants will undergo background checks and rechecks as required in CASA Standards for Local CASA/GAL Programs.

SECTION 4. TERMS OF OFFICE. A director's term of office shall be *number* (#) calendar years. Directors may serve up to *number* (#) consecutive terms. After serving two (2) full terms, a Director is not eligible for re-election until at least one (1) full year has lapsed. Terms will be staggered, with one-third (1/3) of the Directors being elected each year.

SECTION 5. REMOVAL. A director may be removed from office at any time, with or without cause, by an affirmative vote of the majority of all directors. (*OPTIONAL: Any Director who fails to attend three (3) consecutive Board meetings, or who, during the course of a calendar year misses more than one-half of meetings, may be removed by a majority vote of the Board.*)

SECTION 6: RESIGNATION: Resignations from the Board should be communicated to the Board Chair and the Secretary, and become final upon acceptance by the Board or, if no action is taken by the Board to accept the resignation, upon the expiration of 30 days from the date of the resignation.

SECTION 7. VACANCIES. Any person appointed or elected to fill a vacancy on the Board shall serve the unexpired term of the departed Board member.

SECTION 8. ADVISORY COUNCIL. *(OPTIONAL)* In addition to voting members, the Board may have a non-voting Advisory Council nominated and elected by the Board *(with not more than #) members*. The Advisory Council shall meet *(frequency)*. Advisory Council members shall serve a *(# year term and be eligible to succeed themselves for one additional term)*.

SECTION 9. COMPENSATION. Directors shall receive no compensation for their services as Directors of this Corporation.

SECTION 10. CONFLICT OF INTEREST. All members of the board shall sign a Conflict of Interest Policy annually. Board members have a duty to disclose any interest that is directly or indirectly involved with a material contract or transaction with *(CASA Program, Inc.)* Board members are to disclose to the Executive Committee in writing or request to have the nature and extent of interest entered in the minutes of the meeting of the Board. In the event a Director or officer shall disclose the interest at a meeting, the Director who makes the disclosure shall not take part in any discussion, debate or vote on the matter. A board member who fails to disclose a conflict, or potential conflict, shall be subject to discipline by the Board up to and including dismissal from the board.

Board members may be foster, foster/adopt, or adoptive parents for any child whose conservatorship is with DFPS.

Board members who are also CASA volunteers shall serve under the provisions of SECTION 1 above and, not in their capacity as a Board Member, act as an advocate. Volunteer advocate board members must recuse themselves from voting on personnel and human resource matters (i.e. job-related evaluations, disciplinary actions or wage-related decisions of staff) and any other issues with potential for conflict of interest that come before the Board.

ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECTION 1. MINIMUM NUMBER OF MEETINGS. The Board of Directors shall hold a minimum of four meetings per year, one per quarter.

SECTION 2. NOTICE. Notice of each meeting shall be given in person, verbally, written, or electronically no less than *(#)* days prior to the date of the meeting.

SECTION 3. QUORUM. At any meeting of the Board, 51 percent, or a simple majority, of its members shall constitute a quorum, and any action may be taken by a majority of those present, unless a greater percentage of votes is required by the Bylaws. A director may vote in person *(or by proxy)*, executed in writing by the director. No action can be taken when a quorum is not present.

SECTION 4. PROXY VOTE. *(Optional)* Proxies are not permitted or a Director may vote by proxy if executed in writing by the Director. No proxy shall be valid after *(time)* from the date of its execution.

SECTION 5. PARLIAMENTARIAN GUIDE. All meetings of the Board of Directors shall operate under rules consistent with these Bylaws or using Parliamentary Procedures as a guide.

SECTION 6. ACTION WITHOUT A MEETING. (*Optional*) Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Directors under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act, the Certificate of Formation, and these Bylaws may be taken without a meeting, if all Directors individually and collectively participate in writing, including email, setting forth the action and date of the consent. Such written consent shall have the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of the Board.

SECTION 7. SPECIAL MEETINGS. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the Chair of the Board or by the written request of one-third (1/3) of the members of the Board. A written notice including the location, date, and time will be given to all directors no less than 3 days before the meeting.

ARTICLE IX: OFFICERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECTION 1. OFFICERS. The officers of the Corporation shall be a Chair/President, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Past Chair as long as the Past Chair remains on the Board. Other officers may be elected in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

SECTION 2. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE. The officers of the Board shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors. New offices may be created and filled by the Board of Directors at any meeting of the Board of Directors provided that notice of the intent to vote on the creation of a new office is given. The term of office of each officer of this Corporation shall be for (*number (#)*) year. An officer may repeat his or her office and serve up to two (2) consecutive years. After serving two (2) full terms, or one (1) full term and the part of an unexpired term, an officer is not eligible for re-election to the same office until at least one (1) full year has passed.

SECTION 3. REMOVAL. An officer who does not comply with assigned responsibilities may be relieved of office by two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors present at a meeting designated for that purpose.

SECTION 4. VACANCIES. A vacancy in any office, except that of the Past Chair, because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise, may be filled by the Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term with a majority vote of the members of the board.

SECTION 5. CHAIR OR PRESIDENT. The Chair shall be the principal executive officer of the Corporation and shall, in general, supervise and control all of the business and affairs of the Corporation. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board, and, in general, the perform all duties incident to the office of the Chair and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors from time to time. The Chair shall be a voting and participating member of the Executive Committee and an ex-officio member without voting rights (except in the event of a tie) of all other committees. The Chair shall appoint committee members unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

SECTION 6. IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR OR PRESIDENT. The Immediate Past Chair serves only if still a member of the Board and shall continue to serve on the executive committee as an officer of the Corporation. The Past Chair shall perform such duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Board of Directors.

SECTION 7. VICE-CHAIR OR VICE-PRESIDENT. The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the President in their absence and perform such duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Chair or by the Board.

SECTION 8. SECRETARY. The Secretary shall keep a record of minutes and attendance of the meetings of the Board and Executive Committee; see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws, or as required by law; be custodian of the corporate records; and, in general, perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to the Secretary by the Chair or by the Board.

SECTION 9. TREASURER. The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Corporation, receive and give receipts for monies due and payable to the Corporation from any source whatsoever and deposit all such monies in the name of the Corporation. The Treasurer shall provide monthly financial reports to the Board and provide quarterly financial reports as may be required by grantors.

ARTICLE X: COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES. The Chair shall appoint all committees and the Board of Directors must adopt a resolution consenting to the Chair's appointments. Each committee shall include two or more directors, and may include persons who are not directors. The Board of Directors may establish qualifications for membership on a committee. The establishment of a committee or the delegation of authority to it shall not relieve the Board of Directors, or any individual director, of any responsibility imposed by the Bylaws or otherwise imposed by law.

SECTION 2. STANDING COMMITTEES. The standing committees of *(CASA Program, Inc.)* shall be the Executive, Finance, Nominating/Board Development and *(list any other standing committees)* Committees.

SECTION 3. AD HOC COMMITTEE. Ad hoc Committees may be created at any time, as deemed appropriate by the Chair or the Board. Such committees shall have powers and duties as the Board Chair or Board may determine, so long as they do not conflict with these Bylaws.

SECTION 4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The Officers of the Board of Directors shall constitute the Executive Committee. The Board Chair shall act as chairperson of the executive committee. A majority of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and all decisions shall be by majority vote of those present.

This committee shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Corporation in between regular meetings of the Board for the purpose of transacting routine business as well as for the purpose of making

recommendations to the Board and acting on urgent matters that require immediate attention, which cannot await a Board of Directors meeting. The actions of the Executive Committee must be reported to the Board at its next regular or special meeting.

The Executive Committee shall have all the power and authority of the Board of Directors except that it shall not have the authority to:

- a. Remove an officer, create a new office or or fill any vacancy in any office;
- b. Approve the annual budget of the Corporation;
- c. Amend, alter or repeal the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation; or
- d. Appoint, employ, or discharge the Executive Director.

SECTION 5. FINANCE COMMITTEE. The Finance Committee shall be comprised of the Treasurer and (*number (#)*) additional members of the Board of Directors shall be appointed annually with the approval of the Board. The Treasurer shall serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee, in conjunction with the Executive Director, shall: (i) prepare an annual budget based on funding anticipated during the next fiscal year and present it to the Board of Directors for approval at least two months prior to the end of the fiscal year; and (ii) prepare and present an annual report which includes an audit of the financial statements of CASA to the Board no later than nine (9) months after the end of the fiscal year. The ED and Treasurer shall be responsible to assure the Corporation operates under a Financial Control Policy to be approved by the Board.

The Finance Committee shall study and review all matters involving the finances, appropriations and expenditures of (*CASA Program, Inc.*), including but not limited to a monthly review of the budget and financial reports. The finalized financial statements will be presented at each Board meeting.

SECTION 6. NOMINATING/BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE. The Nominating/Board Development Committee shall be composed of (*number (#)*) members of the Board, elected by the Board. The committee shall designate one of its members to serve as its Chair.

The Nominating Committee will establish qualifications and attributes for directors and officers, actively seek and maintain a roster of diverse potential candidates, explain to nominees the duties and responsibilities of directors and provide nominees relevant organizational and operational documents. The members of the Board of Directors are responsible for assisting through suggestions for nominations for officers and Directors. The report of the Nominating/Board Development Committee for nominations shall be sent at least five (5) days before the meeting at which vacancies are to be filled and will present the nomination report at the meeting. The Board will then vote on whether or not to invite each nominee to join the Board.

The Nominating/Board Development Committee ensures all new Board members receive formal orientation upon election onto the Board.

The Nominating/Board Development Committee also ensures at least one Board member attends Texas CASA's or National CASA's annual conference.

SECTION 7. TERM OF OFFICE. Each member of a committee shall continue as such until a successor is appointed, unless the committee shall be sooner terminated, or unless such member is removed from such committee, or unless such member shall cease to qualify as a member.

SECTION 8. REMOVAL. Any member of any committee may be removed by the person(s) authorized to appoint members whenever in their judgment the best interest of the Corporation shall be served by such removal.

SECTION 9. QUORUM. A majority of the entire committee shall constitute a quorum. The act of a majority of members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee.

SECTION 10. PROXY VOTES. A committee member may vote by proxy if executed in writing by the committee member. No proxy shall be valid after 11 months from the date of its execution.

ARTICLE XI: EMPLOYEES

SECTION 1. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. The Board of Directors shall have authority to appoint or employ and discharge an Executive Director upon such terms and conditions as the Board may determine. The Executive Director shall be the chief administrative officer of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) and shall be responsible to the Board of Directors for the management of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) programs. The Board will evaluate the Executive Director on an annual basis. The Executive Director may be assisted by such additional staff as provided for by the Board of Directors through its personnel policies, which are reviewed (*frequency*) basis. The Executive Director shall serve as a non-voting member of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XII: CONTRACTS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS AND FUNDS

SECTION 1. CONTRACTS. The Board of Directors may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents of the Corporation, in addition to the officers so authorized by these Bylaws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of or on behalf of the Corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

SECTION 2. CHECKS AND DRAFTS. All checks, drafts, or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences or indebtedness issued in the name of the Corporation shall be signed by such officer(s), agent(s) of the Corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution by the Board. In the absence of such determination by the Board, such instruments shall be signed by the Treasurer and counter-signed by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Corporation.

SECTION 3. DEPOSITS. All Corporation funds shall be deposited to the credit of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) at such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Directors selects.

SECTION 4. GIFTS. The Board of Directors may accept on behalf of the Corporation any contribution, gift, bequest or devise for the general purposes or for any specific purposes of the Corporation. The Board of Directors may make gifts and give charitable contributions that are not prohibited by the

Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, state law, and any requirements for maintaining the Corporation's federal and state tax status.

ARTICLE XIII: BOOKS AND RECORDS

The Corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of accounts. Minutes of the proceedings of its meetings, Board of Directors and its committees, shall be kept. The Corporation will keep at its principal place of business the original or a copy of its Bylaws, including amendments to date certified by the Secretary of the Corporation. A record of names and addresses of the members entitled to vote shall also be kept at the principal office. All books and records of the Corporation may be inspected by any member, agent or attorney for any proper purposes at any reasonable time.

ARTICLE XIV: INDEMNIFICATION AND DEFENSE

SECTION 1. Should an event occur directly or indirectly related to their position with (*CASA Program, Inc.*) Advocates, Board Officers and Directors, volunteers, agents and employees of the Corporation may be defended and indemnified according to the provisions below and as authorized by and in accordance with the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act, Texas Civil Statutes, as amended, and in accordance with the organization's Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws.

- a. (*CASA Program, Inc.*), in civil actions, shall advance reasonable and necessary expenses, including legal fees, court costs and related fees and costs. Civil cases include administrative or regulatory actions that are not classified as criminal under Texas law.
- b. (*CASA Program, Inc.*), in criminal actions, shall exercise discretion as to whether or not to approve the advancement of reasonable and necessary expenses, including legal fees, court costs and related fees and costs reasonably necessary.

SECTION 2. In accordance with the law, the Board shall put in place an insurance program it deems appropriate and necessary to protect Officers and Directors of the Corporation, agents, employees, volunteers and others as it deems appropriate.

ARTICLE VI: WAIVER OF NOTICE

Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act, the Texas Business Corporation Act, as it applies, under the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, or the Bylaws of this Corporation, a waiver of notice by a Director at any meeting of the Board for which the Director did not receive the required notice will constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting unless the Director objects at the beginning of the meeting to the transaction of business on the grounds that the meeting was not lawfully called or convened. A waiver thereof in writing signed by the person(s) entitled to such notices, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice as otherwise required.

ARTICLE XV: FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) shall begin on the (*day*) day of (*Month*) and end on the last day of (*Month*) of each year.

ARTICLE XVI: POLICY

(CASA Program, Inc.) shall be incorporated, self-governing, nonprofit, non-partisan, non-sectarian and non-discriminatory. The Board of Directors has the authority to establish and approve plans, policies and procedures in keeping with the goals and operational needs of the organization.

The Corporation shall solicit and receive sufficient funds for the accomplishment and furtherance of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, as adopted.

The Corporation shall strive to maintain diversity in its staff and volunteers that reflects the diversity of the children whom (CASA Program, Inc.) serves. To the extent practicable, the Board shall be compromised of membership reflecting the diversity of (X, X, and X,) Counties and be geographically dispersed by home or office location throughout the counties served.

ARTICLE XVII: AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws may be amended or revised by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of all members present at a meeting designed for that purpose provided that written notice of the proposed change is given at least 10 days prior to such meeting.

Unless in conflict with these Bylaws, all the provisions of the Texas Business Corporation Act or the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act shall be applicable to (CASA Program, Inc.).

I, _____, Secretary of (CASA Program, Inc.), do hereby certify the foregoing Bylaws are true and correct copies of the revised Bylaws of (CASA Program, Inc). which were duly revised and adopted by the Board of Directors of the organization on ____ (date)_____.

(CASA Program, Inc.)

By: _____
Secretary, Board of Directors

- Adopted: (DATE)
- Revised: (DATE)
- Revised: (DATE)
- Revised: (DATE)

BOARD MEMBER ROSTER: STANDARD 5.C.1.

Office	Sal.	First Name	Last Name	Sex	Race/ Ethnicity	Occupati on	Company	Address	City	County of Residence	Cell	Work	Email	Term	Committee
Pres.	Mr.	Raul	Gomez	M	Hispanic	Partner	Addams Attorneys at Law	13 Cemetery Lane	Cayce, TX 78765	Iowa	809- 667- 4323	809-459- 3000	rgomez@addams.com	2014 - 2016	Executive Committee
Sec.	Mrs.	Sonia	Greene	F	African American	Owner	Pecan Media	804 Lady Street	Huger, TX 76754	Washington	803- 948- 5438	803-767- 9994	sonia@pecanmedia.com	2015 - 2017	Executive Committee
	Mr.	Hank	Hill	M	White	Assistant Manager	Strickland Propane	123 Rainy Street	Arlen, TX 77777	Indiana	440- 556- 9996	440-333- 8000	hankhill@aol.com	2015 - 2017	Finance Committee
VP	Ms.	Leslie	Knope	F	White	Deputy Director	Pawnee Parks & Recreation	717 Sebastian Lane	Pawnee, TX 79711	Indiana	213- 501- 1111	213-500- 5437	presknope@gmail.com	2016 - 2018	Executive Committee
	Mrs.	Linda	Belcher	F	White	Co- Owner	Bob's Burgers	313 Ocean Avenue	Jersey, TX 77550	Washington	409- 777- 8371	409-667- 3000	allright@hotmail.com	2016 - 2018	Nominating/ Board Develop.
Treas	Mr.	Lando	Calrissian	M	African American	Baron Admin.	City of Cloud City	12 Parsec Drive	Cloud City, TX 79801	Washington	915- 387- 1212	915-759- 3000	notascratch@gmail.com	2014 - 2016	Executive & Finance Committees
	Mr.	Tom	Haverford	M	Asian American	Owner	Tom's Bistro	42 Penny Lane	Pawnee, TX 79710	Indiana	213- 508- 7200	213-506- 9999	tommyfresh@gmail.com	2015 - 2017	Nominating/ Board Develop.
	Ms.	Lana	Kane	F	African American , White	Secret Agent	Spy Contractors	007 Bond Road	New York, TX 70003	Iowa	212- 696- 4567	212-900- 2001	lkane@iscontractors.com	2016 - 2018	Finance Committee
	Ms.	Betty	Suarez	F	Hispanic	Assistant	Mode Magazine	67 Bittern Drive	Queens, TX 70015	Iowa	212- 317- 8448	212-546- 6727	ubetty@mode.com	2015 - 2017	Nominating/ Board Develop.
	Mrs.	Sheila	Broflovski	F	White	PTA Member	South Park Elementary	108 Park Lane	South Park, TX 70632	Iowa	970- 201- 1997	same	sheila&gerald@gmail.com	2014 - 2016	Nominating/ Board Develop

BOARD MEMBER JOB DESCRIPTION : STANDARD 5.C.3.a. & 5.A.12.c.

(CASA PROGRAM, INC.) BOARD MEMBER JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Board Member

REPORTS TO: Board President

TERM: Three (3) calendar years. Directors may serve up to two (2) consecutive terms.

PURPOSE: A voting member of the Board of Directors with full authority and responsibility to develop policies, procedures and regulations for (CASA Program, Inc.'s) operations. The Board monitors the financial health, programs and overall performance of (CASA Program, Inc.). The Board supports the Executive Director in order to meet the needs of those served by the organization.

INDIVIDUAL DUTIES:

- Attend all board meetings and related activities, including special events and retreats.
- Come to meetings prepared and informed about issues on the agenda.
- Actively participate on at least one committee.
- Represent CASA to individuals, the public and other organizations.
- Support CASA through an annual personal contribution relative to one's capacity to give.
- Assume leadership roles when asked.
- Keep the Executive Director informed about any concerns from the community.
- Sign annual Conflict of Interest Policy and disclose actual or potential conflicts in a timely manner.
- Identify potential board members/volunteers/donors in the community.
- Consent to a social security number verification; state and national criminal record check, and state and national sex offender check using Fingerprint-Based Background Checks; a Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry Check via DFPS' Automated Background Check; and undergo background re-checks per Texas CASA Standards.

FULL BOARD'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Adopt operating policies and review them annually.
- Hire, evaluate, and if necessary, terminate the Executive Director. Evaluate the Executive Director's performance annually.
- Secure adequate funding and resources.
- Provide proper financial oversight and review financial reports at least quarterly.
- Develop CASA's budget each fiscal year.

- Insure an independent audit is conducted within nine months of the end of each fiscal year.
- Create and update a long-range strategic and diversity plan.
- Insure compliance with contracts between Texas CASA and any other applicable state and local statutes, court rules, executive orders, or appropriate regulations.
- Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance. The Board articulates prerequisites for candidates, orients new members and evaluates its own performance annually.
- Participate in ongoing training and educational opportunities.

ADDITIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS DUTIES:

- Determine the organization's mission and purpose; create and review a statement of mission and purpose that articulates (*CASA Program, Inc.*'s) goals, means, and primary constituents served.
- Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.
- Ensure effective organizational planning. The Board actively participates in an overall planning process and assists in implementing and monitoring the plan's goals.
- Enhance CASA's public standing. The Board clearly articulates the organization's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public and garners support from the community.
- Determine, monitor, and strengthen CASA's programs and services. The Board determines which programs are consistent with CASA's mission and monitors and evaluates their effectiveness.
- Support the Executive Director. The Board ensures the Executive Director has the moral and professional support they need to further program goals.

(CASA PROGRAM, INC.)
BOARD PRESIDENT JOB DESCRIPTION

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: The President, subject to the control of the Board of Directors, supervises, directs and controls the business and officers of (CASA Program, Inc.) The President provides leadership to the Board to help ensure it functions effectively.

TERM: One year

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Preside at all meetings of the Board and Executive Committee. Develop agendas for these meetings in consultation with the Executive Director.
- Attend (CASA Program, Inc.) functions and events.
- Appoint committee chairs and committee members, subject to Board approval. Assign annual charges to each committee, in consultation with the committee chair.
- Direct an annual performance review of the Executive Director with the assistance of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.
- Serve as ex-officio, non-voting member of all committees.
- Serve as chief spokesperson for the association with both external and internal audiences. Keep members informed of Board actions and association issues.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Active voting member and has served at least one year on the Board of Directors.
- Demonstrated leadership skills through record of responsible service to the program.
- Knowledgeable about CASA's mission and programs.
- Ability to communicate effectively in oral and written form and strong facilitation skills.
- Demonstrated ability to exercise good judgment and is fair, reasonable, and impartial.

TIME COMMITMENT REQUIRED:

- Board meetings – (#)-hour meeting plus (#) hours of preparation quarterly
- Executive Committee meetings – (#) -hour meeting plus 6 hours of preparation quarterly
- Executive Director's performance review – approximately 10 hours annually (month conducted)
- Committee appointments – approximately 5 hours annually (month of appointments)
- Program Events – (#) events; participation includes (XX)
- Regular communications with Board and Executive Director – approximately 4 hours monthly

MEETINGS:

- Board meetings are held (*frequency*). Executive Committee meetings are held (*frequency*)

STRATEGIC PLAN : STANDARD 9.B.

Texas CASA Standards require this plan to contain short-term (within a year) and longer-term (multi-year) goals for multiple fiscal years (3-5). This disciplined effort produces fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, does, and why it does it, with focus on the future. Strategic plans covering several years can evolve over time.

Carrying out the Goals and Objectives/Action Steps of a Strategic Plan is most effective when tasks are delegated among a group, such as a Strategic Planning or ad hoc Committee.

KEY COMPONENTS OF A STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION STATEMENT (IF APPLICABLE):

MISSION STATEMENT:

VALUES (IF APPLICABLE):

GOALS

- Express desired OUTCOMES in specific areas of services and/or operations.
- Provide the DIRECTION in which the organization is heading.
- Reflect the organization's priorities for a specific period of time.
- Answers the question "What do we want to accomplish?"

ARE YOUR GOALS SMART? :

Answering these and other discussion questions can help guide the creation of a comprehensive strategic plan:

- ✓ SPECIFIC: Target a specific area for improvement.
- ✓ MEASURABLE: Quantify or identify an indicator of progress.
- ✓ ASSIGNABLE: Specify who will do it.
- ✓ REALISTIC: State what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources.
- ✓ TIME-RELATED: Specify when the result(s) can be achieved.

OBJECTIVES/ACTION STEPS

- Objectives are the operating component of the Goals and answer the question: "What will we do?" or "How will we meet this Goal?"
- Progress toward achieving objectives/action steps should be measurable with timeframes given.

IDENTIFYING GOALS: QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

GOALS: NONPROFIT GOVERNANCE

- Do we have the size and diversity we want on the Board? Do our members represent all counties served? What skill sets and demographics do we have on our Board? What additional skills/demographics are we missing or focusing on?
- Do Board members understand the breadth their role? Based on the defined responsibilities and requirements, are all Board members engaged? How can we strengthen our orientation process?
- Do we use meetings and committees efficiently? What can we improve (structure, frequency, agenda)?
- Are we planning for growth? How or why not?
- Do we have a succession plan in place? Is it written and comprehensive? Is there additional work to set this in place?
- Are our methods of annually evaluating the Executive Director comprehensive? What can we do to strengthen the process?
- How do we assess our own performance? Do we effectively utilize a board self – assessment? Do we obtain thoughtful and constructive feedback? How do we utilize this feedback?

GOALS: NONPROFIT ADMINISTRATION

- How is our staff retention? What contributes to this? What can we do to strengthen/increase/maintain?
- Are we appropriately staffed to achieve our mission? What position would we hire next?
- Does our physical office space allow for growth?
- How many cases are staff working? What can we do to ensure volunteers take these cases?
- Are the staff/volunteer ratios appropriate? How many advocates do each supervisor supervise? What other responsibilities are expected from supervisors?
- Are we considered a culturally inclusive organization? Do staff represent diverse demographics?

GOALS: FINANCIAL & RISK MANAGEMENT

- Does our financial standing sufficiently support current program expenses? Are we able to cover expenses based on our growth projections? How do we maintain or meet these needs?
- Are we creating a reserve in the event of a significant reduction in funding? What other opportunities to strengthen the reserve exist? If we are not, how can we plan for this?
- Do we have diverse funding sources or do we rely on a few large grants? How do we identify additional sources?
- Do we foster a culture of philanthropy among all Board, staff and volunteers? How?
- Do all Board members personally donate to CASA annually? What does this imply or how does this reflect on the organization?

GOAL: VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

- What is our volunteer retention rate? What do we know about why volunteers leave the program? What can we do to improve volunteer retention?
- Does our volunteer training sufficiently prepare volunteers to take a case? How do we know? What opportunities exist to improve training?
- In addition to supervision, are we adequately staffed to recruit and retain volunteers?
- How do our volunteers help us recruit new volunteers?
- Aside from working a case, how else can we engage and utilize our volunteers?
- What feedback have we received from volunteer surveys? How do we utilize this information? How else can we act on these results?
- Do our volunteers represent the diverse demographics of the children and community(ies) we serve? If not, how can we address this?

GOAL: ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN

- What do our stakeholder surveys say about our advocacy? How can we increase participation in this survey? How are we utilizing this feedback? How else can we respond?
- What is our Volunteer to Case Ratio (VCR)? How can we improve/maintain it?
- How are our relationships with our local courts? Are there other ways we can involve them in CASA? What other ways can we strengthen/reinforce the relationship?
- How is our relationship with CPS? Are there other ways we can involve them in CASA? What other ways can we strengthen/reinforce the relationship?
- How do we advocate for children in PMC? How can we improve the quality of this advocacy to meet the needs of these children?
- How do we address the unique cultural, racial, ethnic and linguistic advocacy needs of the children we serve? Is this effective and/or sufficient? Do other opportunities exist?
- Do we actively and effectively advocate for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgender children? Is there more that can be done?

SAMPLE STRATEGIC PLAN FORMAT

OBJECTIVES/ ACTION STEPS Specific, measurable activities to achieve goal.	WHO Person(s) or Group(s) Responsible	WHEN Timeline	HOW The way change is observed; indicators; data collected to measure progress
GOAL # : (The DIRECTION in which the organization is heading)			
ACTION STEP 1: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 2: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 3: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 4: (insert step)			
GOAL # :			
ACTION STEP 1: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 2: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 3: (insert step)			
GOAL # :			
ACTION STEP 1: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 2: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 3: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 4: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 5: (insert step)			
GOAL # :			
ACTION STEP 1: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 2: (insert step)			
ACTION STEP 3: (insert step)			

NONPROFIT ADMINISTRATION

STANDARD 1: PROGRAM MISSION & PURPOSE

Written Agreement with the Court(s)

Written Agreement with DFPS

STANDARD 5: PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

Written Agreement with Umbrella Organization

STANDARD 6: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Personnel Policies

Program Organizational Chart

Job Descriptions for Staff Positions

**WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH THE COURT(S) :
STANDARD 1.C.1**

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
AGREEMENT BETWEEN
(CASA Program, Inc.) And (Court)**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines the working relationship between (COURT) and (CASA Program, Inc.). Parties voluntarily choose to participate in this cooperative relationship and agree to make every effort to create and sustain a positive and successful collaboration that serves the best interest of children.

I. ASSIGNMENT:

- A. (CASA Program, Inc.) will be automatically assigned to all CPS cases by the local Court. CASA will be assigned at the earliest possible stage of court proceedings, though at any given time, the Department of Family and Protective Services, Presiding Judge, Attorney ad litem, or an attorney for the child’s family may request that a case be reconsidered for CASA appointment.
- B. In turn, the CASA program, within the limits of its resources, capacities, and mission, determines those cases it can appropriately serve and submits an Order of Appointment or Withdrawal to the Presiding Judge. Case acceptance will be determined by the availability of a volunteer to meet the needs of the child and the standards outlined by National and State CASA as well as the Texas Family Code.

(Alternate verbiage for appointment: (CASA Program, Inc.), in cooperation with the court, retains the right to establish priorities for service as well as determine from among cases referred for appointment those it can serve appropriately).

- C. Priorities for Case Referral:
 - Child(ren) removed from the home and/or at imminent risk of being removed from the home.
 - A complex case involving serious allegations of sexual or physical abuse and/or neglect.
 - Permanency is an issue.
 - All ages up to 18 are appropriate for referral.

II. APPOINTMENT:

- A. CASA staff will review each case to determine if there are any areas of conflict before a volunteer is assigned. All volunteers will signify their agreement to carry out the obligations and duties as guardian ad litem by signing a “Certificate of Acceptance” to the case.
- B. Upon acceptance, the CASA Advocate is considered a sworn officer of the court and remains active on the case until legal permanency is attained or as directed by the court. If for any reason the CASA Advocate can no longer fulfill the duties and obligations of guardian ad litem or at such time the case is concluded by Court Order, Non-suit, or majority of the child(ren), the case file and related information will be returned to the CASA office immediately.
- C. CASA shall notify all parties of the case, including foster parents, in writing, of the assignment of a CASA Volunteer Advocate, and the CASA Volunteer’s name and contact information.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. UNDER THESE TERMS OF AGREEMENT, CASA WILL:

The role of the GAL will be filled by a trained and sworn CASA volunteer advocate under the professional supervision and consultation of a CASA Volunteer Supervisor. The CASA/GAL shall abide by the roles and responsibilities of a GAL, set forth in the Texas Family Code, below, and as further outlined in the CASA Program Policy and Procedure Manual.

1. CASA shall notify all parties in the case, in writing, of the assignment of a CASA Volunteer Advocate and include the CASA Volunteer Advocate’s name and contact information.
2. Conduct an independent review, examine all relevant documents, and interview any persons having direct knowledge of the child(ren)’s and or family’s situation to formulate an understanding of what is in the best interest of the child(ren).
3. Provide the court with independent information, including written court reports, on findings and recommendations reflecting the best interest of the child to the court at each hearing and assure that all of the relevant facts are before the court.
4. Attend all court hearings and submits a report to the court and the parties
5. Monitor compliance/non-compliance of parties to family service plans and court orders.
6. Immediately report any incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.
7. Maintain regular contact with the child/ren, caseworker, and Attorney ad litem
8. Maintain confidentiality of all information obtained, with the exception of reporting information to the court
9. Upholds the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between TDFPS and Texas CASA

B. UNDER THESE TERMS OF AGREEMENT, THE COURT WILL:

1. Appoint CASA to cases involving suits affecting the parent/child relationship by the Department of Family and Protective Services.
2. Ensure that CASA staff/volunteers have reasonable access to court records.
3. Swear in newly trained CASA volunteer advocates to serve as guardian ad litem
4. Formalize the appointment of CASA with a written court order. When possible automatic appointment will be the practice. CASA will notify the judge if this practice is possible.
5. Encourage and facilitate the cooperation of court staff and officers of the court with CASA staff/volunteers.

We, the undersigned, have read and agree to the terms of the current MOU and will review the agreement at least every two years.

Executive Director, (CASA Program, Inc.)

Date

Presiding Judge, (Court)

Date

**WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH DFPS:
STANDARD 1.C.5.**

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES, CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES
DIVISION
AND
TEXAS COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES
November 2013
As Amended September 1, 2014**

I. Overview

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to define and foster a collaborative working relationship between Court Appointed Special Advocate programs throughout the state, hereafter referred to as CASA, and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Child Protective Services Division, hereafter referred to as CPS. This agreement establishes consistent policies and procedures that enhance the working relationship between CASA and CPS programs. The parties expect that the protocols within this document will be adhered to and enforced by state and local leadership.

II. Respective Roles — CPS and CASA

CPS is statutorily required to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect of children in Texas, and, when appointed as the managing conservator for a child being brought into the state's care on a temporary or permanent basis due to abuse or neglect, to act in the child's best interest regarding decisions of placement, education and medical care, services for the family, permanency planning, and others.

CASA volunteers are appointed to provide advocacy and best interest representation for children in the care of CPS whose families are involved in a CPS case. CASA programs adhere to standards promulgated by National CASA and Texas CASA. The minimum expectations of service for CASA volunteers are outlined in this agreement under CASA responsibilities.

III. Appointment of a CASA

Judges can appoint CASA at any point in the case: the ex parte hearing, adversary hearing, status hearing, initial permanency hearing, permanency hearing or review hearing. Typically, most CASA appointments are made at the ex-parte or 14-day adversary hearing. CASA's appointment to the case continues until the case is closed by the court or CASA is removed from the case by a court order. In extended jurisdiction cases when a youth who has turned 18 agrees to remain in care and indicates a desire in writing for his or her CASA to continue, CASA appointment will continue. Local CASA programs who do not have the volunteer capacity to accept all case appointments will work with local courts to determine a process for selection of cases for CASA appointment.

CASA may also be appointed by a judge to a juvenile or cross-over case or a court-ordered services case. CASA's appointment in these types of cases also continues until the case is closed or CASA is dismissed by court order.

IV. Local CASA — Program Courtesy Assistance

Given the vast geographical area of the state, local CASA programs will, as resources and local program policies permit, provide assistance to each other in fulfilling their responsibilities on a case. The local CASA program will notify the CPS caseworker when courtesy assistance is requested and provided and will notify the CPS caseworker when the courtesy assistance concludes. Courtesy assistance will not be available through *Case Connection*. CASA will not attempt to assign cases to courtesy workers across units when using *Case Connection*.

V. CASA Responsibilities

- A. Notification of Appointment:** CASA will provide timely written notification of appointment to CPS, the attorneys, parents, and all other parties to the case in a manner agreed to locally. This notification will identify the CASA staff and CASA volunteer advocate assigned to the case and will provide contact information for both.

- B. Obtaining Court Order to Access Child Files:** In cases where the CASA is not appointed Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) by the court, the CASA program shall seek a court order to gain access to the child's records. A sample Order of Appointment is attached.

- C. Assist in Identifying the Child's Best Interest:** In a timely manner after appointment, and throughout the case, CASA shall review all records and documents permissible by law, rule, court order or this MOU. CASA will interview the child, parents, social workers, teachers, and other persons to determine the facts and perspectives of the child and the child's situation.

- D. Maintain Regular Contact with the Child:**
 - i. CASA volunteers will meet in person with the child as required by CASA standards.
 - ii. While CASA and CPS may visit together, it is expected that both will visit the child separately the majority of the time to gain an independent perspective. CASA will continue to visit the child according to CASA standards until CASA is dismissed from the case.
 - iii. The CASA program will assure only qualified trained volunteers and staff will have contact with the child assigned to the CASA program.
 - iv. CASA will have other types of age-appropriate contact with the child, including telephone calls, emails, video-conferencing, and/or letters, as applicable for the child's age and interests.

E. Transportation of Children: If a local CASA program's policies allow CASA to transport children, the CASA will secure written permission for transporting the child from the CPS caseworker.

F. Represent the Child's Best Interest

- i. Ensure that a Case Plan, Education Portfolio and Health Passport have been created and maintained for the child.
- ii. Provide input for the Health Social Educational and Genetic History report (HSEGH), profile in TARE, Life Book, targeted recruitment and preparation for adoption.
- iii. Participate in Permanency Planning Meetings, Transition Planning Meetings, Discharge Planning Meetings, and Adoption Selection Staffing. Participate in the Family Group Decision-Making Meetings (Family Group Conferences, Family Team Meetings and Circles of Support) per protocol. CASA may assist CPS in the engagement of family members and children in Family Group Decision-Making Meetings.
- iv. The CASA volunteer and CASA Supervisor will review home studies of prospective adoptive families that are determined eligible by CPS and will be invited to participate in the selection staffing for the child or children. CASA will offer an opinion as to appropriateness of a potential family to CPS and the court.
- v. Appear at all hearings to advocate for the child's best interest and permanency. Provide testimony when necessary, making recommendations for specific services for the child and, when appropriate, the child's family. Provide written court reports for all regularly scheduled hearings.
- vi. Participate in mediation regarding access to, conservatorship of, or any other issue regarding the child.
- vii. Report on the progress of the Child and Family Service Plan(s).
- viii. Review the medical care provided for a child and seek to elicit, in a developmentally appropriate manner, the child's opinion on the medical care provided.

G. Confidentiality:

- i. All information and records regarding a child's case will be kept confidential. Local CASA programs will have board-approved written policies and procedures in place to assure confidentiality of case information and records in accordance with Texas Family Code, Section 261.201 and other applicable law.
- ii. If sharing confidential information with outside parties such as foster parents and placements, schools and health care providers is necessary for the care and protection of the child, the information shared should always be the minimum necessary for the care and protection of the child and follow CPS and/or CASA policies.
- iii. Confidential information accessed electronically through the DFPS *Case Connection* maintains its confidential nature; electronic transmission does not operate as a waiver of confidentiality or change the confidential nature of the information in any way.
- iv. Once a case is closed and/or CASA is dismissed, CASA will assume full responsibility for ensuring all CPS paper or electronic records in their possession are either destroyed or kept in safe, secure storage for a time determined in writing in the local program board-approved policies.

H. Participation in DFPS Case Connection: CASA will ensure that all CASA volunteers or staff registering for access to the DFPS *Case Connection* External Access to IMPACT portal have read and understood the DFPS Security Requirements (addendum to this MOU), have a signed *User Security Agreement Form* which will be maintained in the CASA staff or volunteer file, and are otherwise authorized to access the electronic system before accessing the *Case Connection*.

I. Notification of CASA Dismissal, or Staff or Volunteer Change of Assignment; Removal from Case Connection:

- i. When a CASA Program has been removed by the Court from an open CPS case, the CASA Program must notify CPS by email or other written method within two business days of removal unless CPS was present at the hearing where the CASA removal occurred. CPS will terminate all CASA assignments to the case.
- ii. When a CASA Volunteer or staff has been removed from an open CPS case, the CASA Program must take one of the following actions:
 - a. If the volunteer or staff has been terminated from the CASA program, the CASA Designated Identity Access Management (IAM) Portal Representative must terminate the volunteer or staff's *Case Connection* account via the IAM Administrative process within two business days. This action will automatically terminate all case assignments for the volunteer.
 - b. If the volunteer or staff is removed from an open CPS case but is not terminated from the CASA program, CASA must notify CPS by email or other written method within two business days. CPS will manually terminate the volunteer or staff's case assignments.
- iii. Failure to promptly terminate a dismissed advocate's access to the *Case Connection* may result in the local CASA organization losing access to the Connection on a temporary or permanent basis.
- iv. When CASA is dismissed at the same time the case is closed, CASA will provide written notification of dismissal to parents, kinship or adoptive placements.
- v. CASA will cooperate with DFPS on a quarterly basis to ensure both agencies have an accurate and current list of which volunteers or staff are allowed access to *Case Connection*.

J. Notice and Remedy for Security Breach: In the event of a security breach whereby confidential information regarding a child, children or family is accidentally or intentionally disclosed to a party who is not authorized to have access to the information, the CASA organization must immediately notify CPS, and will take such remedial measures as determined necessary by CPS or as may be required by Texas Business and Commerce Code, Chapter 521.

VI. CPS Responsibilities

A. Access to the Child's Records and Information

- i. **Provision of Hard Copy Files:** In a timely manner after CASA appointment to a case, CPS will provide to CASA a hard copy of the Child and Family Service Plans,

Permanency Progress Reports, Placement Review Reports, and any reports filed with the court. CASA may also obtain such records from the court.

- ii. **Review of Other Records:** CPS will make available to CASA, in a manner agreed to locally, other records as permissible by law and/or court orders, including medical and mental health records (which may include psychological or other assessments of the child and therapy notes regarding the child). CPS will only make available a child's drug/alcohol treatment records if the child has specifically consented to that disclosure by signing and authorizing the disclosure on the required consent form.
 - iii. **Electronic Access to Health Passport:** CPS shall allow each local CASA organization electronic access to the health passport for children assigned to that local organization's staff or volunteers.
 - iv. **External Access to DFPS Case Connection:** CPS shall allow each CASA volunteer and CASA supervisory staff authorized by law or court order to access the records of a child in DFPS conservatorship and who meets the security protocols contained in the ADDENDUM: *DFPS Security Requirements for CASA organizations* incorporated by reference into this MOU, to have access to, at a minimum, the following information as it relates to the current conservatorship case of a child for whom the individual has been appointed (or that individual's supervisor):
 - (a) demographic, locating, and contact information for principal and collateral participants;
 - (b) information regarding the child's current placement and any prior placements during the same conservatorship episode;
 - (c) information regarding the child's authorized service level, including supporting documentation in the current Common Application for Placement of Children in Residential Care;
 - (d) the case plan as that term is defined in 40 TAC §700.1319, including the child service plan and any family service plan then in effect;
 - (e) information related to the child's permanency plan, including documentation related to permanency planning meetings held on the child's behalf;
 - (f) the temporary visitation schedule or visitation plan in effect for the case;
 - (g) list of all legal actions and statuses in the case;
 - (h) educational status information;
 - (i) information regarding the child's medical care, including the identity of the child's medical consentor, a listing of the child's medical and mental health assessments, and the child's medical and developmental history page; and
 - (j) a listing of the external documents associated with the case.
 - v. **Future Improvements:** The types of information to which a volunteer advocate may gain access will be expanded upon mutual agreement of the parties as technological enhancements are made and may be considered as included in the MOU.
- B. Access to Parent Records:** CASA will be granted access to parent records when a court order specifies that such a release of records is permissible, or upon a signed parental release.

C. **Access to Child:** Whether through the DFPS *Case Connection* or by other means, CPS will provide information to CASA about the child's placement, including all contact information, location and address, in a timely manner following CASA's appointment to the case. CPS will ensure access to the child to facilitate the in-person visits or other types of appropriate communication between the CASA and the child, and will ensure contracted residential providers are aware of these requirements.

D. **Notifications and Invitations:**

Notifications:

- i. CPS will provide notice to the CASA program of all hearings and intent to non-suit in a timely manner. CPS will provide CASA with a copy of the Parent-Child Visitation plan when the plan is developed, as well as any changes or updates to the plan.
- ii. CPS will notify CASA of planned mediation.
- iii. If a youth is involved in the juvenile justice system or juvenile hearings, CPS will notify CASA of these hearings.
- iv. CPS will notify CASA upon receipt of a provider's notice to end placement. CPS will consult with a child's CASA volunteer in making placement decisions. In cases of emergency placements where there is not time for consultation, CPS will notify the CASA as soon as possible after the change, but in no case later than three working days after the emergency placement change.
- v. CASA will provide in writing information about the child's needs to be attached to the Common Application and provided to the Child Placement Unit to assist in finding the most appropriate placement for the child.

Invitations:

- i. CPS will invite CASA to participate in Permanency Planning Meetings, Transition Planning Meetings, Discharge Planning Meetings, and Adoption Selection staffing. CPS will invite CASA to participate in Family Group Decision-making Meetings (Family Group Conferences, Family Team Meetings, and Circles of Support) per protocol. CASA may assist CPS in the engagement of family members and children in Family Group Decision-making Meetings. Invitations shall occur as soon as possible after the meeting is scheduled.
- ii. The CASA volunteer and the CASA Supervisor shall be invited by CPS to participate in the mediation process when CPS is the party responsible for issuing invitations.

VII. **General Provisions Applicable to Both Parties**

CASA and CPS will:

- A. **Share Information:** Share records and information in accordance with law and court orders. CASA and CPS acknowledge that collaboration throughout the life of a case helps to ensure the child's continued safety, well-being, and opportunities for permanency. CASA and CPS acknowledge that information sharing benefits children. Information sharing and communication helps to prevent disagreements that may impede the progress in meeting the needs, assuring the well-being and safety of the child. It also helps to secure the best and most timely permanency outcome for the case.

Unless limited by court order, areas of information-sharing may include:

- i. identification of relative(s) and fictive kin;
- ii. issues regarding visitation;
- iii. child's placement and the placement's ability to meet the child's need for safety, well-being and permanency;
- iv. child's education, including special education Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) meetings; the name and contact information of the education decision-maker and/or special education decision-maker (surrogate parent); and other important education information, meetings, events or activities;
- v. child's diagnosis of physical or mental illness and any therapeutic interventions, including psychotherapy or prescribed medication; the name and contact information of the person authorized to consent to medical care on behalf of the child, and records and notes, including therapy notes;
- vi. identified needs of the child or family and progress or assistance provided in the plan of service to meet these needs; information sharing in development of service plans and amendments to service plans and visitation plans;
- vii. post-termination of parental rights adoption preparations, search and progress;
- viii. supports for transition from care into independent living; and
- ix. home studies of potential placements, foster, relative and adoptive placements selected by CPS as being eligible for consideration.

B. Communicate with Necessary Parties

- i. **CPS Caseworker and CASA:** Will communicate with one another after initial appointment and at least one time per month for the duration of the case.
- ii. **Current Primary Caregiver:** Meet in person with the child's current primary caregiver in a timely manner after placement occurs, and communicate with the caregiver at least once a month.
- iii. **Court:** Inform the court promptly of important developments in the case through appropriate means as determined by court rules and statute.
- iv. **Other Parties:** Interface with the mental health, medical, legal, educational and other community systems to advocate for the child's best interest. CPS and CASA will work collaboratively to ensure that foster parents, kinship providers, schools, child placing agencies and others providing services have the records needed to appropriately provide services and assistance. Confidential information should be shared to the minimum extent necessary to care for the child.

C. Search for Family/Fictive Kin: Work together to identify as many family members and fictive kin as possible for a child. CASA and CPS will share results of diligent search activities, case mining and family-finding and engagement efforts.

D. Encourage Self-Advocacy for Children and Youth: Encourage children and youth to advocate for their rights as well as ensure that the system respects and enforces their rights. CASA and CPS shall ensure children have been provided information about their rights as

outlined in the Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care “Bill of Rights” as required by CPS licensing standards and the residential contract provisions.

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/About_Foster_Care/rights.asp

- E. Encourage Youth Participation:** Encourage youth participation in court through attendance in person, and, if in person attendance is not possible, by teleconference. CASA and CPS shall also encourage youth to communicate their needs, desires and wishes with the court.

- F. Submit Court Reports:** Provide written court reports for regularly scheduled hearings — Adversary, Status, Initial Permanency, Permanency, and Placement Review hearings. These hearings are usually scheduled in advance and will allow time for CASA and CPS to discuss critical information each considers important to include in a court report. Prior to court hearings and preparation of written court reports, the CPS caseworker and the CASA volunteer should communicate and share information regarding recommendations related to placement, visitation, permanency and concurrent plans, and provision of services.

It is expected that CASA and CPS may have different recommendations in written court reports. Collaboration, discussion and sharing of information prior to the submission of reports to the court are important and should promote better outcomes for children.

CPS shall provide to CASA copies of its written court reports ten calendar days prior to a court hearing as required by the Texas Family Code. CASA shall provide copies of its written court reports to CPS as soon as possible, but not later than five calendar days prior to a court hearing.

Local jurisdictions will agree upon the method by which these court reports will be shared.

- G. Cross-Train:** Work together on a statewide and local level to develop opportunities to share training information or participate together in training. Knowing Who You Are and Permanency Values training are examples of good co-training opportunities. CPS will request local CASA participate in new caseworker training. CASA will request local CPS participate in new volunteer training.

- H. Address Disproportionality:** Will create collaborative efforts to address the issue of quality service for all children with the goal of positively impacting the mental health and well-being of children in foster care. Joint training opportunities to examine the issues of racial identity and disproportionality will be explored.

VIII. Resolution of Conflicts: CASA and CPS will work together to address conflicts and seek resolutions. Should disagreements and/or grievances occur between CPS and CASA on a case, the issues should be brought to the attention of the CPS Supervisor and the CASA Supervisor by the CPS case worker and the CASA volunteer. With the CPS and CASA Supervisors’ assistance, the CPS Caseworker and the CASA volunteer should attempt to resolve these concerns. If resolution cannot be reached, the CPS Supervisor and the CASA Supervisor will take steps to resolve the concerns. If no resolution is reached, CPS will enlist the assistance of individuals

according to the appropriate chain of command (i.e., Program Director, Program Administrator, Regional and/or State-level Directors) and the CASA Supervisor will enlist the assistance of individuals according to the appropriate chain of command (i.e., local CASA Program Director, Executive Director and/or Texas CASA) to resolve the issue.

IX. Terms of Agreement

A. Effective Date: This agreement is effective upon signatures of the undersigned parties and will remain in effect until it is:

- i. Modified by agreement between Texas CASA and CPS; or
- ii. Terminated by either party. Either party may terminate this agreement without cause by giving the other party written notice of termination,

B. Review of Agreement: Local CASA and CPS programs will review this agreement every two years and sign and re-commit to the working relationships outlined in this document.

Local Procedures: Local CASA and CPS offices may develop procedures consistent with this MOU in order to implement the requirements of the MOU in a way that enhances the parties' collaborative partnership but does not change the substantive provisions of the MOU. Informal local agreements regarding the methods by which the parties will communicate and collaborate that do not decrease collaboration or access outlined in this MOU do not require prior approval from the state CASA or DFPS office. Formal addendums that modify substantive provisions or policies outlined in this state MOU will require review by Texas CASA and approval from DFPS state office.

C. Judiciary: The parties agree that both local CASA programs and local CPS offices should provide a copy of current signed agreements to the judiciary responsible for hearing child abuse cases in their region, and, if possible, meet annually with all judges to further communication and collaboration with a goal of improving service and assistance to child victims and their families.

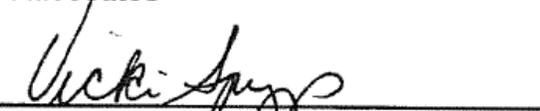
Texas Department of Family and Protective Services



Signature
Printed Name:
Title:

9/5/14
Date

Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates



Signature
Printed Name: Vicki Spriggs
Title: CEO

September 3, 2014
Date

Local Program Participation Agreement with Addendum

The representatives from CPS and CASA named below have met and reviewed the statewide Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was adopted November 2013 and Amended September 1, 2014 between the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Child Protective Services Division and Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).

Local CASA and CPS programs will review the MOU every two years and re-commit to the working relationship by signing below and by securing the signature of the DFPS Assistant Commissioner for CPS.

DFPS and CASA understand that no modifications can be made to the adopted statewide MOU. DFPS and CASA may develop formal or informal procedures that are consistent with this MOU in order to implement the requirements in a way that enhances the parties' collaborative partnership but does not change the substantive provisions of the MOU.

Delete the following paragraph if no additional procedures or changes have been made. Any written procedures or agreements apart from the original MOU will require review by Texas CASA, approval from DFPS state office, and will be incorporated by reference into the MOU.

The following written procedures are attached and incorporated by reference into the MOU along with this Local Program Participation Agreement: *<Name of Additional Written Procedures Document>*. We understand CPS staff will submit this to DFPS state office to begin the process of review by both DFPS and Texas CASA. We further understand additional time will be needed with this approval process."

Local CPS Representative
Program Director

Local CASA Representative
Executive Director or Program Director

Signature Date

Signature Date

Printed Name

Printed Name

Counties Represented

Local CASA Program Name

DFPS Assistant Commissioner for Child Protective Services

Signature Date

Printed Name

WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION:
STANDARD 5.B.2.

**(UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION, INC) AND (CASA PROGRAM, INC.)
UMBRELLA AGREEMENT**

I. MISSION & PURPOSE

(Umbrella Program, Inc.) is a private, nonprofit agency. The mission of the organization is *(insert mission)*. In pursuit of this mission, the *(Umbrella Org, Inc.)* is an umbrella agency for *(CASA Program, Inc.)*. While CASA and *(Additional Programs.)* programs have separate functions in the child protection system, they share the goal of improving the lives and promoting the healing of abused and neglected children in the community.

The mission of CASA is *(insert CASA mission)*.

The mission of *(Additional Program Name)* is to *(insert partner program mission)*.

(Umbrella Program, Inc.) also operates other programs and projects to benefit children and support the work of CASA and the *(Organization/Program Name)*. These include:

- School Supply Drive – Provide free school supplies to children in need in (Name) County and is funded by local community donations.
- Christmas Toy Drive – Utilize local community donations to provide Christmas presents to children served by *(Umbrella Program, Inc.)*.
- *(List Any Additional Programs – Description)*

II. STAFF

(Umbrella Program, Inc.) has staff members that are separate and shared between CASA and *(Organization/Program Name)*.

The Executive Director is responsible for the overall management of the organization, including both CASA and *(Organization/Program Name)*. Much of the day-to-day responsibilities of the Executive Director will be done to benefit both programs simultaneously, though there are times the Executive Director will focus on activities that are directly or solely tied to one program or another. Overall, it is expected that the Executive Director's time, attention and energies will be shared equally and evenly among the CASA and *(Organization/Program Name)* programs.

The CASA Program Director and CASA Volunteer Supervisor *(Include any other CASA employees and respective responsibilities)*, their titles imply, will focus on the direct services work of CASA. These positions are responsible for the recruitment, screening, training and supervision of CASA volunteers. Responsibilities also include submission of quarterly statistics.

The *(Additional Organization/Program Name and positions)* responsibilities include *(insert responsibilities)*.

Separate staff provide direct services for CASA and (*Organization/Program Name*). Due to the nature of CASA's work, it is important for volunteer advocates to be independent voices for the children they serve. Separate staff help safeguard against the potential perception that CASA volunteer advocates are unduly influenced by (*Organization/Program Name*) staff, or its partner agencies. Furthermore, separate staff helps to prevent conflicts of interest that could arise when a child's case involves both programs.

Receptionists are considered shared staff and their responsibilities and duties support staff of both programs equally.

III. FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

The annual budget, approved by the board of directors, is prepared for the entire agency. Fundraising efforts of the board or Executive Director are allocated to all agency needs and apply to expenses for each program within the agency. Any income or expenses specifically designated for CASA, (*Organization/Program Name*), or other agency projects will be allocated directly to the particular program or project. Shared costs are the equally distributed between CASA and (*Organization/Program Name*), including general office supplies, utilities, phone, internet, general liability insurance, and any other expenses identified. Grant applications or written funding requests may be made for a specific program or can include both programs. Funding will be allocated as per the agreement with the respective funding source. Fundraising efforts such as special events, direct mail, or other initiatives involving the local community will be held for the benefit of the entire agency. If where one program has a particular or special need, the board may vote on and approve a fundraising event or initiative within the local community benefiting this unique situation.

IV. COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Overall, community awareness efforts of board members and staff should focus on the (*Umbrella Program, Inc.*) and all of the associated programs and projects equally. Occasionally, specific presentations, press releases or other community awareness efforts may focus on a single program. When possible, efforts will be made to mention, if only briefly, other programs of the (*Umbrella Program, Inc.*) in these situations. For example, when writing a CASA volunteer recruitment article, the focus is the CASA program. However, it is a best practice to mention the (*Umbrella Program, Inc.*) operates other programs for abused children, and specifically mention other programs by name when possible.

V. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality must be maintained regarding cases for both CASA and (*Organization/Program Name*). Only CASA staff shall have access to the files and identifying information of CASA cases. (*If applicable*) Only CAC staff are allowed access to CAC files and identifying information of CAC cases. Case files and other such records shall be maintained separately. In situations where a child or family is involved with both programs, CASA staff must present a copy of the court order to CAC staff before accessing the CAC file or requesting to view a recorded forensic interview.

As outlined in the CASA Working Protocols, CASA staff and volunteers are not allowed in the observation room during a forensic interview. Once an interview is completed, CASA may provide CAC

staff with a copy of the court order of appointment to the case. This will grant access to the confidential CAC records to review the recording of the interview.

CASA staff may attend case review meetings hosted by the CAC and are responsible for sharing pertinent information with the CASA volunteer assigned to the case.

Identifying information of CASA and CAC cases will not be disclosed at board or committee meetings. General case information will only be shared when it provides board members a deeper understanding of the impact CASA and CAC have on the children they serve. In these circumstances, staff/volunteers may share specific case stories as long as confidentiality is maintained. The client's name or any identifying information or details about the case will not be revealed.

VI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

As outlined in the agency by-laws, members of the board representing CPS shall refrain from discussing or voting on any issues specific to CASA. See section 2 of this document regarding conflicts of interest for staff.

VII. UPDATES

This document will be reviewed by the board at least every two years to determine if any updates are needed.

Executive Director, (Umbrella Program, Inc.)

Date of Signing

Board Chair, (Umbrella Program, Inc.)

Date of Signing

CASA Program Director

Date of Signing

**PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
STANDARDS 5.A.3.,6.C.**

**(CASA PROGRAM, INC.)
PERSONNEL POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL**

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HISTORY AND MISSION OF CASA PROGRAM, INC.

In 1976, David Soukup, a superior court judge in Seattle, became greatly concerned about making decisions that had significant impact on dependent children's futures, so he created a plan to train and appoint community volunteers to research the best interests of children in cases of abuse and neglect. He needed to be sure he was getting all the facts and that the long-term welfare of children was represented, so he depended on these volunteers to make informed recommendations to the court about getting children in safe, permanent homes as soon as possible. Today, that judge's idea has evolved into one of the largest volunteer organizations in the country.

(CASA Program, Inc.) was organized in *(date)* by a group of concerned citizens who saw the need for a Court Appointed Special Advocates program in their area. *(CASA Program, Inc.)* is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit agency governed by a volunteer board of directors. *(CASA Program, Inc.)* receives funds from Texas CASA, county, federal and state funding, local and state foundations, and from individual, corporate and civic donations. *(CASA Program, Inc.)* is one of over 1,000 programs in 50 states affiliated with the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association. The local names of these programs vary, to include: Court Appointed Special Advocates, Guardian Ad Litem, Voices for Children, and Child Advocates.

(CASA Program, Inc.) is a member of Texas CASA, Inc. and the National CASA Association, which provides the policies and procedures for the organization and regulates the intensive training each volunteer undergoes. The training program, which requires thirty classroom hours and court observation, has been used across the country in over 900 CASA programs—including the 72 in Texas. This intensive training program has been refined by judges, the Department of Family and Protective Services, psychologists, and child abuse specialists in order to ensure the best possible training is administered. Community Volunteers receive 30 hours of pre-service training before being sworn in by the courts as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs). Volunteers also receive a minimum of 12 hours continuing education annually. Employees and volunteers undergo a criminal background check before being assigned as an advocate for an abused or neglected child.

The procedure for assigning a CASA volunteer is consistent across the state. When a child is removed from his or her home by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and placed in a foster home or with relatives, the presiding judge appoints a CASA volunteer to serve as the child's guardian ad litem throughout the child's stay in the foster care system. District judges bear an enormous responsibility in deciding what is best to facilitate a child's growth. CASA volunteers can provide judges with the information they need to make the best decision for that child. With no allegiance to any particular agency, oblivious to caseloads and financial constraints, a CASA volunteer can provide quality advocacy for a child. A CASA volunteer will bring continuity to cases and facilitate necessary services for timely, safe, permanent placement for the children.

MISSION

(CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Program, Inc.) provides trained volunteers who are appointed by the court to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children.

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

1.1 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

(CASA Program, Inc.) is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against any individual, employee or applicant on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, age, pregnancy, sexual orientation or disability. It is our policy to:

- Recruit, hire, train and promote persons in all job titles without regard to age, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, citizenship status, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, sex and gender identity and gender identity (including pregnancy), and any other legally protected status.
- Base decisions on employment so as to further the principles of equal employment opportunity.
- Ensure that promotion decisions are in accordance with the principles of equal employment opportunity by imposing only valid requirements for promotional opportunities.
- Ensure that all personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, return from layoffs, leaves of absence, company sponsored training, educational tuition assistance, and social and recreational programs will be administered without regard to age, race, color, national origin, religion, citizenship status, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, sex and gender identity (including pregnancy), or any other legally protected status.
- Make reasonable accommodations wherever necessary for all employees or applicants with disabilities, provided that the individual is otherwise qualified to perform safely the duties and assignments connected with the job, and provided that any accommodations made do not impose undue hardship to CASA Program.
- We encourage employees with questions or concerns to bring them to the attention of their immediate supervisor or the Executive Director.
- Include "Equal Opportunity Employer" on all job descriptions and recruitment materials.

1.2 AT-WILL EMPLOYER

Employment with (CASA Program, Inc.) is at-will. This means the employment relationship can be terminated by either the employee or CASA at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause, except for a characteristic, status or action protected by law. Neither CASA nor the employee needs a reason to terminate the employment relationship.

The at-will nature of an individual's employment with CASA cannot be changed or modified except by a written document signed by the Executive Director. Any expressed or implied statements, agreements or assurances concerning the terms, conditions or duration of an individual's employment with CASA are not binding upon CASA unless they are in writing and signed by the Executive Director.

Employee policies and procedures may be amended, revised or updated by CASA Program at any time without prior notice.

1.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director (ED) shall be responsible to the Board of Directors for the operation and management of (CASA Program, Inc.). The ED may employ and supervise other employees as is deemed necessary and authorized by the Board of Directors to carry on the business of CASA.

The ED is responsible for the recruiting, selecting, evaluating and supervising of employees. The ED may delegate authority as required. The ED is responsible for ensuring that all employees have performance reviews. The ED shall be responsible for the daily operation of the organization.

The ED serves as the official spokesperson for CASA. If/when unplanned media contact occurs, an employee shall refer the media to the ED or the ED's designee. In the event the ED is not available for a 24-hour or more period of time the President of the Board of Directors should be notified.

The ED is the staff person held ultimately responsible for the overall administration, financial management and fundraising/grant writing, program development, personnel administration, community/public relations and Board relations.

1.4 EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATION

Full-time Employees:

Full-time employees are those employees who are regularly scheduled to work a minimum of (#) hours per week. Full-time volunteer supervisors do not supervise more than 30 volunteers or 45 cases. The number of volunteers and cases that part-time volunteer supervisors supervise is reduced appropriately and/or based on other duties assigned.

Part-time Employees:

Part-time employees are those employees who are regularly scheduled to work (#) or fewer hours per week. The number of volunteers and cases that part-time volunteer supervisors supervise is reduced appropriately and/or based on other duties assigned.

Regular Employee:

Full and part-time employees who have satisfactorily completed the 90 day orientation period.

Temporary Employees:

A person hired for a specific project, job, internship or assignment with the understanding that the employment is anticipated to end within a short time.

Probationary Employee:

An employee who has not completed the 90 day (or longer) orientation period or who has otherwise been suspended for performance reasons.

SECTION 2: EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Every employee is crucial to the CASA team. Regular attendance and punctuality help the program ensure quality and contribute to meeting program goals and maintaining advocacy responsibilities. We understand that personal circumstances (such as illness or an unexpected emergency) may make it necessary for an employee to miss time from work occasionally, but attendance and punctuality are considered essential elements of every position at CASA.

Office hours are (TIME) A.M. to (TIME) P.M. Monday through Friday, though the Executive Director may assign additional and alternative hours as warranted by the needs of the agency.

Attendance and Calling In:

If an employee must be absent, the employee must personally notify his or her supervisor as early as possible and in no event later than the time the employee is scheduled to report for work. If the employee is unable to call personally, he or she should have a relative or friend make the call. Unless otherwise instructed, an absent employee must notify the supervisor of his or her absence on a daily basis. This means an employee is expected to check in daily during any absence, unless the employee is told otherwise by the supervisor. An employee's failure to notify his or her supervisor properly may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Punctuality:

Employees are expected to be at work on time. However, CASA recognizes occasionally an employee cannot avoid being late. Incidents of tardiness must be kept to a minimum, and whenever possible, an employee who knows he or she will be late must notify his or her supervisor in advance. Frequent tardiness may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Excessive Absenteeism:

Disciplinary action up to and including termination could result from excessive absenteeism. This is evident when an employee is unable to adequately perform his/her job due to absenteeism, or when the normal day-to-day work activities of the office are disrupted due to excessive and/or unscheduled leave by the employee.

Unauthorized Absence:

An employee who fails to report to or remain at work, or who fails to return to work upon expiration of approved leave, may be considered to have abandoned his or her position with (CASA Program, Inc.). Unless the employee produces a satisfactory explanation for the unauthorized absence, disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, will be the result.

2.2 PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND PROFESSIONALISM

As representatives of the National and State CASA organization, employees are to project an image of professionalism. We project our image, in part, by the clothes we wear, the care we take with our personal grooming, and the way we behave. Employees of CASA Program are expected to use good judgment in grooming and dress and behave in a professional and business-like manner at all times.

Appropriate business attire should be worn when conducting official CASA business including court hearings, meetings, speaking engagements, visitations, conferences, etc. Jeans are acceptable for casual Fridays only if the employee is not conducting official CASA business.

CASA employees are to maintain a professional atmosphere at all times. The volume of voices should be appropriate and the overall appearance of the office is to be neat and orderly.

2.3 EMPLOYEE RECORDS

The employee is responsible for notifying their supervisor and/or the ED of any changes that affect their personal records. In most cases there is a specific form to complete to update your personal information. Typical changes we need to know about include the following:

- Name
- Address and phone number
- Tax exemptions
- Beneficiaries
- Auto insurance
- Contact name/phone number for emergency
- Change in family status
- Outside employment

2.4 PERSONNEL FILE

The Executive Director shall maintain a permanent personnel file for each employee. Each file shall contain:

- Written application and employment forms
- Verification of references
- Satisfactory results of motor vehicles division records check
- Copy of a valid driver's license
- Copy of current personal insurance coverage.
- Social security number verification
- Satisfactory results of Fingerprint-Based Background Check (FBC)
- Satisfactory results of Department of Family and Protective Services Record check
- I-9
- Job description
- Training certificates/verification
- Evaluations
- Records of positions held
- Signed statement of confidentiality
- Conflict of Interest Policy, signed annually
- Salaries and other pertinent information
- A signed copy of the (*CASA Program, Inc.*) Personnel Policies when hired and any subsequent versions adopted during the course of employment.
- Letters of commendation

Access to Personnel File:

Employee files are maintained by the Executive Director. Any file connected with an employee is considered strictly confidential. If an employee wishes to view the contents of his/her personnel file, the employee should request permission from the Executive Director. No document may be removed or altered. The employee shall not copy anything from his or her personnel file, but may make notes.

Access to an employee file will be based on the Public Records ACT:

1. Unless the employee has given his/her consent or the court has issued a specific order, access to the complete official personnel file of an employee shall be given only to the employee, his duly authorized representative and supervisors in the chain of command from the employee to the appointing authority.
2. That portion of an employee's official personnel file that contains his application, performance ratings and corrective and disciplinary actions is an open record and may be disclosed to anyone who makes a request.
3. Representatives of government or law enforcement agencies, in the course of their business, may be allowed access to file information. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Executive Director in response to the request, a legal subpoena or a court order.

Disagreements:

If the employee disagrees with one of the documents he or she may request permission to add a document containing their comments regarding the document in question.

2.5 VISITORS IN THE WORKPLACE

To provide for the safety and security of employees and the facilities at CASA, only authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. Personal visits between co-workers should occur infrequently and should be handled quickly and in a manner that will not disrupt the flow of work. When a visit by a non-employee becomes necessary, it should be kept brief. CASA employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors.

2.6 SOLICITATIONS

In order to ensure a proper business environment and to prevent interference with work or inconvenience to others, CASA Program maintains a "no-solicitation" workplace. No vendors, salespersons, or other non-employees are allowed on premises without proper authorization.

CASA Program recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. However, employees may not distribute literature concerning these activities anywhere during working time.

2.7 USE OF COMPANY PROPERTY

CASA requires that certain guidelines be followed concerning agency property and the work environment. Abuse of these guidelines can lead to corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

The assets, equipment and supplies of CASA should be used in a conscientious, efficient and prudent manner. When using company property, employees are expected to exercise care and follow all

operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines. Please notify your supervisor if any equipment appears to be damaged, defective or needs repair. Reasonable wear and tear from routine business use is expected and will be covered by CASA.

Telephone Etiquette:

To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should always use an appropriate greeting and speak in a clear, courteous and professional manner. Vulgar or unprofessional language will not be tolerated. When taking a message, confirm pertinent information before ending the call and always ask for a phone number (even if they say "You already have it").

Personal Phone Calls:

CASA places and receives many phone calls per day; therefore, it is important to reserve the phone lines for providing services. Personal phone calls should be brief and limited in frequency. Personal phone use that CASA Program determines in its sole discretion to be excessive may result in corrective action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees are responsible for reimbursing CASA for any personal long distance calls.

Postage:

Postage in the office is to be used for CASA business. Employees are not to use postage for personal use.

Copying/Filing:

The copy machine is to be used for (CASA Program Inc.) business. Items mailed from the CASA office should be copied and filed, as appropriate. Staff members are to notify their supervisor or the ED if they wish to make personal copies.

Other Communications:

Staff calendars are to note when staff will be out of the office. Meeting notices are to include date, location, time, type of meeting, estimated length of meeting, and contact name if appropriate. Master calendar will be updated as necessary.

Closing the Office:

The last person to leave the office is responsible for checking to ensure that all doors are locked, electrical items are turned off/down, the a/c is set at 80 degrees or heat at 65 degrees, as applicable and the alarm is set.

2.8 CONFIDENTIALITY

During the course of employment with CASA Program, employees will work with confidential, proprietary information and materials. Confidential information, including donor, volunteer, customer, and board member databases, CASA program files, contribution files, marketing files, and other confidential or trade secret materials, and every portion thereof, however stored, compiled or collected, constitutes the valuable proprietary information of CASA Program. Document items which must be kept confidential include, but are not limited to:

- Board member, personnel, or volunteer records

- Donor records
- Salary information
- Case files
- Attorneys' offices, staff/volunteer-generated court reports and communications with attorneys
- Any documents from CPS, law enforcement, the District or County Attorney's Offices.

Confidential information (and all documentation and information relating thereto) will be kept strictly confidential by employees. Specifically, employees agree that, except as expressly authorized in writing by CASA, employees will:

- Not disclose confidential information to any third party;
- Not copy confidential information for any reason;
- Not remove confidential information from CASA's premises;
- Not use confidential information in any manner which is detrimental to the interests of CASA Program (irrespective of whether such use is beneficial to the employee);
- Return to CASA Program confidential information in an employee's possession upon completion of any work for CASA Program requiring the employee to have access to such confidential information; and
- Return confidential information upon separation from employment.

PRECAUTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WORKING WITH CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:

Maintaining Confidentiality in Your Office and Offsite:

- Keep all confidential documents out of view and/or locked away in your desk.
- Close all doors when confidential discussions occur.
- Confidential information on your personal computer should be password protected and never left open when you step away and should never be stored on your personal hard drive.
- **CASA Advocates' records WILL NOT be maintained by staff members away from the office unless specifically instructed by the Executive Director.** Employees must maintain the security of all confidential records when in the personal possession of the responsible person, as well as maintain the security of those records when they are not in the person's possession, such as times when they are temporarily left at home or in a vehicle. Case records and notes shall be secured, kept private and inaccessible to unauthorized persons.

Maintaining Confidentiality when Printing, Copying, and/or Disposing:

- When printing confidential documents monitor the printer and do not leave jobs unattended.
- Remove all confidential documents from the copy machine. In the event of a jam, make sure all confidential papers are removed.
- Shred confidential documents – do not discard in wastebaskets or recycle bins.

Maintaining Confidentiality on the Telephone:

- Close doors when confidential conversations are taking place on the phone.
- Conference Calls where confidential information may be discussed should be conducted behind closed doors.

- Care should be taken when leaving voicemail messages as it may contain confidential information.
- Be discrete in communications with others to ensure unauthorized disclosure does not occur.

Maintaining Confidentiality When Mailing:

- Confidential mail sent by regular mail or courier should be sent in sealed envelopes and marked "Confidential".

Maintaining Confidentiality When Emailing:

- Before sending any confidential information via electronic mail, individuals should make sure the intended recipient is the sole user of the address.
- Discretion should be used when sharing confidential information by email since it can be accessed fairly easily by experienced users.
- The following confidentiality notice should be included on all confidential electronic mail:
CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email communication and any attachments may contain confidential and privileged information for the use of the designated recipients named above. This transmission is strictly confidential. If you are not the intended recipient of this message, you may not disclose, print, copy or disseminate this information. If you have received this in error, please reply and notify the sender (only) and delete the message. Unauthorized interception of this email is a violation of federal criminal law.

Maintaining Confidentiality When Faxing:

- When using a fax machine to transmit confidential information, make arrangements for recipient to be available to monitor the fax machine to retrieve the document.
- Verify all fax numbers prior to sending information by facsimile and include the notice of confidentiality with all faxes:
CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This transmission is intended only for the addressee shown above. It may contain information that is privileged, confidential or otherwise protected from disclosure. Any review, dissemination or use of this transmission or any of its contents by persons other than the addressee is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please contact us immediately upon receipt.

All employees will sign a confidentiality statement upon hire.

2.9 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION RESOURCES & DATA SECURITY:

CASA provides equipment and information systems to employees at CASA's expense in order for employees to access information for the benefit of CASA and its clients. These may include personal computers, email, Internet, Intranet, telephones, cellular phones and smart phones, facsimile, voicemail, and PDAs. All employees are expected to use these tools in a productive, appropriate, and responsible manner to maintain and enhance CASA's image, and in accordance with CASA policies.

Employees are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding appropriate use of information technology resources and for protecting information. The following outline examples of acceptable and

unacceptable use of both (*CASA Program Inc.*) and of personally-owned, systems, electronic access, devices for CASA purposes.

- Employees are responsible for the security of data, accounts, and systems under their control. Keep passwords secure and do not share account or password information with anyone, including other personnel, family, or friends.
- Computers, smart phones and other computing devices must be configured to require a user ID and password. You must maintain system-level and user-level passwords in accordance with CASA's policy.
- Do not lend any CASA issued computer or mobile device to anyone who is not an employee of CASA. Do not lend your CASA issued computer or mobile device to another CASA employee without your Supervisor's approval.
- Employees are responsible for protecting CASA provided computers from theft, damage, destruction and unauthorized use. Laptop computers, tablets and other mobile computing devices should be physically secured by:
 - ✓ Always maintain physical control of the device when you are away from the office, and
 - ✓ Take the device with you rather than leaving it in a car.
- Computers are susceptible to viruses and other malware. You are responsible for taking the following precautions to avoid infection:
 - ✓ Do not disable your anti-virus software.
 - ✓ Do not open email attachments from senders that you do not know. Also, use your judgment when opening attachments from senders you do know. If the message seems a little too generic or you did not expect to receive a file from the sender, reply in a new email and ask if he/she sent the attachment. Do not reply directly to these emails.
 - ✓ Exercise great caution when clicking on web links in emails. Attackers often use emails that look like they come from Facebook, your bank or another trusted source to get you to visit a web site that is infected with a virus. Beware of these types of emails.
 - ✓ If you think your computer is infected with a virus, contact (*POSITION*).
- Computer screens must be locked when unattended

Voice Mail and Email:

All electronic and telephonic communication systems, including voice mail, email, and any communication and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems, are the property of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) and are to be used for job-related purposes. Although CASA understands that a minimal level of personal use of these systems is to be expected, employees must keep personal calls and personal email use to a minimum. Excessive personal use of these systems may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. What constitutes excessive personal use will be determined by CASA in its sole discretion.

All business-related voice mail and email communications are considered CASA business records and, therefore, may be transmitted only to individuals who have a business need to receive them. Such communications are also subject to disclosure to law enforcement or government officials, or other third parties through subpoena or other processes. Consequently, employees should always be sure that business information contained in voice mail and email communications is accurate, appropriate and lawful. Abuse of these systems, or use in violation of law or CASA policies, will result in disciplinary

action up to and including termination of employment.

Voice mail and email communications are to be treated like shared paper files, with the expectation that anything in them is available for review by (CASA Program, Inc.) management. It is important for employees to remember that the computer and other communication systems of (CASA Program, Inc.) are the property of CASA. Employees should have no expectation of privacy with respect to anything communicated to, stored on, transmitted through or by, or otherwise involving a company telephone, computer, telephone connection, computer connection or network. CASA reserves the right to review an employee's voice mail and email communications and disclose them to law enforcement, government officials, or other third parties, without notification to or permission from the employee. The improper use of CASA's computer and other communication systems, may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Computer Systems and Internet Usage:

CASA provides a computer for each employee with the expectation that it will be used for job related purposes. CASA also provides additional workstations for volunteer use under the supervision of staff. Computers are on a network that back up files, printer sharing and electronic file sharing. CASA provides software packages to sufficiently allow staff to interact with the community. If there is a specific software need, staff should consult their immediate supervisor or the Executive Director. Employees are prohibited from adding or downloading software packages to agency computers without permission from their supervisor or the Executive Director.

Although CASA understands that a minimal level of personal use of the Internet is to be expected, employees must keep personal use of the internet to an absolute minimum. Excessive personal use of the internet may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Similarly, inappropriate use of the internet may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. What constitutes excessive personal use and/or inappropriate use will be determined by CASA in its sole discretion.

Prohibited Activities/Use:

Inappropriate use of these tools encompasses a range of conduct, arising from various practical and legal concerns.

- ***Equal Employment Opportunity:*** Images, voice and text that are intimidating, offensive, profane or hostile may give rise to discrimination or harassment claims. The same prohibitions contained in the EEO policy apply to use of electronic communications.
- ***Personal Commercial Gain:*** Employees may not research, develop, service or conduct a personal business enterprise using CASA electronic communication devices and systems.
- ***Anti-Spam Laws:*** Employees may not use the Agency's systems to send unsolicited email to persons with whom they do not have a prior relationship.
- ***Use of an Alias:*** Employees may not use an assumed name or alias when using CASA electronic communications systems, and may not attempt or actually obscure the origin of any message sent.
- ***Copyright Law:*** Employees are not to violate this law, including but not limited to, illegally duplicating or transmitting copyrighted pictures, music, video, and software.

- **Expressing Personal of Political Views:** CASA devices, systems and electronic access are not to be used to express personal views unrelated to their work on behalf of CASA and should not be used for partisan political/campaign purposes other than as approved by the Executive Director.
- **Expressing the Agency's Views:** Media and other requests for information about CASA or the views of the program should be forwarded to the Executive Director for response.
- **Recreation:** The systems and devices provided by CASA are not to be used for gambling, bidding on auction items, games, chain letters, accessing non-business-related streaming audio or video, participation in chat rooms, viewing webcams, upload, download, sending or viewing of pornography or adult materials of any kind, and other recreational purposes.
- **Excessive Personal Use:** While some limited personal use is allowed and may not otherwise violate this policy, if the use monopolizes bandwidth of the systems, negatively affects employee productivity, or is otherwise deemed excessive by the employee's supervisor or the Executive Director, it is considered unacceptable.

CONSENT TO ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY: An employee's use of CASA's electronic communication systems constitutes his/her consent to the terms and conditions of this policy.

Social Media:

This policy governs the use of social media by employees, volunteers, and Board members of (CASA Program, Inc.). For the purposes of this policy, social media is defined as 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 You Tube.

This policy applies to all uses of social media, including personal, by CASA employees, volunteers and Board members. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary. All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that CASA employees must otherwise follow. It is never okay to publish confidential information on social media.

If you are representing (CASA Program, Inc.) on social media sites, respect your audience. These groups reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Avoid arguments on social media, particularly of controversial issues. Don't try to settle scores, cause controversy, or goad volunteers or co-workers into inflammatory debates through social media. Do not use your social media profiles to defame or embarrass a co-worker, volunteer, program stakeholder child victim or their families. Always consider how other parties on a case might feel about your statements. Make sure that your social media use does not interfere with your job or commitments to volunteers or the children you serve. Policy violations will be addressed and subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause.

Don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with (CASA Program, Inc.). Be respectful of your co-workers, volunteers and CASA stakeholders. This includes ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc. as well as the careful consideration of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.

Social Network Guidelines:

- Avoid referring to, posting photos of or revealing information about a child, a family or a case.
- Avoid comment about the courts, attorneys, foster parents, Child Protective Services or others you encounter through your staff or volunteer role.

- CASA volunteers and staff may not friend children served by CASA, respondent parents, the children's extended family or kin or kinship care providers.
- Please do not "friend" a CASA child. In the event that someone without access to the child is looking for him or her, this precaution will prevent the child from being located through your social networking profile. It also encourages healthy boundaries.
- We recommend keeping privacy settings at a level that restricts your content to people who are your "friends," "connections" or "in your circle."
- We recommend choosing a profile photo and a profile name that would not embarrass you or the agency in court, or divulge personal information about you or your family that you would not want shared.
- We strongly discourage you from using your social networking profile to comment on divisive social, legal or political matters, especially those related to child welfare.
- We hope you will please "Like" us on Facebook, "Follow Us" on Twitter and join our LinkedIn group, but do not post material related to specific cases or people or any material that would be seen as critical or divisive.
- If you find the job rewarding, challenging or interesting (and we sincerely hope you do), we encourage you to tell others, but please do so without discussing a particular case or person.

Personal Device:

(CASA Program, Inc.) employees may have the opportunity to use their personal electronic devices for work purposes. Personal electronic devices include personally-owned cellphones, smartphones, tablets, laptops and computers.

- All personal devices must be set with a passcode to unlock the device
- Only use reputable websites and be cautious of the security of any website accessed
- All applications must be up-to-date (to ensure that all security fixes are up-to-date)
- Personal devices should be turned off or set to silent or vibrate mode during meetings and conferences and in other locations where incoming calls may disrupt normal workflow.
- While at work, employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using their personal devices as is expected for the use of CASA devices. CASA policies pertaining to harassment, discrimination, retaliation, trade secrets, confidential information and ethics apply to employee use of personal devices for work-related activities.
- Excessive, non-emergency personal calls, e-mails or text messaging during the workday, regardless of the device used, can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others and, therefore, are prohibited. Employees shall ensure friends and family members are aware of the policy. CASA reserves the right to request employees' cellphone bills to identify calls and messaging made during working hours to determine if use is excessive.
- Employees are expected to follow applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations regarding the use of electronic devices at all times.
- Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving are expected to refrain from using their personal devices other than in handsfree mode while driving. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees driving for CASA-related purposes are required to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before texting or before placing or accepting a call other than in handsfree mode. Special care should be taken in situations involving traffic, inclement weather or unfamiliar areas. Employees who are

charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their personal devices while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

2.10 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Your employment relationship gives (CASA Program, Inc.) ownership and certain other rights in whatever work product you create as a (CASA Program, Inc.) employee; in particular, the productions of your thinking and other creative efforts. These are generally referred to as “intellectual property.” It is your responsibility to safeguard such property from unauthorized use and from disclosure to unauthorized persons.

All forms of expression that have been committed to paper, computer memory, audio or videotape, or other tangible medium, and that you prepared in the course of your employment, belong to (CASA Program, Inc.). These rights come to (CASA Program, Inc.) automatically and without the necessity of CASA having to take any affirmative steps to preserve them. To the extent any of your work products qualify as an invention for patent protection, you are required to assign these rights to (CASA Program, Inc.) as a condition of your employment.

Any information belonging to CASA, either in whole or in part (such as computer programs, source or object codes, manuals, documentation, customer lists, client profiles, marketing plans, etc.), cannot be used without (CASA Program, Inc.) prior written permission, unless such use directly benefits CASA. Moreover, such information or material cannot be taken by you for distribution outside (CASA Program, Inc.). Finally, under the law of trademarks and unfair competition, CASA’s name, trademarks, service marks (i.e., the heart logo), service names, program names, and other forms of trade identification all belong to CASA Program and cannot be used without its express permission.

In the course of your employment, you must disclose to your supervisor any form of intellectual property you develop so that (CASA Program, Inc.) may take any steps necessary to protect it. You should also understand that in the event your employment with CASA Program has terminated for any reason, you are required to leave behind all forms of intellectual property, including any copies.

Any questions you may have regarding your responsibilities or CASA’s rights should be directed to your supervisor or the ED. In addition, if you have any doubt about what is or is not intellectual property, or what does or does not constitute the proper use of intellectual property, you should first consult with the ED prior to proceeding with any proposed use or program.

2.11 REIMBURSEMENTS

Receipts for official agency business are required for all reimbursements. The definition of “official agency business” includes travel incurred by employees as a part of their official duties. It also includes attendance and/or participation in the proceedings of the meeting of a professional group so long as the context of the meeting directly relates to the current job responsibilities of the employee. An expense report with attachments, including all your receipts, must be submitted to your supervisor at the end of the month when expenses were incurred.

Employees who voluntarily resign within 90 days of attendance at a seminar, conference or training, will

reimburse CASA the entire amount paid by the agency. In such case, all expenditures related to the event may be deducted from any compensation due the employee at the time of termination.

2.12 TRAVEL POLICIES

Automobile Insurance: All employees using personal cars for (CASA Program, Inc.) business must have copies of their current personal liability insurance on file. Employees who drive on behalf of CASA must have a satisfactory motor vehicle division records check and results will be stored in the employee's file. Any accident involving an automobile while on CASA business must be reported immediately.

Cell Phone Use:

Staff are encouraged to pull over when driving if a call needs to be placed or answered.

Travel Expense Reimbursement:

Expenses eligible for reimbursement, based on pre-approved travel requests include:

- **Hotels:** Overnight hotel expenses are reimbursable excluding personal phone calls, movies, and/or room service. Employees should arrive and depart on the same day of the meeting or activity when reasonably possible. Employees are encouraged to share rooms when there is an opportunity to do so.
- **Airfare:** Travelers will be reimbursed for the least expensive airfare reasonably available. All travel arrangements should be made far enough in advance to ensure the lowest possible fare.
- **Personal Car Mileage:** Travel by personal car, other than for routine job responsibilities (i.e. court, CPS, case-related visits, supplies, bank, post office) must be approved in advance. Reimbursement will not exceed the federal reimbursement rate for amount per mile. When two or more employees are traveling to the same destination, they should attempt to travel together. All employees using personal cars for CASA business must have on file copies of the personal insurance coverage.
- **Other Related Expenses:** Taxi/shuttle, rental car, and parking expenses necessary to attend a meeting/activity are reimbursable with advanced approval by the Executive Director.
- **Tips:** CASA will reimburse tips for meals, shuttles, and/or concierge services if they are reasonable. However, the amount of tip paid must be indicated on the corresponding receipt so that CASA has a record.
- The employee is expected to attend the entire meeting/activity for reimbursement to be considered. For reimbursement, the employee **MUST** present receipts for travel expenses not paid in advance.

CASA does **NOT** pay for the following:

- Additional expenses incurred as a result of having an additional individual accompany the employee on the trip.
- Personal entertainment and/or souvenirs
- Alcoholic beverages
- Meals/lodging for someone other than the approved employee
- Any personal items

Travel expense reimbursement requests for local mileage accumulated during the course of official CASA business must be submitted within 60 days or prior to the end of the fiscal year, whichever is sooner.

Employees who voluntarily resign within 90 days of attendance at a seminar, conference or training, will reimburse CASA the entire amount paid by the agency. In such case, all expenditures related to the event may be deducted from any compensation due the employee at the time of termination.

2.13 CREDIT CARD POLICY:

See CASA Program's *Financial Policies and Procedures*.

2.14 TELECOMMUTING

CASA may allow employees, on a case-by-case basis, to telecommute or work from home at the discretion of the Executive Director or Board President. Requests to work from home while on leave to recover from an illness or injury shall be treated separately from other requests to work from home. Employees who are allowed to telecommute should designate a specific work site and work hours, and must be available by phone or email during the designated work hours. Dependent care issues should be addressed to the satisfaction of the Executive Director or Board President. The employee is responsible for all equipment, utilities, and related expenses involved in telecommuting. The employee must be responsible for his or her own electronic or digital equipment and hardware necessary to telecommute. CASA assumes no liability for the employee's equipment or safety of the employee's home workplace. Confidential information located offsite must be secured when not in use. Employees are expected to follow the confidentiality guidelines outlined when working from home.

2.15 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Employees are expected and required to act in good faith and in the best interest of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) at all times. Employees shall avoid any actual conflicts of interest and situations which might give rise to the appearance of a conflict of interest or other impropriety (regardless of whether or not a conflict of interest or other impropriety actually exists). The following principles and guidelines are not designed to address every possible situation involving a potential conflict of interest or instance of employee misconduct. They are intended to establish a minimum acceptable level of conduct with respect to potential conflicts of interest or questionable conduct. All employees will sign this policy annually. Conduct to the contrary will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Outside Employment:

All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is not detrimental to the image or purposes of (*CASA Program, Inc.*). Employees may not engage in outside employment incompatible with their CASA employment and shall have no interest arising by contract or other relationship with service providers that creates a conflict of interest with duties without prior written approval from the Executive Director. Employees shall report in writing to the Executive Director any situation in which they feel or should feel that they may be or may become involved in a conflict of interest in a timely manner. Employees may not use their positions for private gain for themselves or other parties.

A CASA employee may not be a foster, foster/adopt, or adoptive parent for any child whose conservatorship is through DFPS, unless the staff member is related to the child or the child is not in conservatorship in (X) County(ies).

A CASA employee will not serve as a DFPS mediator or have any contractual relationship with DFPS.

Accepting Gifts:

It is recognized that employees may be offered gifts or similar favors from persons utilizing the services of CASA, and common courtesy may require the acceptance thereof. However, gifts should not be accepted if they are offered, or appear to be offered, as an inducement to perform an act inconsistent with the best interest of (CASA Program, Inc.) or if acceptance, directly or indirectly, places the recipient under any obligation to the donor. In no event should a person accept: 1) cash payments; or 2) gifts or similar favors having a value in excess of \$20. In any event, the recipient of a gift shall report the acceptance of the gift and the nature of the gift in writing to the Executive Director.

Political Contributions:

Under no circumstance shall (CASA Program, Inc.) funds be contributed, directly or indirectly, to any political party, candidate or political committee, or to a government official or employee of the United States or any subdivision thereof or of any foreign country or any subdivision thereof. Although employees are encouraged to participate individually in the political process, no speech making, soliciting or other political campaign activities are permitted within (CASA Program, Inc.) offices during normal business hours.

Nepotism:

In compliance with the Uniform Grant Management Standards and the Texas Government Code, (CASA Program, Inc.) will ensure that no officer, employee, or member of its governing body shall vote or confirm the employment of any person related within the second degree of consanguinity to any member of the governing body or to any other officer or employee authorized to employ or supervise such person. This prohibition shall not prohibit the employment of a person who shall have been continuously employed for a period of two years prior to the election or appointment of the officer, employee, or governing body member related to such person in the prohibited degree.

SECTION 3: HEALTH & SAFETY

3.1 SAFETY

Your safety and well-being are a primary concern of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) and efforts are made to assure a safe and healthy environment for you to work. A safe work environment depends on the alertness and personal commitment of all employees. Each employee is expected to use good judgment and exercise caution in all work activities. Employees should avoid potential accidents by not operating malfunctioning equipment, lifting or pushing extremely heavy objects, or performing other tasks that may be potentially hazardous. Any unsafe conditions should be reported immediately to your supervisor.

Despite our prevention measures, we recognize that accidents and injuries may still occur in the workplace. If an accident results in an injury to any (*CASA Program, Inc.*) employee, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees must immediately notify the ED or the appropriate supervisor. Reporting accidents is necessary to assure that proper medical attention is obtained as well as to comply with workers' compensation and OSHA regulations. It is crucial that all job-related injuries and illnesses be reported in a timely manner so that the appropriate workers' compensation paperwork may be filled promptly if necessary, otherwise an employees' rights to benefits could be jeopardized.

3.2 SMOKING

In keeping with CASA's intent to provide a healthful and comfortable work environment, smoking within agency buildings. Local ordinances also apply.

3.3 WORK AREA

CASA Program provides employees with a professional work area and necessary supplies. Desks and other storage devices may be provided for the convenience of employees but remains the sole property of CASA. As such, employees are not allowed to place their own locks on desks, work areas or storage areas. Management takes reasonable measures to maintain equipment and ensure its use as intended.

The offices of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) are to be maintained in a business-like condition. Employees are required to use their work areas, storage areas and supplies in an orderly and clean manner. Employees may include personal items in their work area, provided they are in good taste. These areas, as well as any articles found within them, may be inspected by a representative of CASA at any time without prior notice and without permission or consent from the employee. CASA will not be liable for theft, loss or damage to personal items kept in the employee's work or storage areas.

For health reasons, staff must clean and put away food, dishes, glasses and utensils immediately after use. Kitchen duties are not assigned at CASA; everyone is responsible for washing their own dishes.

3.4 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency, leave the building by the closest exit available. In the event of a fire or the sounding of a fire alarm, exit the building in an orderly manner. Employees are to meet (*LOCATION.*) so the ED or designated individual can conduct a head count to ensure all employees are safe.

3.5 WEAPONS POLICY

The possession of firearms, dangerous weapons or explosives on the premises of (CASA Program, Inc.) or while engaged in the duties or functions as employee, volunteer or board member of CASA is prohibited. This prohibition includes those weapons carried under license issued by the State of Texas. Violations of this policy may result in dismissal from employment or removal from volunteer or board service. Law enforcement agents are exempt from this policy. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

Prohibited weapons include any form of weapon or explosive restricted under local, state or federal regulation. This includes all firearms, knives over three inches in length, or other weapons covered by law. Legal chemical dispensing devices, such as pepper spray, which are sold for personal protection, are not prohibited by this policy.

Premises covered by this policy include, without limitation, all CASA-owned or leased buildings and surrounding areas, such as sidewalks, walkways, driveways and parking lots under CASA's ownership or control, unless the prohibition is not allowed by applicable state law.

CASA reserves the right to conduct searches of any person, motor vehicle or object that enters onto the premises in order to enforce this policy. Items that may be searched include, but are not limited to, lockers, desks, purses, briefcases, baggage, toolboxes, lunch sacks, clothing, vehicles parked on CASA premises, and any other item in which a weapon may be hidden regardless of whether these articles are locked or secured. CASA management or local authorities may conduct searches. To the extent the search is requested by CASA and the employee is present, the employee may refuse the search; however, such refusal can result in discharge from employment for refusal to cooperate.

3.6 DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

(CASA Program, Inc.) is committed to providing employees with a safe, efficient and productive work environment. Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on the job may pose serious safety and health risks. In support of this commitment, CASA has established the following Drug-Free Workplace policy.

This policy applies to all employees, board members, contractors, visitors and other persons on (CASA Program, Inc.) premises. This policy also applies to any person conducting business on behalf or in the name of CASA, no matter where that business takes place. Compliance with this policy is a condition of employment for all CASA employees. Any violation of this policy may result in corrective action, up to and including termination of employment. Employment, however, is at-will and may be terminated at any time, with or without cause and without notice. The following substances are within the scope and coverage of this policy:

- **Alcoholic Beverages:** Any beverage with an alcohol concentration constitutes an "alcoholic beverage".
- **Drugs:** Any substance, including inhalants, (other than an alcoholic beverage or over-the-counter medication) capable of altering an individual's mood, perception, pain level, motor skills or judgment.

- **Illegal Drugs:** Any drug which, if possessed, sold or consumed, would constitute a violation of criminal law, either state or federal. This definition includes prescription drugs not prescribed to the person using them and/or not used in accordance with the prescribing practitioner's instructions.
- **Prescription Drugs:** Any "controlled substance" as defined in Schedules I through V of 21 U.S.C. Section 812, or any drug prescribed for individual consumption by a licensed medical practitioner.

The following activities are specifically prohibited by this policy:

- Reporting to work intoxicated or under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, drug or illegal drug. "Under the influence" is defined by having any detectable level in the person's body, regardless of when or where it may have been consumed.
- Unlawful manufacture, possession, distribution, sale, transfer or purchase of any alcohol, drug, illegal drug, inhalant, or prescription drug on company property or while acting in the capacity of an employee or representative of CASA, or while attending a CASA sponsored event.
- The use or possession of any alcoholic beverage, drug, illegal drug, or drug or illegal drug-related paraphernalia on company property or while acting in the capacity as an employee or representative of CASA. *This policy does not apply to alcoholic beverages served at CASA-approved or CASA-sponsored functions. However, under no circumstances is the consumption of alcoholic beverages to exceed legal limits as determined by federal or state law.*
- The use or possession of any prescription drug which could impair the employee's work performance or attention to safety regulations, while on company property or while acting in the capacity as an employee or representative of CASA.

In the event that any violation of this policy could constitute a violation of criminal law, either federal or state, CASA will inform the appropriate law enforcement officials, and will cooperate fully with any investigation or prosecution of the perpetrator. Any employee convicted under a criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace must notify CASA no later than five (5) days after the conviction.

If employees have substance abuse problems, regardless of whether they directly affect work performance or constitute violations of this policy, CASA encourages them to seek medical treatment for their problems prior to being found in violation of this policy. Employees are responsible for the costs of any treatment, but should consult their benefits information to see if any costs will be covered by their medical insurance.

CASA reserves the right to conduct searches and inspections of employees, visitors and other individuals conducting business on the organization's premises, subject to applicable federal and state law. Such searches include all CASA property including, but not limited to, desks and other property used on a daily basis. Furthermore, personal effects (i.e., baggage, vehicles, briefcases, etc.) brought on CASA premises are subject to search and inspection. Employees who refuse to consent to a search will be

discharged for failure to comply with (CASA Program, Inc.) policy. Other individuals who fail to consent to a search will be removed and not be permitted to return to the premises.

Employees will be required to sign a Search and Inspection Consent and Release Form that amongst other things, acknowledges that the employee has received and read the Drug and Alcohol Policy. Employees who refuse to sign the form will be discharged.

Currently, CASA does not have a drug or alcohol testing program for employees. However, the company reserves the right to implement a testing program and to require employees to submit to testing as a condition of continued employment.

Employee support and cooperation with this policy is appreciated. This policy may be amended, revised or updated by CASA at any time without prior notice.

3.7 HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT & INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

(CASA Program, Inc.) prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex and gender identity (including pregnancy), age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic or status protected by law. "On the basis of sex" includes sexual harassment.

Harassment includes unwelcome discriminatory conduct of a verbal or physical nature when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. (i.e., pertains to, or is motivated by, a characteristic protected by law) and when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment. Harassment can include unwelcome verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual or discriminatory nature; such as:

- unnecessary touching of an individual;
- graphic or verbal commentary about an individual's body, skin color or ethnicity;
- degrading verbal abuse;
- a display in the workplace of sexually suggestive or otherwise offensive objects or pictures;
- offensive jokes; and
- physical assault.

Sexual harassment also includes any unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, flirtations or requests for sexual favors, or other conduct of a verbal or physical nature whether expressed or implied—for sexual favors. Additionally, when submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for an employment decision affecting that individual. No employee shall threaten or insinuate that another employee's or applicant's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect any aspect of that person's employment. Similarly, no employee shall promise, imply or grant any preferential treatment to another employee or applicant in exchange for engaging in sexual conduct.

Employees who feel they are being harassed have certain rights and responsibilities:

- ***Speak Up:*** Any employee who is subjected to any offensive or unwelcome comments or behavior has the right to inform the individual that such comments or behavior is unwelcome or

offensive, and should promptly do so. Making clear to others what is unwelcome or offensive is the first step in preventing unlawful harassment from occurring.

- **Report Harassment:** If any employee feels that he/she is a victim of any type of discriminatory harassment, including any of the conduct listed above, by any co-worker, customer, supplier or other person, then he/she should immediately contact his/her supervisor or the ED. Likewise, employees witnessing harassment of other employees should immediately report any such incidents to their supervisor or the ED.
- **Report Inappropriate Behavior by Supervisors:** Any employee who feels that they have been subjected to any offensive and/or inappropriate behavior by a supervisor with immediate (or successively higher) authority over them should immediately report the matter to the ED. While CASA does not tolerate harassment by any person connected with CASA, CASA requires the utmost professionalism from its supervisors and managers.
- **Be Prompt:** Prompt reports are important; they help CASA eradicate discrimination and harassment and facilitate prompt and thorough investigations. For this reason, the employee should always make a report *as soon as possible*, usually within 24 hours of the offensive conduct. Do not wait for a situation to become worse or unbearable before making a report.

For instance, if a supervisor makes inappropriate sexual comments, the employee should not wait until the conduct interferes with his/her ability to do the job. Instead, the employee should promptly tell the supervisor that his/her conduct is unwelcome and offensive, and then contact the ED. Even if an employee does not report offensive conduct within 24 hours, CASA still wants the employee to report the conduct, and CASA will deal with the report appropriately.

All supervisors and managers have the responsibility to enforce the policy and to eliminate harassment and associated behaviors. This responsibility includes communicating CASA's anti-harassment policy, educating all employees under their supervision about the policy and how to use it, and enforcing the policy.

(CASA Program, Inc.) encourages good-faith reports and prohibits retaliation. Under no circumstances will an employee who in good faith reports alleged incidents of harassment, or who cooperates in an investigation of any such report, be subjected to any form of reprisal or retaliation on account of his/her report or cooperation in such an investigation. Any employee who feels that he/she has been threatened with, or subjected to, such reprisal or retaliation should immediately report the reprisal or retaliation to his/her supervisor or the ED.

All allegations of harassment or retaliation will be taken seriously and will be investigated as promptly and confidentially as possible. Appropriate corrective action will be taken, if warranted. Any employee who, after an investigation, is determined to have engaged in any form of discrimination, harassment or retaliation in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

While (CASA Program, Inc.) is committed to preventing and correcting unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation, it also recognizes that false accusations of discrimination, harassment or retaliation may harm an innocent party who is falsely accused. Accordingly, any employee who, after an investigation, is found to have *knowingly* made a false accusation of discrimination, harassment or retaliation may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. However, if an employee makes a report of what he or she in good faith believes to be harassment or retaliation, the employee will not be subjected to disciplinary action even if the employee turns out to have been mistaken.

For any problem set out in this section where the problem relates directly to the (*Designated Person*) or the Executive Director, the employee should present the problem to the Executive Committee. If the Board President is perceived to be the cause of the problem the report will be made to the Board of Directors who will undertake the necessary investigation and action.

SECTION 4: PROBLEM RESOLUTION & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Misunderstandings or disagreements may arise in any organization. (*CASA Program, Inc.*) values and wishes to promote an amiable and cooperative work environment. Our Open Door and Problem Resolution policies reflect our commitment to providing the best possible working conditions.

4.1 OPEN DOOR

(*CASA Program, Inc.*) encourages an open and frank atmosphere where concerns, suggestions and questions can be discussed with supervisors and staff members. CASA strives to ensure consistent and honest treatment of all employees. Employees are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. Many problems can easily be resolved simply by discussing them openly.

4.2 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1. If the employee is not satisfied with the determination by the Executive Director, a written statement by the employee about the situation/problem should be submitted to the Board Chair who will address the issue with the Executive Committee.
2. If the problem relates directly to the Executive Director, the employee should present the problem in writing to the Executive Committee.

Although not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, it is through the open discussion of problems that employees and management develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important to the operation of an efficient and harmonious work environment that benefits both the employee and CASA and each problem will be investigated as promptly and confidentially as possible. However, (*CASA Program, Inc.*) reserves the right to determine, in its sole discretion, the appropriate resolution to any problem.

If an employee believes a condition of employment or a decision affecting them is unjust or inequitable or are adversely affected by a policy or practice or disrespectful workplace they are encouraged to first discuss the problem with the immediate supervisor. If a discussion with the supervisor would be inappropriate, the employee is encouraged to follow the grievance steps:

The grievance process must be initiated by the employee within 7 days of the event:

1. The grievance shall be initiated by the employee with a written request to discuss the matter with the employee's supervisor. The grievance must contain the following information:
 - Description of the incident (including date, time and place);
 - Any corroborating evidence;
 - A list of witnesses; and
 - Identification of the alleged offender.
 - The written grievance must be signed by the employee making the complaint.
2. The person receiving the written grievance is responsible for making a written status report on the matter no later than 10 business days after the grievance is made.

3. If the problem has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the employee by the employee's immediate supervisor, the employee may appeal to the Executive Director.
4. If the problem remains unsolved following the conference with the Executive Director, the employee may appeal to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

The Executive Committee may rule on the grievance. The ruling of the Executive Committee may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

The employee may withdraw the grievance at any time.

At each stage of the grievance procedure, the written summary of the proceedings shall be prepared and the employee shall be given a copy for review and comments. The written summary and employee comments will be placed in the employee's permanent personnel file.

If the employee's immediate supervisor is perceived to be the cause of the grievance, the written grievance may be provided directly to the Executive Director who will assume the responsibility for investigation and discipline.

If the Executive Director is perceived to be the cause of the grievance, the written grievance may be provided directly to the Executive Committee who will confer with the appropriate Board Committee regarding investigation and action.

4.3 CORRECTIVE ACTION

The objective of Corrective Action is to change employee behavior patterns that negatively affect job performance or the efficient operation of the work environment. Corrective Action is used to correct problems, prevent recurrence of problems, and prepare employees for satisfactory service in the future.

Corrective action is typically taken in any one of four measures:

1. Verbal warning;
2. Written warning;
3. Other corrective action short of termination; and
4. Termination of employment.

In certain instances, an employee may be suspended pending further investigation. CASA hopes that employee problems can be corrected at an early stage benefiting both the employee and CASA. However, CASA retains the right to determine, in its sole discretion, what corrective action serves the best interests of CASA Program and to take that action.

The complainant(s) will receive notification of resolution of the complaint and a copy of that resolution will be maintained in the employee's files.

4.4 WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

(CASA Program, Inc.) encourages its employees, directors and officers to report suspected violations of the law by any employee, volunteer or Board member. All employees, directors and officers will be protected from any disadvantages caused by raising legitimate concerns and shall report suspected illegal activities within CASA.

Confidentiality:

An individual may report a suspected violation anonymously or on a confidential basis, keeping in mind that in the course of the investigation it may become necessary that the source of the complaint be identified.

Retaliation:

No individual reporting a suspected violation in good faith, whether or not the allegation turns out to be true, shall be subject to any form of retaliation, including harassment, demotion or firing by CASA. Anyone who retaliates against a complainant shall be subject to disciplinary action.

(CASA Program, Inc.) will not retaliate against employees who disclose or threaten to disclose to a supervisor or; a public body, any activity, policy, or practice the employee reasonably believes is in violation of a law, or a rule of regulation mandated pursuant to law, or is in violation of a clear mandate or public policy concerning the health, safety, welfare, or protection of the environment.

Malicious Allegations:

An individual is not required to prove the truth of an allegation, but he or she is required to act in good faith. Any individual who does not act in good faith regarding a suspected violation may be subjected to disciplinary action.

Open Door Policy:

If any employee reasonably believes that some policy, practice or activity of CASA is in violation of the law, or a clear mandate or public policy, the employee should share their questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints with someone who may be able to address them properly. If the concerns are not addressed, the individual should make a formal complaint.

Reporting Violations:

If an individual reasonably believes that some practice of (CASA Program, Inc.), or the Board of Directors or a board committee, an employee of CASA, or another individual or entity with which (CASA Program, Inc.) has a business relationship is in violation of the law, the employee must file a written complaint with the Executive Director or Executive Committee.

Handling Reported Violations:

The Executive Director or Board President will contact the complainant within 10 business days and acknowledge the reported violation was received. The complainant will be notified about what actions will be taken. If no further action or investigation is to follow, an explanation of this decision will be given to the complainant.

Any complainant who reasonably believes they have been retaliated against in violation of this Whistleblower Policy shall follow the same procedures as they did when they filed the original complaint.

4.5 MEDIA CRISIS PLAN

All inquiries from the media, planned or unplanned, including but not limited to the press, television and radio, regarding *(CASA Program Inc.)* are to be directed to the Executive Director. Comments to the media regarding *(CASA Program Inc.)*, or any case handled by CASA, are to be made by the Executive Director only, except by express permission of the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for managing and notifying local, state and national groups.

In the case of a crisis which may have a significant impact on the credibility, reputation, or funding at the local or state or national level, information will be shared with the Executive Director of *(CASA Program Inc.)* by Texas CASA or National CASA unless subject to confidentiality limitations.

SECTION 5: EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT, SCREENING & DEVELOPMENT

5.1 APPLICATION

All employees of (CASA Program, Inc.) must complete a written application and provide the names of (#) references, at least three of whom are not related to the applicant.

5.2 APPLICANT SCREENING

All applicants, upon consent, will undergo a social security number verification check; Texas criminal record check, national criminal record check, national sex offender check using The Fingerprint-Based Background Check, Texas state sex offender check using the Fingerprint-Based Background Check; and a Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry Check. Background investigations also include but are not limited to the procurement of relevant information from references, courts, the Central Registry, law enforcement, department of motor vehicles, and other governmental agencies. If the candidate has lived in another state within the past seven years, CASA shall conduct a background investigation in that area. All employees shall be rescreened according to Texas CASA Standards.

All barred offenses listed under Texas CASA Standard 5.C.9. or criminal history (including guilty pleas, pleas of no contest, acceptance of deferred adjudication, and charges, whether pending or not, and regardless of whether an offense is classified as a felony or misdemeanor) involving violence, child abuse or neglect, or sex or drug related offenses, or any other felony, of an applicant or individual or of someone with whom the applicant or individual resides or regularly comes into contact with, will preclude that applicant or individual from working for (CASA Program Inc.). Furthermore, the refusal to execute consent and release forms shall disqualify an individual from CASA employment.

Driving Under the Influence convictions (including pleas of guilty pleas no contest) or charges may disqualify individuals from holding a position of employment with (CASA Program Inc.). A thorough investigation of the driving record and insurability of a person being considered for employment may be conducted.

Employees of (CASA Program, Inc.) must notify the Executive Director immediately of any criminal charges filed against them.

5.3 INITIAL TRAINING PERIOD

The first six months of employment are considered a training period. New employees have the opportunity to demonstrate their ability, achieve satisfactory performance and determine whether the new position meets their expectations. CASA evaluates employee capabilities, job performance and attendance during this time. The employee or CASA may end the employment relationship at-will at any time during or after the training period, with or without cause or advance notice.

After six months, supervisors will complete a formal performance appraisal to ensure the new employee is progressing satisfactorily, training needs or corrective actions are identified, goals are reviewed or established, and to determine if employment should continue.

5.4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Volunteer supervisors and directors are required to attend CASA Pre-Service Training and any additional training deemed appropriate; all other new employees are strongly encouraged to attend. All staff members who supervise volunteers must complete 12 hours of in-service training annually.

CASA offers training opportunities to enhance employees' professional development. These training opportunities include attendance at national and state CASA conferences and professional books, webinars, and classes or conferences in the employee's area of expertise. CASA encourages employees to discuss training opportunities with their supervisors to obtain meaningful professional development.

5.5 PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

A key to career success is understanding what your strengths and weaknesses are in relation to your job responsibilities. (CASA Program, Inc.) is committed to helping employees improve their performance. Toward this goal, performance appraisals are tool to recognize those areas in which employees excel, and to clarify those areas that need improvement. Formal written performance appraisals take place following an employee's training period and then annually. Each employee also conducts a self-evaluation. This is an opportunity to openly discuss ways to improve operations, for the benefit of the employee and to benefit CASA.

A performance review (or employee evaluation) should reveal no surprises. Evaluations provide opportunities to ensure CASA employment is meaningful and productive. They assess job performance in relation to the quality and quantity of work defined in the job description, and to the performance objectives established in the most recent evaluation. There should be clearly-stated objectives for future performance and recommendations for further training and skill-building. The employee will add any comments, sign the appraisal and receive a copy.

Annual performance reviews will be performed by the employee's supervisor and reviewed by the Executive Director.

Annual performance reviews for the Executive Director will be performed by the Executive Committee and presented to the Board of Directors for approval.

SECTION 6: PAY PROCESS

6.1 PAY/WORK WEEK/DEDUCTIONS

Pay:

Wages shall be paid on the (DAY) and (DAY) of each month. If a pay day occurs on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, wages shall be made on the preceding work day. Work done on the first of the month through the fifteenth of the month shall be paid on the (DAY). Work done on the (DAY) of the month through the last day of the month shall be paid on the (DAY) day of the next month.

CASA Program recommends direct deposit of employee pay into approved banks and credit unions.

Deductions:

The law requires that CASA make certain deductions from employees' compensation. Among these are applicable federal, state and local income taxes, as well as Social Security and Medicare. Each CASA Employee shall sign the Authorization for Deduction from Wages form.

Work Week and Office Hours:

CASA Program's normal office hours are from 8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Phones are to be covered during normal office hours, including lunch hour.

Lunch Hour:

One hour is allotted for lunch periods for employees. Employees are free to use this time however they wish. CASA encourages the employees to use this time each day to remove themselves from the workplace and to maintain their physical and mental wellness. "Working through lunch" is not encouraged, and shall not be used to accrue additional Overtime or Flex Time.

6.2 TIME SHEETS

All employees must accurately report the amount of time they work for (CASA Program, Inc). A paycheck will not be given unless the completed and submitted timesheet is accurate and correct. Strict compliance with the following requirements and procedures is a condition of employment with (CASA Program, Inc.) and failure to comply will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Tampering with or falsifying CASA's records or documents including, but not limited to, applications of employment, time sheets, expense records and credit card account records will result in corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

6.3 SALARY MANAGEMENT AND PROMOTIONS

Salary Management:

It is an objective of (CASA Program, Inc.) to attract, motivate and retain quality employees in order to achieve our mission and goals. To reach this objective, CASA endeavors to pay salaries competitive with those paid by comparable agencies. All employees are evaluated and compensated without regard to age, race, color, national origin, religion, citizenship status, veteran status, disability, sex and gender identity (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status.

Promotions:

Employees are considered for promotion based on job performance, training, skills and education. Employees are evaluated without regard to age, race, color, national origin, religion, citizenship status, veteran status, disability, sex and gender identity (including pregnancy), or any other legally protected status.

6.4 INSURANCE

(CASA Program, Inc.) provides the opportunity for full-time employees to participate in a pre-tax insurance plan. Part-time employees are eligible for Worker’s Compensation Insurance only. Temporary employees are not eligible for CASA’s insurance package.

Rates are determined by the insurance carrier upon completion of the required application(s). (CASA Program, Inc.) provides (%) of the cost for the employee and requires the employee to pay the remaining (%) of the total cost. Spouse and children may be added at the employee’s expense.

Employees are eligible for health insurance coverage on (DATE) following their start date. Employee deductions are made out of both pay periods during the current month. (E.g., for May coverage, deductions are made during both pay periods in May.) An employee who terminates employment early or mid-month may still owe up to two additional premiums after departing. Eligibility for coverage ends the last day of the month in which the employee has worked.

Full-Time employee’s insurance packages include:

- Medical Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Life Insurance
- 403(b) Retirement Savings Plan

SECTION 7: TIME OFF

7.1 HOLIDAYS

Employees regularly scheduled to work the day upon which a holiday is observed are eligible for the following paid holidays as of their date of hire:

- New Year's Day January
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day January
- President's Day February
- Good Friday/Floating Spring Day March or April
- Memorial Day May
- Emancipation Day June
- Independence Day July
- Labor Day September
- Veterans' Day November
- Thanksgiving and the following day November
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day December
- One Floating Holiday

Holidays falling on a Saturday are normally observed on the preceding Friday. Holidays falling on a Sunday are normally observed on the following Monday. At the beginning of each calendar year, employees will receive a listing of the actual dates each holiday will be observed. Employees on an unpaid leave of absence do not receive holiday pay. The (CASA Program, Inc.) Board of Directors may allocate additional holiday leave.

7.2 VACATION

The nature of the work of CASA necessitates a balance between professional performance and good mental health. We recognize your need for rest, recreation and time to spend with family and friends.

Eligibility for Vacation:

- All full-time employees accrue vacation.
- Part-time employees accrue vacation on a prorated basis.
- Temporary employees do not accrue vacation.
- Employees must have successfully completed the Initial Training Period to be eligible to accrue and to use vacation.
- Employees hired from existing CASA programs will maintain their tenure for purposes of determining vacation eligibility.

Rate of Vacation Accrual:

Full-time employee vacation accrual rates:

- (#) hours per pay period for 0, but less than (#) years of service.
- (#) hours per pay period for (#), but less than (#) years of service.
- (#) hours per pay period for (#)+ years of service.

Part-time employee vacation accrual rates:

- Calculated using the rates as stated above and the percentage of hours worked to the standard work week.

Vacation Requests:

Employees must secure approval from their supervisor at least two weeks in advance of the time for which vacation leave is requested. The Executive Director may approve a leave request less than two weeks in advance on a case-by-case basis. When there is a change in previously approved vacation leave, the supervisor must be notified of and approve the updated request. Failure to make a revised request as soon as practical may result in a denial of the requested leave.

Non-exempt employees who receive vacation pay are paid, per vacation day, an amount equal to their regular, straight-time rate of pay multiplied by the number of hours they are regularly scheduled to work per day. Exempt employees who receive vacation pay are paid, per vacation day, an amount equal to one-fifth of their regular, weekly salary.

Use of Vacation:

Approval of requested vacation is left to the sole discretion of CASA. Employees who fail to return to work upon the expiration of an approved vacation, or who fail to arrange for an extension of leave prior to the date they are expected to return, will be considered to have abandoned the job and voluntarily terminated employment.

Accrued but Unused Vacation:

Vacation time can accrue up to (#) days. No employee will be allowed to take more than ten consecutive days of vacation without approval of the Executive Director. The Board President must approve vacations of longer than ten days for the Executive Director.

Upon termination of employment with (CASA Program, Inc.) accrued but unused vacation will be paid to the departing employee if the employee has been employed for a minimum of 12 months at the discretion of the Executive Director. Upon termination of the employment of the Executive Director, accrued but unused vacation will be paid to the departing Executive Director if they had been employed for a minimum of 12 months and at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

7.3 PERSONAL DAYS

(#) paid personal days may be taken each year. The employee accrues this time on the anniversary date of their hire, and unused days do not carry over to the next year. Unused personal days will not be paid when an employee leaves CASA Program.

7.3 SICK LEAVE

CASA realizes that illness or injury may make it necessary for you to miss work occasionally. To ease the economic hardship missing work could cause, we provide a certain number of paid sick days to full-time and part-time employees. Sick leave accrues on the first day of the month.

Accrued, but unused sick leave is not paid upon termination of employment.

Eligibility and Rate of Accrual for Paid Sick Leave:

- Full-time employees accrue one day of Paid Sick Leave per month.
- Part-time employees accrue paid sick leave on a prorated basis.
- Temporary employees do not accrue paid sick leave.

Use of Paid Sick Leave:

- Paid Sick Leave may be requested for the illness or disability of the employee or to care for an ill or disabled spouse, child or parent (not including parents-in-law). Approval of requested Paid Sick Leave is left to the sole discretion of CASA.
- If the employee's need for the Paid Sick Leave is foreseeable, the employee must make a written request for the leave at least 30 days in advance. Failure to make a written request for a foreseeable leave 30 days in advance may result in a denial or delay of the requested leave.
- If the employee's need for the Paid Sick Leave is unforeseeable, the employee must request the leave as soon as practicable and in no event later than the time the employee is scheduled to report for work. Failure to request approval for an unforeseeable leave as soon as practicable may result in a denial or delay of the requested leave.
- Employees requesting Paid Sick Leave the day before or after a scheduled holiday, approved vacation, CASA Program closing, or other absence from work shall be required to submit a doctor's statement certifying the employee's illness.
- When a period of Paid Sick Leave exceeds three days, a doctor's certificate may be required.
- A doctor's statement certifying the employee's illness may be required under other such circumstances as CASA Program deems appropriate in its sole discretion.
- An employee may be required to keep CASA Program advised of their condition and anticipated date during Paid Sick Leave.
- When Paid Sick Leave has been used up, CASA may charge any additional, approved absences covered by this policy against the employee's accumulated vacation or personal days.
- When all paid leave has been exhausted, an employee may request an unpaid Short-Term Disability Leave or Personal Leave (see below).
- Employees who fail to return to work upon the expiration of an approved Paid Sick Leave, or who fail to arrange for an extension of such leave prior to the date they are expected to return, will be considered to have abandoned the job and voluntarily terminated employment.
- Malingering or other abuses of Paid Sick Leave privileges will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Accrued but Unused Paid Sick Leave:

Accrued but unused Paid Sick Leave is not paid upon termination of employment for any reason. Employees may accrue no more than 20 days paid sick leave.

7.4 LEAVES OF ABSENCE

There may be times when you need a leave of absence for one reason or another in order to balance work and personal life. To assist you in fulfilling personal obligations, CASA Program provides various leave benefits. Continuous service is not interrupted, and seniority is not affected by an approved leave of absence, provided you return to work on the agreed upon date.

Bereavement:

This benefit is available to all full and part-time employees. CASA grants paid time off in the event of a death in the employee's immediate family. For purposes of this benefit, immediate family includes an employee's spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, child, grandparent and grandchild. Up to three days with pay may be granted, depending on personal circumstances. As approved by the Executive Director, additional time off may be granted.

Short-Term Disability (STD) Leave:

This benefit is available to full-time employees who have been employed with (CASA Program, Inc.) for at least one month. Any such employee, who is temporarily disabled due to illness or other condition, including disability due to pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions, may be permitted a leave of absence during the period of temporary disability. Short-Term Disability Leave ("STD Leave") under this policy normally will be limited to a maximum of six (6) months; however, the Executive Committee may allow a longer period in writing.

The employee will be required to use any available vacation or Paid Sick Leave during the STD Leave. Once all paid leave has been exhausted, the employee will be on leave without pay for the remainder of the approved STD Leave. Employees on unpaid STD Leave do not accrue vacation or Paid Sick Leave and are not eligible for holiday pay for any holidays occurring during the leave.

Employees who know in advance that they will experience a period of temporary disability must provide CASA Program with as much advance notice as possible of the expected beginning and duration of the period of temporary disability. During the period of temporary disability, the employee must keep CASA advised of the employee's condition and anticipated date of return.

If an employee is unable to perform some or all of the duties of his or her position due to a temporary, disabling illness or condition, and the employee is able to perform light duty or work according to a reduced schedule, the employee may request that his or her supervisor attempt to arrange for such light duty or reduced schedule if feasible given the employee's abilities and the needs of CASA. Whether to permit such an employee to remain at (or return to) work on light duty to a reduced schedule is solely within the discretion of CASA. (CASA Program, Inc.) may require a doctor's statement before allowing such an employee to be assigned to light duty or a reduced schedule. If it is not feasible to assign the employee to light duty or a reduced schedule, the employee will be permitted a leave of absence as described in the first paragraph above. Following any absence due to a temporarily disabling illness or condition, (CASA Program, Inc.) will make a reasonable effort to return the employee to his or her former position if that position is available or if it is not available, to another position within (CASA Program, Inc.) for which the employee is qualified. There is, however, no guarantee that any position will be available.

CASA may require any employee returning from a leave of absence under this policy to submit a statement from the employee's physician. Employees who fail to return to work upon the expiration of STD Leave, or to arrange for an extension of such leave prior to the date they are expected to return, will be considered to have abandoned the job and voluntarily terminated employment.

Jury Duty/Subpoenaed Witness:

Any employee summoned to serve as a juror or subpoenaed to appear as a witness must notify his or her supervisor upon receipt of such summons or subpoena and, to the extent possible, keep in touch with his or her supervisor during the time the employee is serving as a juror or appearing as a witness. If, on any given day, an employee is released from jury summons or subpoena and two or more hours remain in the workday, the employee must return to work.

When a full-time employee is summoned for jury service or subpoenaed to appear as a witness, CASA normally will continue the employee's regular pay for the first three days of the employee's service as a juror or subpoenaed witness. However, CASA may provide such pay continuation benefits for a longer or shorter period of time if, in CASA's sole discretion, it chooses to do so. In any event, deductions will not be made from the salaries of exempt employees for jury or witness service lasting less than one full workweek. Regardless of whether pay continuation benefits are provided, time spent by an employee in service as a juror or witness will not count toward hours worked for purposes of overtime compensation.

Military:

An employee's eligibility for leave for military service and reemployment afterwards are governed by state and federal law. Questions regarding military leave should be directed to the Executive Director.

Personal Leave:

This benefit is potentially available to all full-time and all part-time employees. (*CASA Program, Inc.*) will consider a request for a Personal Leave of up to 60 days for compelling personal or emergency situations, including the birth or placement of a child. Personal Leave is granted at the Executive Director's discretion. Requests for Personal Leave will be evaluated based on a number of factors including the reason for the request, anticipated work load, and staffing considerations during the proposed period of absence.

Personal Leaves are unpaid leaves, and employees requesting a Personal Leave will be required to first use all available vacation and, if appropriate, any available Paid Sick Leave. Employees do not accrue vacation or Paid Sick Leave and are not eligible for holiday pay for any holidays occurring during any unpaid portion of Personal Leave.

Upon an employee's return from a Personal Leave, CASA will make a reasonable effort to return the employee to his or her former position if available, or if the employee's former position is not available, to another position within (*CASA Program, Inc.*) for which the employee is qualified; however, there is no guarantee that any position will be available. Employees who fail to return to work upon the expiration of personal leave, or to arrange for an extension of such leave prior to the date they are expected to return, will be considered to have abandoned the job and voluntarily terminated employment.

Emergency Leave:

As approved by the Executive Director (who will notify the Board President), Emergency Leave may be granted for good cause. Examples of good cause are severe weather conditions, including but not limited to hurricanes, ice or snow that prevent the employee from getting to work, or conditions that prevent the (*CASA Program, Inc.*) office from conducting business.

Voting Time Off:

Full-time employees may request one hour time off during the workday for voting in city, county, state and federal elections; except as otherwise provided by law. CASA recognizes the importance of voting, and employees will be given an opportunity to vote.

Inclement Weather:

Employees are not expected to come to work when weather or road conditions between their home and office present a significant danger.

CASA Program will follow the school district's inclement weather schedule. If schools close due to inclement weather, but the county courthouse does not cancel an employee's scheduled court hearing, that employee is still expected to report to their court hearing. Employees who are unable to attend their hearing for whatever reason must contact their supervisor or the Executive Director immediately and the employee must use vacation leave or other applicable leave to account for their court time.

Educational Development:

An employee may apply for unpaid leave or a flexible schedule in order to attend undergraduate or graduate level courses at an accredited institution of his or her choice under the following provisions:

- ✓ The employee must be a full-time employee for at least one year at the date of enrollment;
- ✓ The employee must be meeting all performance standards;
- ✓ The employee's absence from work during the scheduled class time does not place a hardship on the employee's department or CASA Program;
- ✓ The employee can be excused for up to four hours a week to attend classes;
- ✓ CASA Program does not pay tuition or fees;
- ✓ The employee may adjust work hours if job duties and workload permit as determined by the supervisor. However, job responsibilities always take precedence over educational development; and
- ✓ The employee must still fulfill a full-time work schedule.

Approval of Leave:

Employees must first receive approval from their immediate supervisor and then final approval by the Executive Director. The Executive Director can make the final decision regarding leave taken. The supervisor or Executive Director may require that the leave be taken at a time other than the one requested, based on the needs of CASA Program. The agency may require proof that leave taken is within the purpose of this policy.

7.5 ACCRUAL OF PAID LEAVE DURING LEAVE

Employees who continue to receive their regular paychecks during an absence from work continue to accrue annual leave and sick leave benefits. Employees who cease receiving their regular paychecks during an absence from work cease accruing annual leave and sick leave benefits.

SECTION 8: LEAVING (CASA PROGRAM, INC.)

8.1 RESIGNATION/TERMINATION

We hope you will find a rewarding and enjoyable employment experience with us; however, we realize that for one reason or another, sometimes the employment relationship must end.

Resignation:

This is a voluntary act by the employee to end the employment relationship with CASA. CASA Program asks that at least two weeks written resignation notice be given. Written notice should include the reason for the resignation and the last day the employee will work, along with the employee's signature and the date notice is being given. An employee who does not give at least two weeks' notice may be considered ineligible for rehire and may not be paid any accrued but unused vacation upon termination.

Termination:

Termination is an involuntary end of the employment relationship initiated by the employer. Since employment with CASA Program is based on mutual consent, both the employee and CASA Program have the right to end the employment relationship at-will, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

The following steps will precede termination for cause:

1. Verbal warning to the employee
2. Written notice to the employee with a copy to the Board of Directors
3. In some cases, suspension of the employee for a specified period of time
4. Discharge of the employee

Employees who do not successfully complete their probationary period may be terminated without notice.

Termination may result from:

- Permanent or long-term reduction of work volume;
- Permanent or long-term reduction in operating funds;
- Inability to maintain proper working relationships at any level or failure by the employee to meet required standards; and
- Conduct prejudicial to the best interest of CASA Program.

The final paycheck will be issued in accordance with applicable law. Travel reimbursement and compensation, and any other money owed the employee will be released on the authority of the Executive Director after all keys and property of (CASA Program, Inc.) has been returned. Such employees will not be entitled to severance pay.

8.2 EXIT INTERVIEWS

If you plan on leaving CASA, you may be asked for your comments concerning your period of employment. Your input helps us to evaluate our policies, procedures, benefits, work environment and other variables affecting your employment experience.

Exit interviews with the Executive Director are normally scheduled with employees leaving the organization. Employees leaving (*CASA Program, Inc.*) are responsible for returning all company property such as manuals, keys and files.

8.3 REFERENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the policy of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) not to provide references regarding former employees. CASA will only verify dates of employment, the position held, and rate of pay. Requests for references should be directed to the Executive Director. No other employee may give a personal or professional reference. CASA may, in its sole discretion, make exceptions to this policy; however, such exceptions normally will not be made unless (*CASA Program, Inc.*) receives a written authorization and release from the former employee. If you have any questions or concerns, please see your supervisor or the Executive Director.

8.4 SUCCESSION PLAN FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director is accountable for the performance of (*CASA Program, Inc.*). In the event that the Executive Director needs to be replaced, the following will occur:

1. The delegation of authority will transfer to the President of the Board
2. The President of the Board will be designated as the Interim Executive Director as necessary
3. A committee to manage the transition process will be appointed
4. The Board will create an Executive Director profile including the skills, qualities, talents, experience and education needed to take the organization forward
5. The transition committee will determine compensation and benefits
6. The committee will conduct the recruitment and application review process in an orderly, fair manner to get the broadest candidate pool and provide a thorough screening of qualified candidates
7. The transition committee authorizes one person to make an employment offer and negotiate any terms. The agreement must be documented, and the new employee should quickly receive copies of any employment materials or handbooks. The new Executive Director should be introduced to the Board, the CASA Program staff, and the community. The Board should work with the new Executive Director to clarify relations, co-create a realistic work plan with performance measures, and establish and implement the evaluation process.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have received a copy of and have read the foregoing (*CASA Program, Inc.*) Employee Handbook and am familiar with its terms. I understand that it is not a binding contract, but a source of information and a set of guidelines for implementation of personnel policies. I understand that (*CASA Program, Inc.*) can unilaterally rescind, modify or make exceptions to any of these policies, or adopt new policies, at any time. I also understand that the provisions of this Handbook will control over any contrary statements, representations or assurances made by any supervisory personnel except those made in writing by the Board of Directors.

I also understand that, notwithstanding any of the provisions of this Handbook, I am employed on an at-will basis. Accordingly, my employment may be terminated at any time, by me or by CASA, with or without notice and with or without cause. I further understand that the at-will nature of my employment with (*CASA Program, Inc.*) may not be modified except by a written document approved by the Board of Directors and signed by the Chairperson of the Board, whom I understand is the only individual with authority to make such modifications on behalf of CASA, and that any agreements or assurances concerning the terms, conditions or duration of my employment are not binding unless they are in writing, approved by the Board of Directors, and signed by the Chairperson of the Board.

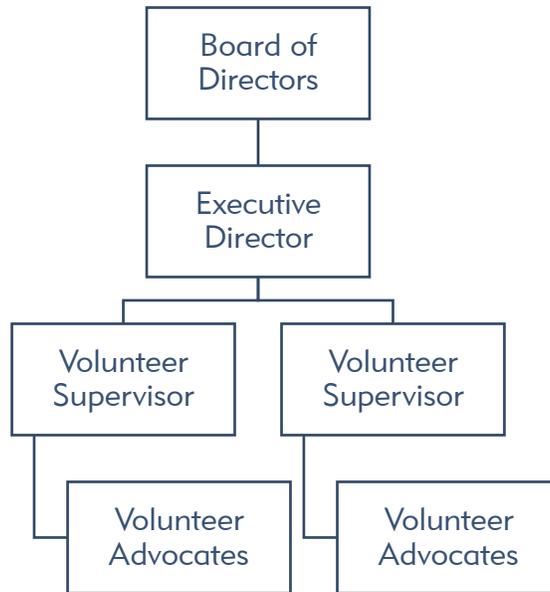
EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

DATE

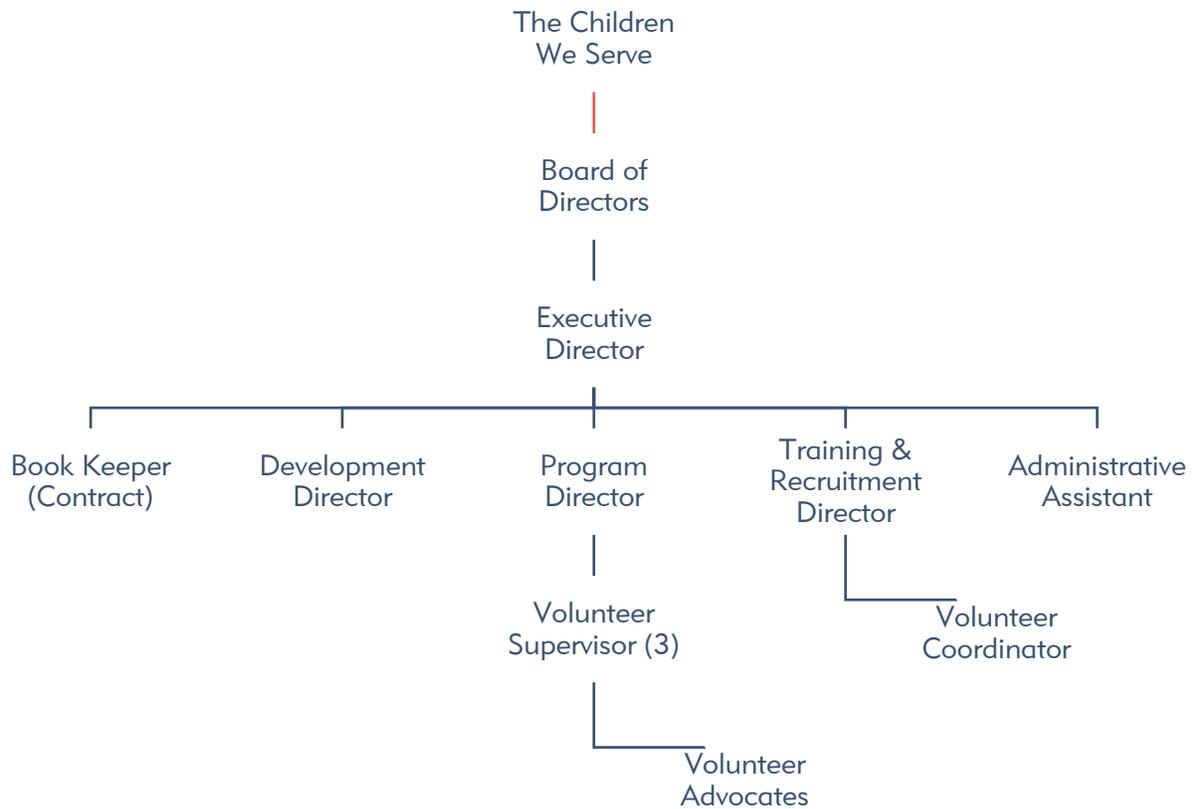
Please sign this page and return it to the Executive Director immediately. A copy of this acknowledgment will be retained in your personnel file.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONAL CHART: STANDARD 5.B.1.

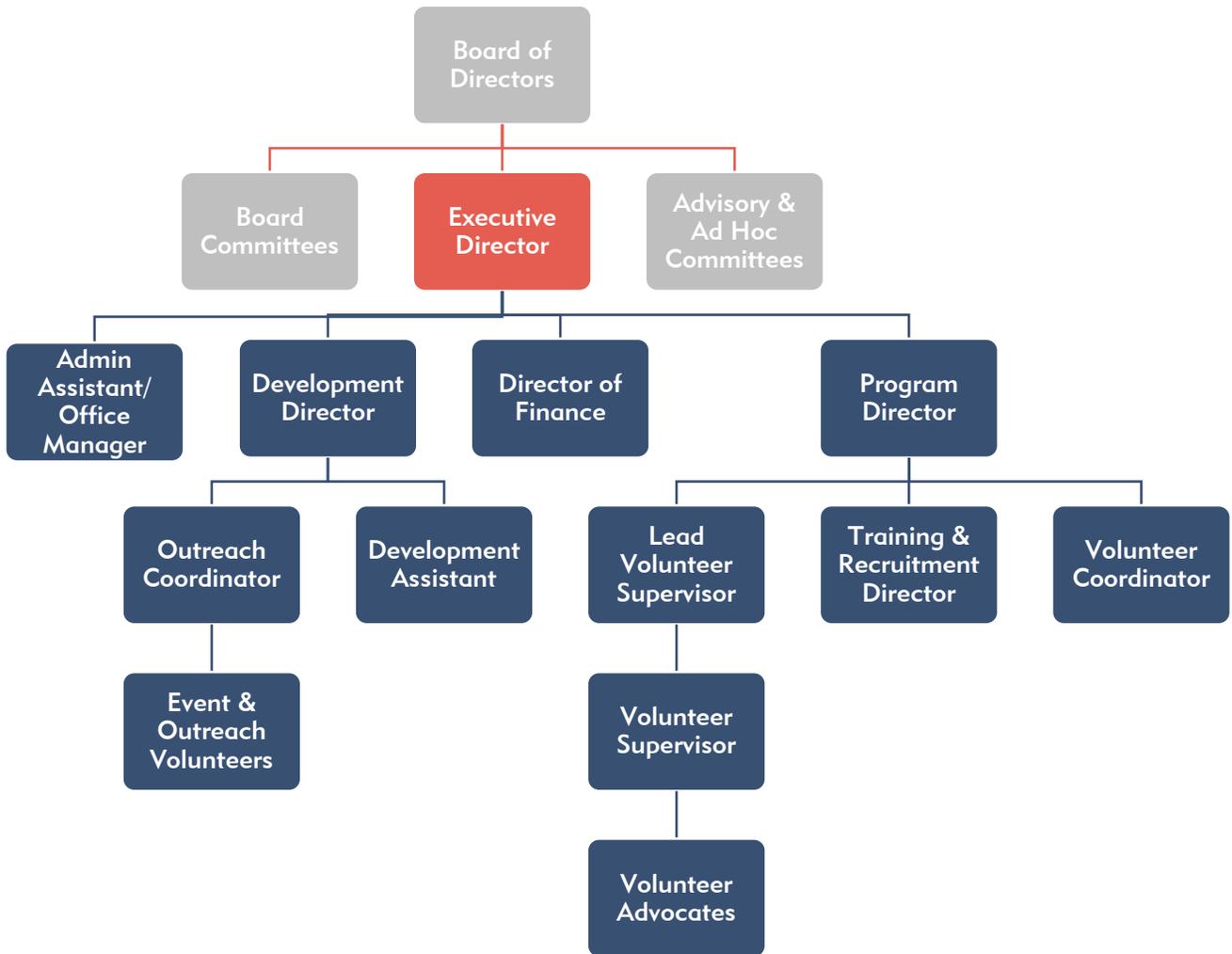
SMALL PROGRAM SAMPLE



MID – LARGE PROGRAM SAMPLE



LARGE PROGRAM SAMPLE



(CASA PROGRAM, INC.)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION DESCRIPTION

CLASSIFICATION AND STATUS: Exempt/Full-Time Position

REPORTS TO: Board of Directors

QUALIFICATIONS:

Degree in business, public administration, human services or related field. Master's Degree preferred. Supervision or management experience with a minimum of 3 years related experience in administration of volunteer, nonprofit, or public service agencies.

PREFERRED SKILLS:

Excellent written and oral communication skills, including presentation and training; ability to work effectively with a volunteer board and committees; ability to plan, monitor and evaluate budgets; experience in writing and administering grants; comfortable interacting with diverse populations; ability to organize, plan and implement activities appropriate to further organizational goals; ability to maintain confidentiality and be discreet

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The Executive Director is responsible for the overall management of the agency and all aspects of the agency's operations. This primarily involves the supervision and coordination of a volunteer service program that provides CASA services to abused and neglected children. Key responsibilities include, but are not restricted to, resource development and maintenance, community and public relations, agency and program planning, liaison to the board of directors, personnel and fiscal management.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

BOARD LIAISON

- Maintain appropriate relations with the Board and Board committees and keep them informed
- Assist in the preparation of agenda and notices for meetings, workshops, trainings, etc.
- Attend all Board meetings and prepare a monthly report
- Collaborate with the Executive Committee in facilitating Board orientation and ongoing training
- Assist the board in the formation and implementation of policies, procedures and activities for the effective and economical operation of the agency
- Present a clear picture of problems confronting the organization to the Board, including outlining possible solutions to stated problems
- Act as the official staff representative for CASA: report to the President and confer with other officers or committee chairs as necessary

- Ensure that legal obligations of the agency are met
- Responsible for public accountability of the agency, maintenance of the agency facilities, and regular reporting to the Board President and other officers or committee chair as necessary

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Manage day-to-day fiscal operations
- Submit monthly and quarterly financial reports to grantors (as required)
- Review and approve all monthly and quarterly reports with their documentation
- Submit bills and expenditures for reimbursement and accounting
- Assist in developing agency annual budget

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- Recruit, hire, train, supervise and evaluate qualified professional and non-professional staff
- Ensure compliance with personnel policies
- Facilitate staff meetings
- Delegate duties to appropriate staff members

COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Public speaking to recruit volunteers, collect donations and promote community awareness
- Serve as liaison with National and Texas CASA and other agencies on state and local levels
- Maintain appropriate communication between CASA and court personnel, child welfare agencies and the legal community
- Promote cooperation among agencies that work with abused and neglected children
- Work with board, staff and/or volunteers to produce a newsletter and public awareness material
- Approve all written public relations material printed by the agency

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- Evaluate program services in relation to specified goals and standards and recommend modifications where appropriate
- Provide statistical information to the Board and funding sources
- Keep abreast of programs that are being implemented or considered by other CASA agencies
- Develop and administer professional development and education workshops and seminars for volunteers and staff
- Keep abreast of legislation affecting children

VOLUNTEERS

- Oversee volunteer recruitment, training, supervision and recognition activities
- Assist with volunteer recruitment
- Ensure effective and appropriate use of volunteers in the provision of services

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

- Develop long and short-term goals for program, development and fiscal management.
- Review CASA standards and assure compliance with funding and regulatory entities
- Submit policy changes or developments to the Board for review and approval
- Provide overall direction and participate in all fundraising activities
- Prepare VOCA, TXCASA and other funding source proposals and/or applications
- Develop written/verbal presentations to corporate sponsors when requested
- Oversee maintenance of donor records
- Plan and implement donor recognition and communication activities

ADDITIONAL DUTIES

- Attend 30 hours of Pre-Service Volunteer Training upon hire
- Sign CASA Program, Inc.'s Conflict of Interest policy annually.
- Participate in other continuing education opportunities relevant to this position
- Other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors

This job description is not intended to be all-inclusive, and the Executive Director will also perform other reasonably related business duties as required and as assigned by the Board of Directors. This organization reserves the right to revise or change job duties as the need arises. This job description does not constitute a written or implied contract of employment.

(CASA PROGRAM, INC.)
PROGRAM DIRECTOR POSITION DESCRIPTION

STATUS: Full-Time Position

REPORTS TO: Executive Director

QUALIFICATIONS:

Bachelor's degree in nonprofit management, public administration; psychology, or related area. Master's Degree preferred. Two-years related experience in management of volunteer, non-profit or public service agency, or an organization/division involved in human social services. Candidate will demonstrate strong skills in volunteer management, program planning, and child advocacy. Previous experience working with volunteers, knowledge and understanding of child abuse and neglect, families in crisis and other social services skills are given priority. Previous experience managing volunteers and working directly with children specifically in the foster care system is required. Clear criminal background required.

PREFERRED SKILLS:

Excellent written and oral communication, including presentation and training; attention to detail; highly organized; vision to identify potential and opportunity; ability to build and maintain consensus; ability to develop and successfully implement a budget; ability to communicate with, supervise and empower volunteers to be effective in their roles; knowledge and understanding of issues and dynamics within families in crises relating to child abuse and neglect.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The CASA Program Director oversees and manages the CASA Volunteer Advocacy Program. The principal duties of the position include managing the Volunteer Supervisors; and overseeing recruitment and training of CASA volunteers; establish relationships with community partners; and meets or exceeds program standards of Texas and National CASA.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Provide the orientation, training, and supervision for all program staff
- Facilitate individual and group coaching of the Program Team, working closely with direct reports to create a sense of empowerment.
- Oversee general case management ensuring confidentiality, adequate supervision, the safety of, and best outcomes for, each child.
- Monitor volunteer quality, retention, recognition and support of volunteer advocates.
- Provide case consultation for difficult cases or case mediation between Volunteer Supervisors and Advocates; attend meetings for Volunteer Supervisors when they are unavailable.
- Conduct annual performance evaluations, and case documentation audits for all direct reports.
- Expand diversity and cultural competency to ensure inclusivity and responsiveness to client needs.
- Oversee Advocate and Program Staff training including the core 30-hour training program, ongoing in-service program and professional development, including annual diversity and cultural competency training.
- Ensure all program policies and practices comply with Texas and National CASA standards.

- Oversee the recruitment and education of volunteers and assist in the implementation of recruitment and retention strategies
- Represent CASA as a professional and positive liaison in court, to the public and welfare agencies, the district attorney's office, the private child welfare agencies, other government agencies, professional collaborations, and other relevant organizations

VOLUNTEERS/CASEWORK

- Coordinate CASA's presence at court and CPS hearings, including emergency removals, show cause hearings, motions to modify and terminations in reference to caseload
- Review court reports and attend court hearings as necessary
- Consult with appropriate CPS staff regarding client needs and volunteer assignments
- Meet monthly with CPS supervisor regarding program collaboration
- Schedule and oversee monthly case staffings
- Keep necessary and appropriate volunteer records
- Assist with yearly volunteer evaluations and follow-up

FINANCIAL AND RECORDS

- Prepare program reports and monitor metrics; coordinate the design, implementation and analysis of annual surveys, program evaluation and outcome measurements
- Aid in the preparation of the annual CASA budget
- Assist with grant writing and research for government crime victim grants
- Assist with VOCA and Crime Victim Grant reports
- Collect and tabulate program effectiveness measures

STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLANS

- Assist in the development of a long-range plan in cooperation with the Board of Directors
- Develop yearly goals for the CASA program

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP

- Participate in national, state and local organizations concerned with child abuse and neglect
- Provide community education about services offered by CASA and assist with outreach
- Maintain effective relationships through personal contact and written communication with other professional and social service organizations, funding groups, foundations and charitable organizations and serve on appropriate community committees and task forces

ADDITIONAL DUTIES:

- Attend 30 hours of Pre-Service Volunteer Training upon hire
- Sign CASA Program, Inc.'s Conflict of Interest policy annually
- Complete special projects and tasks as assigned by the Executive Director

(CASA PROGRAM, INC.)
VOLUNTEER SUPERVISOR POSITION DESCRIPTION

STATUS: Full-Time Position

REPORTS TO: Executive Director or Program Director

QUALIFICATIONS:

Bachelor's degree in social work or related field required. Prior experience with the supervision or coordination of volunteers preferred. Prior experience in the provision of case management or advocacy services with children required. Prior volunteer experience required. Clear criminal background required.

PREFERRED SKILLS:

Proven leadership ability; excellent attention to detail; excellent oral and written communication skills; persistent and diplomatic in encouraging volunteer motivation and case advocacy; self-starter with minimal guidance required; highly organized; ability to coach and empower a diversity of individuals; able to work collaboratively in a team environment.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITY:

Coordinate the delivery of direct advocacy services to assigned foster children through the management of volunteer advocates. The Volunteer Supervisor will coach each assigned advocate in the provision of their duties ensuring adherence to the volunteer advocate job description and core duties. For staff assigned to supervision as a full-time function, staff will not supervise more than 30 active volunteers or a maximum of 45 cases. In the event the staff is required to perform duties other than supervision of volunteers, the number of volunteers the staff can supervise shall be reduced pro rata.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

SUPERVISION/COACHING:

- Supervise activities of volunteer advocates and perform duties temporarily when volunteer advocate is unable to do so.
- Coordinate and supervise casework responsibilities, including:
 - ✓ Family and child contacts,
 - ✓ Professional contacts,
 - ✓ Support services,
 - ✓ Linkage to community resources,
 - ✓ Assistance with court report preparation and timely submission,
 - ✓ Appearance at court hearings,
 - ✓ Appearance at other case related meetings,
 - ✓ Maintenance of case records.
- Attend and assist in volunteer advocate training as requested.
- Confer with advocates at least monthly to assure their cases are progressing appropriately

- Assist in the timely submission and review of each volunteer advocate's case activity monthly logs.
- Evaluate each volunteer advocate's case activity and performance.

CASE MANAGEMENT:

- Maintain knowledge of child placement options, levels of care, and DFPS policies and procedures.
- Attend all court hearings and other case related meetings with the volunteer advocate. In the event that the volunteer is unable to attend, attend all meetings in their place and provide representation of the GAL role.
- Provide timely accurate reports for submission to the court and to other parties on the case.
- Provide notifications of meetings and court hearings to the volunteer advocate.
- Maintain up-to-date case files, including progress notes, reports, motions, and correspondence.
- Maintain and enter all case and volunteer advocate data in CASA's database to ensure accurate funding and statistical reporting.
- Complete all child activity logs, notification of victim's compensation benefits, and other case related documentation on a timely basis.
- Promote and maintain congenial relationships with other professionals.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES:

- Attend 30 hours of Pre-Service Volunteer Training upon hire
- Participate in initial volunteer trainings as presenter and as facilitator
- Sign CASA Program, Inc.'s Conflict of Interest policy annually
- Affiliate with other local and state organizations where appropriate
- Attend national, regional, and state conferences and meetings when appropriate
- Take 12 hours of continuing education classes annually
- Complete special projects and tasks as assigned by the Program Director or Executive Director

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

STANDARD 7: VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

CASA Volunteer Job Description

Court Order of Appointment

Volunteer Pre-Service Training Agenda

Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Volunteer In-Service Training Opportunities

**COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE/GUARDIAN AD LITEM
JOB DESCRIPTION**

POSITION TITLE: Court Appointed Special Advocate Volunteer

RESPONSIBLE TO: CASA Supervisor

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

A CASA is a trained community volunteer appointed by the court. A CASA advocates for the best interests of an abused and/or neglected child(ren) in the child welfare system to help them find a safe, permanent home(s).

PREREQUISITES AND SKILLS

- 21 years of age or older.
- Effective communication both orally and in writing.
- Ability to respect and relate to people from various backgrounds.
- Access to reliable transportation, a current driver's license and current auto insurance.
- Can maintain objectivity.
- Satisfactory results from a social security number verification, Texas and national criminal record check, Texas and national sex offender check and a Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry Check. Rechecks are required every two years of continuous service.
- Submit at least three references, three of which are not related to the volunteer.
- Successful completion of a volunteer application and personal interview.
- Exhibit professionalism in behavior and appearance.
- Complete and new volunteer training, take an oath of confidentiality, and be sworn in by a District Judge as a Court Appointed Special Advocate.

TRAINING

- Attend 30 hours of pre-service training and observe a court hearing before serving as a volunteer on a case. Training includes:
 - ✓ The court process
 - ✓ Family dynamics including mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence and poverty
 - ✓ Relevant state and federal laws, regulations, and policies
 - ✓ Confidentiality and record keeping
 - ✓ Child abuse and neglect
 - ✓ Community agencies and resources available to help meet the needs of children and families

- ✓ Effective advocacy, information gathering, and communication
- ✓ Cultural competency
- ✓ Special needs of children served
- Complete 12 hours of in-service training annually.
- Follow Texas CASA and National CASA Association guidelines.
- Volunteers have access to additional training opportunities offered by other agencies.
- Roles and responsibilities of the CASA volunteer

SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

Volunteers receive direct supervision and guidance from program staff and are encouraged to call their respective Supervisor at any time with questions/concerns. Volunteers and Supervisors are to meet monthly to discuss the case, recent activities, and how to best move forward.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Complete an extensive, independent review of the case including any documentation at the CASA and CPS offices related to the case. Documentation should be reviewed in a timely manner following appointment and routinely through the course of the case.
- Maintain complete written case records, including appointments, interviews, and information gathered about the child, records reviewed, and time spent on the case.
- Meet the child(ren) face to face in a timely manner after appointment, and in person at least once a month thereafter. If the child(ren) is placed:
 - ✓ One to three driving hours away, CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every three months (quarterly).
 - ✓ More than three driving hours away, CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every six months.
- Maintain other types of age-appropriate contact with the child(ren) including telephone calls, emails, and/or letters as applicable for the child's age and interests.
- Obtain a clear understanding of the child(ren)'s situation and advocate for their best interest in the community through interfacing with mental health, medical, legal, educational and other community systems at least quarterly.
- Communicate with the CPS caseworker and placement/caregiver at least monthly.
- Utilize as many factors and contacts as possible in determining the child's best interests
- Seek cooperative solutions among parties by maintaining communication with the child(ren)'s parents, family members, attorneys, teachers, and other service providers.
- Maintain any and all information received and in your possession as confidential.
- Advocate for your CASA child(ren)'s best interests and permanency through the court system.
 - ✓ Provide written court reports containing factual information prior to every court hearing.
 - ✓ Attend all case related Court Hearings and Interagency Meetings.
 - ✓ Provide verbal testimony when necessary

- ✓ If the child(ren) will be attending the hearing, explain what is expected to occur and explore the child's current reactions and feelings regarding the upcoming hearing.

Following the hearing:

- ✓ Ensure court-ordered services are provided to the child and family.
- ✓ Ensure the judicial and child welfare systems are moving ahead to secure a safe, permanent home for the child.

Report Suspected Abuse Immediately: Report any new or suspected incidents of abuse or neglect to the **Child Abuse Hotline** 1-800-252-5400. Report these concerns to the CPS caseworker **AND** your CASA Supervisor.

RESTRICTIONS

- Do not take a child to your home or to any home other than the child's.
- Do not give legal advice or therapeutic counseling.
- Don't authorize medical treatment for the child(ren).
- Don't give the child(ren) medications or any types of vitamins.
- Don't give treats or feed the children without consulting the caregiver for dietary restrictions.
- Don't make promises you can't keep. Keep the promises you make.
- Don't do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Don't make placement arrangements for the child.
- Do not give money or expensive gifts to the child, child's family, or caregiver.
- Do not take a child on an overnight outing.
- Do not probe or introduce the specifics of abuse. Be especially careful when discussing issues in sexual abuse or other potential criminal cases.
- Do not engage in activities which are likely to result in a conflict of interest or expose the program or volunteer to criminal or civil liability.
- Do not cause a child or family to become dependent on the CASA volunteer for services that are provided by other agencies. Such activities may jeopardize the safety of the child, the integrity of the program, or the objectivity of the volunteer.
- Don't accept or be assigned to a case in which the volunteer is related to any parties involved or be employed in a position or with an agency that might result in a conflict of interest
- Don't let children come into contact with anyone who has a criminal history involving violence, child abuse, neglect, drugs, or a sex-related offense.

DISMISSAL OF A VOLUNTEER

- Taking action without program or court approval that endangers the child or is outside the CASA program's role
- 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
- Experiencing an irresolvable conflict of interest

TIME COMMITMENT

- Volunteers are required to make an eighteen-month commitment to the program.
- Attend all court hearings on the cases (on average, five per year).
- Available for case assignment and to accept cases immediately upon completion of pre-service training, unless other arrangements have been made.
- On average, 12-15 hours a month on each case.

BENEFITS

Although we cannot provide you with monetary rewards, there are many benefits to being a CASA/GAL volunteer:

- Make a difference in a child's life who has been a victim of abuse and/or neglect.
- 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 in your community.
- Have access to trainings statewide

ORDER AUTHORIZING APPOINTMENT OF
(CASA PROGRAM, INC.)
(OR AS GAURDIAN AD LITEM)

CAUSE NUMBER:

IN THE INTEREST OF:

IN THE _____ COURT OF
_____ COUNTY, TEXAS
_____ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

The court hereby orders the appointment of *(CASA Program, Inc.)* in the above referenced matter as the “guardian ad litem” as defined in section 107.002 and required in section 107.011 of the Texas Family Code. It is further ordered that:

(OR The court hereby orders the appointment of (CASA Program Name) in the above referenced matter to represent the best interests of the child as a volunteer advocate as defined in section 107.031 of the Texas Family Code. It is further ordered that:)

1. The *(CASA Program, Inc.)* is authorized to designate a responsible adult person who has met the criteria and has been sworn in as a *(CASA Program, Inc.)* volunteer advocate to act as the Guardian ad Litem on behalf of the above named child(ren);
2. The CASA advocate and CASA program shall maintain confidentiality of all records;
3. The CASA representative shall have the right to maintain face to face contact with the above named child(ren), and provide input into placement decisions affecting the child(ren), including providing recommendations for placements in the child’s best interests;
4. *(CASA Program, Inc.)* shall receive prior notification of any hearings or other legal proceedings concerning the child(ren), and shall be notified prior to any action taken on behalf of the child(ren) by any party, including placement changes.
5. The CASA representative shall have the right to appear and have the opportunity to testify and submit a written report regarding the best interest of the child(ren) and the basis for CASA’s recommendations at all hearings or proceedings scheduled in this case;

6. The CASA representative shall have the right to participate in mediations by an authorized agency or person concerning the child(ren);

7. Upon presentation of this Order of Appointment, the CASA representative shall have right of access to any agency or facility and unredacted records for the above named child(ren) including, but not limited to the following:
 - Texas Department of Families and Protective Services
 - Records filed with the court
 - Child placing agencies and foster treatment care providers
 - Child's physical and mental health records as well as access to any medical and mental health professionals, doctors, nurses, psychologists, and counselors. These can include psychological reports and therapeutic notes regarding the child, including trauma screenings and assessment information
 - Schools, teachers, staff and the child's educational records
 - Parent-Child Visitation plan
 - Drug/alcohol records for the child if the child provides written permission
 - Home studies of potential placements, foster, relative and adoptive, as per MOU
 - RTC or CPA Individual Plan of Service
 - Placement Common Application
 - Placement Serious Incident Reports

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20__.

Judge _____, _____ Court

VOLUNTEER PRE-SERVICE TRAINING AGENDA: STANDARD 7.C.1.-8.

Training Day 1: Saturday, February X, 20XX 9:00am – 4:30pm (7.5 hours)		Staff & Guest:
9:00 - 10:30am	Introductions/Welcome The CASA/GAL volunteer role (Chap. 1) Understanding child abuse and neglect	(Name), Training Coordinator & (Name), Executive Director
10:30 – 10:45am	BREAK	
10:45am – noon	Principles and concepts guiding CASA (Chap 1) Training expectations/looking ahead Working your case	
noon – 1:00pm	WORKING LUNCH Harris - Price case/video SPEAKER: Let’s hear from volunteers	(Name), CASA Volunteer
1:00 – 2:30pm	Introducing the Law, CPS and Courts (Chap 2) SPEAKER: Law and the Courts Development of child abuse and neglect laws	
2:30 – 2:45pm	BREAK	
2:45 – 4:30pm	SPEAKER: Judge’s perspective Introducing CPS and the court process (Chap 2) Roles in a juvenile/family court case Homework Sign up for court observation times	(Name), County Judge
Training Day 2 : Tuesday, February X, 20XX 6:00pm – 9:00pm (3 hours)		Staff & Guest:
6:00 – 7:00pm	DFPS overview SPEAKERS – CPS overview and partnership	(Name), CPS Investigator (Name), CPS Supervisor/Caseworker
7:00 – 7:15pm	BREAK	
7:15 – 9:00pm	Developing cultural competence (Chap 3) Diversity and cultural heritage Culturally competent advocacy Homework	(Name), Training Coordinator (Name), Program Director

Training Day 3: Thursday, February X, 20XX 6:00pm – 9:00pm (3 hours)		Staff & Guest:
6:00 – 6:45pm	Values exercise (Chap 3) Principles that guide us	(Name), Training Coordinator & (Name), Program Director
6:45 – 7:15pm	SPEAKER – Foster homes 101	(Name), Foster Parent
7:15 – 7:30pm	BREAK	
7:30 – 8:00pm	SPEAKER- Communicating with your CASA kid	(Name), Therapist
8:00 - 9:00pm	Understanding families/family strengths (Chap 4) Stress in families Homework	(Name), Volunteer Supervisor
Training Day 4: Tuesday, February X, 20XX 6:00pm – 9:00pm (3 hours)		Staff & Guest:
6:00 – 7:30pm	SPEAKER – Substance abuse treatment provider Chapter 4 – Risk factors for child abuse and neglect	(Name), Recovery Center (Name), Training Coordinator & (Name), Program Director
7:30 – 7:45pm	BREAK	
7:45 – 9:00pm	SPEAKER - Educational advocacy for foster children	(Name), Education Liaison (Name) School District
Training Day 5: Thursday, February X, 20XX 6:00pm – 9:00pm (3 hours)		Staff & Guest:
6:00 – 7:00pm	Understanding children (Chap 6) The needs of children How children grow and develop	(Name), Training Coordinator
7:00-7:30pm	<i>The importance of family to a child (Chap 5)</i> Child attachment/Separation SPEAKER- Children's Advocacy Center	(Name), Children's Advocacy Center
7:30 – 7:45pm	BREAK	
7:45 – 9:00pm	Permanence for children	(Name), Volunteer Supervisor

Training Day 6: Saturday, February X, 20XX 9:00am – 4:30pm (7.5 hours)		Staff & Guest:
9:00 - 10:30am	Court reports (Chap 9) Write your own court report	(Name), Training Coordinator &
10:30 – 10:45am	BREAK	
10:45 – 12:00	Principles and concepts that guide CASA (Chap 1) Training expectations/looking ahead Working your case	
12:00 – 1:00pm	WORKING LUNCH Crime Victim’s Compensation Video: What can we do about child abuse	(Name), Executive Director
1:00 – 2:30pm	Case study examples – ROLE PLAYS	
2:30 – 2:45pm	BREAK	
2:45 – 3:30pm	SPEAKER – Attorney panel	(Name), Board President (Name), Attorney (Name), Attorney
3:30-4:30pm	Communicating as a CASA volunteer (Chap 7) Dealing with conflict Understanding confidentiality	
Swearing In Ceremony: Tuesday, February X, 20XX 6:30pm – 7:30pm		Staff & Guest:
6:30 – 7:00pm	Expectations of the Court	(Name), Executive Director
7:00-7:30pm	Swearing in of Volunteers	(Name), County Judge

To become a CASA volunteer volunteers must successfully complete Pre-Service Training including:

- 30 hours of in class training
- 3 hours homework
- 3 hours of court room observation

**CASA PROGRAM, INC.
VOLUNTEER POLICY MANUAL**

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ADVOCATE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Approved by the Board of Directors XX-XX-XX

HISTORY AND MISSION OF CASA PROGRAM, INC.

In 1976, David Soukup, a superior court judge in Seattle, became greatly concerned about making decisions that had significant impact on dependent children's futures, so he created a plan to train and appoint community volunteers to research the best interests of children in cases of abuse and neglect. He needed to be sure he was getting all the facts and that the long-term welfare of children was represented, so he depended on these volunteers to make informed recommendations to the court about getting children in safe, permanent homes as soon as possible. Today, that judge's idea has evolved into one of the largest volunteer organizations in the country.

(CASA Program, Inc.) was organized in *(date)* by a group of concerned citizens who saw the need for a Court Appointed Special Advocates program in their area. *(CASA Program, Inc.)* is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit agency governed by a volunteer board of directors. *(CASA Program, Inc.)* receives funds from Texas CASA, county, federal and state funding, local and state foundations, and from individual, corporate and civic donations. *(CASA Program, Inc.)* is one of over 1,000 programs in 50 states affiliated with the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association. The local names of these programs vary, to include: Court Appointed Special Advocates, Guardian Ad Litem, Voices for Children, and Child Advocates.

(CASA Program, Inc.) is a member of Texas CASA, Inc. and the National CASA Association, which provides the policies and procedures for the organization and regulates the intensive training each volunteer undergoes. The training program, which requires thirty classroom hours and court observation, has been used across the country in over 900 CASA programs—including the 72 in Texas. This intensive training program has been refined by judges, the Department of Family and Protective Services, psychologists, and child abuse specialists in order to ensure the best possible training is administered. Community Volunteers receive 30 hours of pre-service training before being sworn in by the courts as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs). Volunteers also receive a minimum of 12 hours continuing education annually. Employees and volunteers undergo a criminal background check before being assigned as an advocate for an abused or neglected child.

The procedure for assigning a CASA volunteer is consistent across the state. When a child is removed from his or her home by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and placed in a foster home or with relatives, the presiding judge appoints a CASA volunteer to serve as the child's guardian ad litem throughout the child's stay in the foster care system. District judges bear an enormous responsibility in deciding what is best to facilitate a child's growth. CASA volunteers can provide judges with the information they need to make the best decision for that child. With no allegiance to any particular agency, oblivious to caseloads and financial constraints, a CASA volunteer can provide quality advocacy for a child. A CASA volunteer will bring continuity to cases and facilitate necessary services for timely, safe, permanent placement for the children.

MISSION

(CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Program, Inc.) provides trained volunteers who are appointed by the court to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children.

SECTION 1: RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND TRAINING

1.1 CASA VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Court Appointed Special Advocate Volunteer

RESPONSIBLE TO: CASA Supervisor

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

A CASA is a trained community volunteer appointed by the court. A CASA advocates for the best interests of an abused and/or neglected child(ren) in the child welfare system to help them find a safe, permanent home(s).

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Complete an extensive, independent review of the case including any documentation at the CASA and CPS offices related to the case. Documentation should be reviewed in a timely manner following appointment and routinely through the course of the case.
- Maintain complete written case records, including appointments, interviews, and information gathered about the child, records reviewed, and time spent on the case.
- Meet the child(ren) face to face in a timely manner after appointment, and in person at least once a month thereafter. If the child(ren) is placed:
 - ✓ One to three driving hours away, CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every three months (quarterly).
 - ✓ More than three driving hours away, CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every six months.
- Maintain other types of age-appropriate contact with the child(ren) including telephone calls, emails, and/or letters as applicable for the child's age and interests.
- Obtain a clear understanding of the child(ren)'s situation and advocate for their best interests in the community through interfacing with mental health, medical, legal, educational and other community systems at least quarterly.
- Communicate with the CPS caseworker and placement/caregiver at least monthly.
- Utilize as many factors and contacts as possible in determining the child's best interests
- Seek cooperative solutions among parties by maintaining communication with the child(ren)'s parents, family members, attorneys, teachers, and other service providers.
- Maintain any and all information received and in your possession as confidential.
- Advocate for your CASA child(ren)'s best interests and permanency through the court system.
 - ✓ Provide written court reports containing factual information prior to every court hearing.
 - ✓ Attend all case related Court Hearings and Interagency Meetings.
 - ✓ Provide verbal testimony when necessary
 - ✓ If the child(ren) will be attending the hearing, explain what is expected to occur and explore the child's current reactions and feelings regarding the upcoming hearing.

Following the hearing:

- ✓ Ensure court-ordered services are provided to the child and family.
- ✓ Ensure the judicial and child welfare systems are moving ahead to secure a safe, permanent home for the child.

1.2 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Inclusiveness and diversity are essential components of CASA's recruitment efforts. CASA actively seeks individuals who respect a child's inherent right to grow with dignity in a safe environment that meets that child's best interest. CASA includes targeted strategies to attract volunteers from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds and from a variety of age groups and socio-economic levels.

A volunteer is trained by CASA and appointed by the court to advocate for children who have come into the care of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) as a result of abuse or neglect. A CASA volunteer is responsible for advocating for the child's best interest in at every stage of the case once appointed by the court.

CASA strives to recruit volunteers who further CASA's mission:

- by selecting individuals with experience and qualifications that best meet the needs of the child(ren);
- by enhancing opportunities for internal mobility and the promotion of qualified candidates who are current volunteers;
- by enhancing advocacy women and minorities in areas which they are underrepresented; and
- by considering candidates without discrimination based on race, national and/or ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, handicap/disability, religion, veteran status, age, or any other unlawful factor.

Advertising:

Paid and non-paid advertisements are used, including but not limited to:

- Community collaboration
- Media
- Outreach
- Speaking engagements
- Cultural awareness events
- Colleges
- Churches

Volunteer Qualifications:

- Must be 21 years of age, successfully pass the application and screening process, complete CASA training, and swear in with the court to advocate for children in DFPS care as a result of abuse or neglect.
- Must be able to speak and write in English.
- Have a valid driver's license, a satisfactory driving record, proof of current automobile insurance, and reliable transportation.
- Respect a child's inherent right to grow up with dignity in a safe environment that meets that child's best interest.
- Advocate for the child's best interest at every stage of the case once appointed by the court.
- Does not serve as foster, foster/adopt or adoptive parent for any child in the conservatorship of Child Protective Service (CPS) Region (#) unless the volunteer is related to the child.

- Participate in an interview to determine acceptance into pre-service training.

All screening is completed before the volunteer is assigned to a case and written verification is placed in the volunteer file.

Applications:

An application is considered a public document and is subject to disclosure, upon request, whether the application is submitted as a written document or online.

All CASA volunteer applicants are required to:

1. Complete a written application containing information about educational background, training, employment history and experience working with children.
2. Submit the names of (*number (#)*) or more references, at least three of whom are unrelated to the applicant.
3. Authorize the CASA program and other appropriate agencies to secure the following checks:

<input type="checkbox"/> Social security number verification	<input type="checkbox"/> National sex offender check
<input type="checkbox"/> Texas criminal record check	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse & Neglect Central Registry
<input type="checkbox"/> National criminal record check	Check
<input type="checkbox"/> State sex offender check	

Fingerprint-Based Background Checks (FBC) include state and national sex offender and criminal record checks. If the prospective volunteer has lived in another state within the past seven years, CASA will secure the local/county and state record check for each area the person has resided.

4. All background checks will be repeated per Texas and National CASA standards on all volunteers.
5. Attend and participate an interview with CASA program personnel.

Rejection of Application

- Applicant refuses to sign a release of information form or refuses to submit the required information or fingerprints for any of the check required.
- Applicant is found to have been convicted of, or 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 the CASA program’s credibility.
- Applicant has been convicted or has prior charges, or has charges pending, for a felony or misdemeanor involving a sex offense, violent act, child abuse or neglect, or any related acts that would pose risks to children or to the CASA program’s credibility. If any of these charges applies to a volunteer’s family member, the volunteer is also rejected.
- Any other offense that could hurt the credibility of the CASA organization will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Felony convictions involving a motor vehicle in the last ten (10) years or misdemeanor DWI offense in the last ten (10) years.
- CASA volunteers cannot serve as CPS mediators.

Motor Vehicle Check

The Motor Vehicle check is a pre-advocacy and continuing condition for all volunteers who operate a vehicle while conducting CASA business. All volunteers who operate privately owned vehicles in the service of CASA must maintain both an appropriate valid Texas driver's license and personal liability insurance coverage that meet the least minimum liability coverage standards that are mandated by the laws of the State of Texas. Failure to maintain a favorable driver's record is cause for dismissal.

1.3 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of training is to increase the knowledge, skills and abilities of volunteers so that they can fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a CASA volunteer. This training provides information about the backgrounds and needs of the children the program serves.

The training and development program consists of the following:

- Material that is reviewed annually and revised based on the CASA program's assessment of its training needs.
- Opportunities for volunteers to pursue continuing education to upgrade knowledge and skills in order to fulfill the requirements of their respective positions.
- Information related to children who are abused and neglected and in the court system; including cultural competency, inclusion and diversity issues.
- Guest speakers including a variety of instructors including attorneys, judges, agency representatives and volunteers who may deliver the training under supervision of staff.

Pre-Service Training Agreement(PSVT):

Participation in the pre-service volunteer training is required and includes at least 30 hours of training. The CASA volunteer must spend a minimum of ten (10) of these hours in personal contact with and under the supervision of the program staff delivering the training in order for staff to evaluate the applicant's appropriateness to serve as a volunteer. Attendance at pre-service training is essential to your success as a CASA volunteer. The Volunteer Recruiting/Training Director will discuss options if an absence is unavoidable. The pre-service training is a part of the screening process, and acceptance to participate in training does not guarantee the individual will be sworn in as a CASA volunteer.

The following topics are included:

- Roles and responsibilities of a CASA volunteer.
- Court process.
- Dynamics of families including mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence and poverty.
- Relevant state laws, regulations, and policies.
- Relevant federal laws, regulations and policies, including the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and the Multi Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA).
- Confidentiality and record keeping practices.
- Child development.
- Child abuse and neglect.
- Permanency planning.
- Community agencies and resources available to meet the needs of children and families.

- Communication and information gathering.
- Effective advocacy.
- Cultural competency.
- Special needs of the children served.

Court Observation:

In addition to the 30 hours of pre-service training, if allowed by the court, the program requires each volunteer to visit the court served by CASA while court is in session to observe abuse/neglect proceedings before appearing in court for an assigned case.

Continuing Education:

Volunteer advocates are required to attend 12 hours of continuing education throughout the calendar year. The number of required in-service training hours for newly trained volunteers will be prorated according to when the volunteer completed training.

(CASA Program, Inc.) will provide training opportunities throughout the calendar year and also 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.

Volunteers Transferring to CASA Program, Inc.:

A CASA volunteer who transfers from another CASA program must complete a (CASA Program, Inc.) volunteer application and undergo all required background checks. Participation in an in-person interview and a volunteer refresher course is also required. For more information on the refresher course, see the "Reinstatement" policy in Section Five.

SECTION 2: ADVOCATE RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 CODE OF CONDUCT & CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of Interest:

Each volunteer is expected to work for the best interests of CASA's mission at all times. Each volunteer has an obligation to avoid any activity, agreement, business investment or interest, or other situation that could create the appearance of or 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. These actions include, but are not limited to:

- Using position for private gain.
- Giving preferential treatment to any person.
- Losing complete independence or impartiality.
- Making a CASA decision outside official channels.
- Having a direct or indirect financial interest that conflicts substantially, or appears to conflict substantially, with the volunteer's duties and responsibilities.

CASA Volunteers are not to:

- 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.
- Serve as a DFPS mediator, nor have any contractual relationship with DFPS.
- Be employed in a position and/or agency that might result in a conflict of interest.

Personal Gifts, Entertainment and Favors:

A volunteer will not seek, solicit or accept, directly or indirectly for his/her self any gifts, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan, or anything of monetary value from a person(s) who:

- Has or is seeking to obtain, contractual or other business or financial relations with CASA.
- Conducts operations or activities that are regulated by CASA.
- Has interests that may be affected by the performance or nonperformance of the Volunteer's official duties.

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest:

Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can affect the program's good standing in the community and the ability to fulfill its mission. Volunteers shall disclose any relationships and/or interests which may present a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest as soon as they arise to their Supervisor or the Executive Director.

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

2.2 COMMUNICATION

Communications are an important part of conducting business; therefore, we want you to be aware of what is happening within the CASA organization. (CASA Program, Inc.) publishes a monthly newsletter for volunteers and Board members and an annual report. There is also a great deal of information

available on our website. Though the best way to keep yourself aware is to become actively involved and engaged with the program - If you have a question, please ask.

2.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

The responsibilities of a CASA volunteer require that all information provided regarding the child(ren) and families will be held in strictest confidence. Failure to comply with this confidentiality can be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Confidential information shall include, but is not limited to:

- The names and/or identifying information of employees, volunteers, board members, cases, and donors unless the person involved provides written permission.
- 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.
- Communications, observations, involvement and information made by and between or about cases, employees, volunteers, and board members to anyone outside of this agency.

The law that governs the confidentiality of our case files is in the Texas Human Resources Code (40.005) which provides that, a person who is authorized to receive confidential information will maintain its confidentiality and will prevent disclosure of the information to a person who is not authorized to receive the information. It is a Class A misdemeanor to disclose, without authorization, confidential information contained in the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services records, papers, files, or communications.

The following are guidelines for maintaining confidentiality:

- An oath of confidentiality upon completion of Pre-Service Training.
- Keep all records in a secure place.
- 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, 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.
- 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 to the CASA office within ten (10) days of case closure or resignation from the case or program.

Note: All medical information and records are confidential under State and Federal laws. Any volunteer who disseminates such confidential information concerning a victim or one suspected of communicable disease is in violation of such laws and could be subject to serious disciplinary and/or civil action.

2.4 CRIME VICTIMS' COMPENSATION

Volunteers and staff will be trained in assisting crime victims and their non-offending family members in applying for Crime Victims' Compensation (CVC). The information is part of our initial training and is also included as a part of in-service training sessions. Applications are kept in the CASA office.

The following procedures are to be followed:

1. Upon assignment to a case, the volunteer shall determine if the child or family members might qualify for Crime Victims' Compensation.
2. When reading the child's Department of Family and Protective Services' file, note if the Crime Victims' Compensation application is complete and in the file. If not, make note and follow up to ensure the Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworker completes the application.
3. If action is not taken by the caseworker, give the child (if old enough), the foster parent, or the non-offending family member the application. Explain the application process to the party and assist them in filling out the form if necessary. Ensure that all required supporting documentation is submitted with the application.
4. Regularly follow up with the child or family member to see if they have received a response to the application.

5. After resolution of the case, let the permanent placement for the child know that an application has been filed and they may be eligible for assistance. Provide follow up contacts and application copies, if necessary, to the permanent placement.

2.5 DIVERSITY

(CASA Program, Inc) is 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 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. CASA in-service training opportunities include cultural competency training.

2.6 DRESS CODE AND COURT DECORUM

Personal Appearance:

In order to project professionalism, 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, comfortable and attractive, and conducive to a professional image, not distracting. See-through and otherwise sexually provocative clothing is prohibited.

When appearing in court or other CASA-related meetings, a professional appearance is expected. Attire should enhance the dignity of the court and all persons must adhere to the following guidelines:

- No tee shirts or shirts with any writing on them other than the name brand.
- No tank tops, camisoles or midriff-baring tops.
- No shorts, denim shorts or sweat pants.
- No backless or strapless blouses or dresses.
- No baggy pants.
- No flip flops, shower clogs or similar footwear
- No visible piercings (except ears) or tattoos.

Court Decorum

All persons in the courtroom during any hearing shall be mindful and attentive to the proceedings, and shall refrain from any action, including the following, which disrupt court proceedings:

- Before entering the courtroom, remove coats and hats, turn off cell phones and be seated in the proper places provided.
- No smoking.
- No reading irrelevant materials during proceedings.
- No beverages, bottles, paper cups or other beverage containers are allowed in the courtroom.

- Do not prop your feet on any tables, chairs or benches.
- No persons shall walk through, sleep or loiter while proceedings are held or court is in session.
- No talking or making noises during the hearing unless your participation is required during the hearing.
- No facial expressions, shaking of the head, guttural utterances or other conduct exhibiting approval or disapproval of any testimony elicited or statement of transaction which has occurred.
- No standing in the gallery. Take a seat and remain seated until your case is called.

2.7 SERVICE TO A CASE

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 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.

Minimum Expectations of Service to a Case:

- In a timely manner after appointment, a CASA volunteer will obtain first hand a clear understanding of the needs and situation of the child by reviewing all relevant documents and records and interviewing the child, parents, social workers, teachers and other persons to determine the facts and circumstances of the child’s situation.
- Maintain confidentiality of all issues and records of the case, returning all case files to the CASA program after the case is closed.
- Notify all parties to the case of CASA’s appointment.
- Communicate with the DFPS caseworker after appointment and at least one time per month for the duration of the case.
- Meet the child in a timely manner after appointment and meet with the child in person at least one time per month - *50% of these visits must be where the child lives.*
 - If the child(ren) are placed one (1) to three (3) driving hours away, then CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every three months - *50% of these must be where the child(ren) live.*

- If the child(ren) are placed more than three (3) driving hours away, then CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every six months - *50% of these visits must be where the child(ren) live.*
- Have other types of age appropriate contact with the child(ren) including telephone calls, emails, and/or letters as applicable for the child's age and interests.
- Meet in person with the child(ren)'s primary placement provider in a timely manner after placement occurs, and communicate with the placement provider at least once a month thereafter for the duration of the assignment of the child(ren)'s case.
- Advocate for the child(ren)'s best interest in the community by interfacing with mental health, medical, legal, educational and other community systems to assure that the child(ren)'s needs in these areas are met at least once every three months.
- Determine if a permanent plan, an educational passport, and a medical passport has been created for the child(ren).
- Participate in all scheduled case related meetings.
- Seek cooperative solutions by acting as a facilitator among parties maintaining communication with the child(ren)'s parents, family members, attorney ad litem, teachers, and other service providers as applicable.
- Appear at all hearings to advocate for the child(ren)'s best interest and permanency. Provide testimony when necessary, making recommendations for specific appropriate services for the child and, when appropriate, the child's family. Provide written court reports for all permanency and review hearings.
- On each case, assigned CASA staff and CASA volunteers will communicate at least once a month so as to update records and contact logs and participate together in scheduled case conferences.
- Inform the court promptly of important developments in the case through appropriate means as determined by court rules and statute.
- Monitor implementation of service plans and court orders to assure court-ordered services are implemented in a timely manner and that review hearings are held in accordance with the law.
- Participate in a minimum of twelve (12) hours of ongoing training per year of service.
- Refrain from introducing or involving your own family with the child/children or any other persons involved with the case.
- Turn in activity logs detailing all communication on the case, mileage driven, and meetings attended by the 5th of the following month of the activity.
- The criteria listed above are from the Texas CASA minimum expectations requirements and (*CASA Program, Inc.*) policies. Should these standards change, we reserve the right to change the minimum expectations for volunteer service.

Restricted Activities:

A CASA Volunteer shall not:

- Take action without program or court approval that endangers the child or is outside of the CASA program role or powers of the CASA/GAL program.
- Take a child to the volunteer's home or any other home other than the child's.
- 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 a child on an overnight outing.
- Cause a child or family to become dependent on the volunteer for services that are provided by other agencies or organizations. Such activities may jeopardize the safety of the child, the integrity of the program, or the objectivity of the volunteer.
- Engage in activities which are likely to result in conflict of interest or exposes the program or volunteer to criminal or civil liability.
- Submit recommendations to the court without prior discussion with their supervisor.
- Knowingly put a child in contact with someone who 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.

Case Notes and Documentation:

Volunteers are required to keep case notes and records of advocacy activities and proceedings of their assigned case. This documentation or a summary of this information is to be submitted to the Volunteer Supervisor on a monthly basis.

Court Reports:

Volunteers are required to submit completed court reports to their Supervisor no less than 10 days prior to the court date. 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.

2.8 PROBLEM RESOLUTION, GRIEVANCES

Misunderstandings or disagreements may arise in any organization. CASA values and wishes to promote an amiable and cooperative environment. Our open door problem resolution policy is reflective of our commitment to our values and to providing you with the best possible working conditions. CASA encourages an open and direct atmosphere where concerns, suggestions, and questions can be discussed.

We strive to ensure consistent and honest treatment of all volunteers. Volunteers are encouraged to share concerns and feedback with their respective Volunteer Supervisor. If for any reason, you feel uncomfortable speaking with your supervisor, please discuss the matter with the (PD or ED). However, if the grievance is with the Executive Director, or a resolution has not been reached, volunteers may make a written grievance report to the President of the Board of Directors.

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. When the grievance is with the Executive Director. The written grievance should be submitted to the Board President when the complaint is against 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.

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.

2.9 TRAVEL

CASA is unable to reimburse volunteers for volunteer-related travel. From time to time, a volunteer will be asked to attend an out of town conference. Volunteers traveling out of town on authorized business, at the request of CASA, will be reimbursed for meals and other pre-approved attendant expenses. Your Volunteer Supervisor will assist in accurate completion of the expense report and documentation requirements. Receipts must be provided. False or misleading documentation will result in release from volunteer service.

2.10 VOLUNTEER SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervision and Coaching:

CASA assigns each volunteer a Volunteer Supervisor to provide support appropriate to the volunteer's needs and complexity of the case assignment. The Supervisor is easily accessible and provides timely and thorough guidance to the volunteer. 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.

Case Assignments:

A new CASA Volunteer will be assigned one case. 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.

Court Reports:

In preparation for an upcoming hearing, volunteers are to submit completed court reports to their Supervisor no less than 10 days 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, Volunteer Supervisors do not alter reports or recommendations without the knowledge and an agreement of the volunteer.

Case Evaluation

Volunteer Supervisors conduct an in-person review of the 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

2.11 VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

CASA 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. Formal recognition programs provides us with more ways to celebrate creativity and a commitment to excellence in all of our activities.

2.12 VOLUNTEER RECORDS

The *(Position)* maintains volunteer records of each volunteer. It is important that these records are as accurate as possible. It is the volunteer's responsibility to inform his/her supervisor within thirty (30) days of changes, such as mailing address, telephone number, and email address. This information is confidential and will not be shared with non-staff persons or members of the board of directors without your permission. All notices, including those required by law, will be sent to the last address on file.

Volunteers are allowed to examine their records, but only under the supervision of the Volunteer Supervisor. All changes, additions, or corrections must be completed by the Volunteer Supervisor. No document may be removed from the file. The Volunteer Supervisor may provide copies upon request.

CASA will retain the record after a volunteer has left the program in accordance with CASA's record retention policy.

Each volunteer record contains the following:

- Application
- Emergency contact information
- Job description
- Reference documentation
- Documentation that all background checks have been conducted
- Training records
- Documentation related to performance
- Performance evaluations and other applicable documentation
- Volunteer status
- Copy of current driver's license, motor vehicle records check and verification of current automobile insurance.

2.13 VOLUNTEER STATUS

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 Program, Inc.) 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.

Duration of Volunteerism:

At CASA, volunteerism is at-will, that is, the volunteer or CASA may terminate with or without cause and with or without notice at any time. Nothing in this handbook or in any document or statement will limit the right to terminate at-will. No manager, supervisor, employee, or volunteer of CASA has the authority to enter into an agreement for volunteerism for any specified period or to make an agreement for volunteerism other than at-will.

Policy Changes:

The Volunteer Policy Manual contains the volunteer policies and practices of CASA. All previously issued manuals and any inconsistent policy statements or memoranda are superseded. CASA reserves the right to revise, modify, delete, or add to any and all policies, procedures, or benefits stated in this handbook or in any other document. Any written changes to this manual will be distributed to all volunteers so they will be aware of the new policies or procedures. No oral statements or representations can in any way change or alter the provisions of this handbook.

SECTION 3: CASA VOLUNTEER SAFETY

3.1 SAFETY

When performing your CASA volunteer duties, always use common sense. Never put yourself in a situation that feels unsafe. Please call your Volunteer Supervisor whenever you have questions, concerns or need advice. Your safety is important to us, so please do not take risks.

The following safety tips should help you make some decisions, but please use your judgment to ensure your safety.

- Ensure you have the correct address before visiting a home or placement.
- Confirm the date, time and location of your visit before traveling to the location. 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 (homes of respondent family members and relatives who have not been thoroughly checked out) with your Volunteer Supervisor.
- Take a cell phone with you. If you do not own a cellular phone, borrow one.
- Carry your pieces of identification.
- Do not wear expensive clothes or jewelry. Drive an inconspicuous car if possible.
- Use *67 to block Caller-ID services when calling from your personal phone. If the number you are dialing does not accept anonymous calls, call from the CASA office.
- If you must leave a message, give the CASA office phone number.
- Do not give your CASA child your personal phone number. Use the CASA office phone number.
- Give your number 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 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 already set an appointment.
- Only make home visits during daytime if possible.
- Do not let children visit your home or know your home information. Your home is not a temporary housing option, even for one night.
- Always know your location, and call 911 if there is a problem.

3.2 TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

When transporting CASA children or their family members, it is extremely important to consider their safety as well as your own safety. All applicants must provide a copy of a valid current driver's license and adequate current personal automobile insurance. All volunteers using personal cars for CASA business will be required to provide a copy of their current driving record from the Texas Department of Public Safety. Costs associated with obtaining this document are the responsibility of the applicant.

The Volunteer must adhere to the following guidelines when transporting CASA children or their family members:

- Only volunteers with valid current driver's licenses may transport children and family members. Military personnel who are authorized to keep home state driver's licenses may also transport.
- Provide annually to CASA a copy of a valid current driver's license, a safe driving record and adequate personal automobile insurance.
- Must pass a motor vehicles division record check.
- Only transport a child(ren) when there is liability insurance coverage for such activity.
- Obtain written permission of the child's legal guardian or custodial agency before transporting a child.
- Obtain permission of the Volunteer Supervisor or Program Director.
- Knowledgeable of the potential personal risk of liability and choose to accept the responsibility.
- CASA volunteers who have received three (3) or more traffic citations (moving or non-moving) in the last three (3) months or who have been involved in three (3) or more vehicular accidents in the last twelve (12) months are prohibited from transporting children or family members.
- Volunteers who have been convicted of DWI or DUI (Driving While Intoxicated or Driving under the Influence) within the last ten (10) years will not be permitted to serve as Court Appointed Special Advocates and may not transport a CASA child or family member.
- CASA volunteers transporting a CASA child or the child's family member(s) will abide by all Texas Department of Transportation laws.
- Written permission from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

CASA volunteers are responsible for the passengers in their vehicle. The driver will not transport any person(s) until such person(s) have complied with the safety guidelines detailed below:

- All adult passengers (over the age of 18 years old) must wear seat belts.
- All children ranging in age from birth to two (2) years old must be securely fastened into a child safety car seat. Be sure that the child safety seat is securely fastened in the vehicle.
- Children ranging in age from two (2) to eight (8) years, unless the child is taller than four feet, nine inches or one hundred pounds; and must keep the child secured during the operation of the vehicle in a child passenger safety seat system according to the instructions of the manufacturer of the safety seat system. Once children outgrow their booster seat (usually at 4'9", 100 pounds) they should use the adult safety belt.
- All children between the ages of eight (8) years old and eighteen (18) years old must wear their own seat belts, and must not sit on an adults' lap.
- Any child twelve (12) years old and younger may not ride in the front seat of a vehicle while the vehicle is being operated and must be secured by their own safety belt in the rear seat.
- Volunteers may never transport children in an open-bed pickup truck, flatbed truck, or trailer.
- Under no circumstances if the CASA volunteer to take a child to the volunteer's home, the homes of relatives or friends or to places that are not suitable for children. Examples of appropriate places would be to a park, a restaurant, a movie, or an outing to a shopping area.

When an accident, or an incident that causes critical injury, occurs, the volunteer needs to report this to their supervisor within 24 hours of when the event took place.

SECTION 4: AGENCY POLICIES

4.1 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

CASA is committed to complying fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensuring equal opportunities for qualified persons with disabilities. Pre-service inquiries are made regarding only an applicant's ability to perform the essential functions of the position. Reasonable accommodation is available to all disabled volunteers in situations in which their disability affects the performance of job functions. All selection decisions are based on the merits of the situation in accordance with defined criteria, not the disability of the individual. CASA is also committed not to discriminate against any qualified volunteers because they are related to or associated with a person with a disability. CASA will follow any state or local law that provides individuals with disabilities greater protection than the ADA.

4.2 BUSINESS OPERATING HOURS

The CASA office is open from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Executive Director may modify these periods when necessary in order to accommodate a special work schedule.

4.3 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

It is CASA's policy to provide Equal Employment Opportunity to all volunteers and applicants for advocacy without regard to race, religion, sex, national origin/ancestry/citizenship, age, disability, status in the United States military and/or veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected class status. Our EEO policy applies to all areas of advocacy, including in recruitment and selection, training and development, awards and recognition, termination, and recreational and social activities.

CASA sustains these principles by ensuring decisions affecting your advocacy are made based on your individual demonstrated abilities. Effective utilization of qualified, available volunteers requires more than just a statement of policy.

All volunteer recruitment materials will state "CASA is an Equal Opportunity Employer"

4.4 INCLEMENT WEATHER

It is our policy to maintain essential services and operations during any severe weather or emergency condition while providing for the protection, safety, and health of all volunteers. Severe weather/emergency conditions are defined as ice accumulations, floods, snowstorms, hurricanes, or tornado damage that significantly effects the normal operations of CASA.

However, the Executive Director has the final decision to close the offices, to cancel schedules, or to take other appropriate actions in response to severe weather conditions.

Weather Advisory

An advisory will be issued when weather conditions are such that some volunteers could have trouble in getting to and from the office and or job sites. However, the majority of the volunteers would be able to maintain their normal schedule. During an advisory, the offices will not be closed and CASA will continue to operate on a normal schedule.

4.5 PUBLIC STATEMENTS

The Executive Director of CASA or the Board President will be responsible for all statements made to the media. Volunteers are not to talk to the media regarding CASA matters. If you are asked a question by the media, ask the media person to call the Executive Director or Board President at (*phone number*). Periodically, volunteers may be requested to assist in public relations matters. The Executive Director can designate others to speak to the media if so warranted.

4.6 REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

CASA employees, volunteers, and board members are expected to report any suspicion of child abuse. Texas law requires professionals, such as yourself, to report suspected abuse immediately and in no more than 48 hours.

- Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Texas, and so is failure to report it.
- If you suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, you are required to report it to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at 1-800-252-5400.
- If you see a child being abused or mistreated, you are required to call local law enforcement or 911.

4.7 SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND OTHER HARASSMENT

(CASA Program, Inc.) 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:

- Verbal: Sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, or sexual jokes.
- Non-verbal: Display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures or obscene gestures.
- 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.

4.8 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy governs the use of social media by employees, volunteers, and Board members of (CASA Program, Inc.) 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 You Tube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, email and the internet.

This policy applies to all uses of social media, including personal, by CASA employees, volunteers and Board members, as their positions with CASA would be well known within the community. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that CASA volunteers must otherwise follow. It is never okay to publish confidential information on social media.

If you are representing CASA on social media sites, respect your audience and (CASA Program, Inc.) personnel. These groups reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with CASA. Be respectful of your co-workers. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also the careful consideration of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.

Avoid arguments on social media, particularly of controversial issues. Don't try to settle scores or goad volunteers or co-workers into inflammatory debates. Please do not cause controversy with co-workers or volunteers through social media. Do not use your social media profiles to defame or embarrass a co-worker, volunteer, child victim or their families. If your comments create unnecessary controversy in the workplace, it will be addressed and you may face disciplinary action.

Policy violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause.

4.9 SUBSTANCE ABUSE

CASA is a substance-free work environment. CASA prohibits the use, sale, purchase, transfer, receipt or possession of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances on or in CASA premises and vehicles or while performing advocate duties. CASA reserves the right to conduct drug testing or screening on a random or other basis determined by CASA, in its sole discretion.

4.10 WEAPONS

The possession of firearms, dangerous weapons or explosives on the premises of (CASA Program, Inc.) or while engaged in the duties or functions as employee, volunteer or board member of CASA is prohibited. This prohibition includes those weapons carried under license issued by the State of Texas. Violations of this policy may result in dismissal from employment or removal from volunteer or board service. Law enforcement agents are exempt from this policy. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

Prohibited weapons include any form of weapon or explosive restricted under local, state or federal regulation. This includes all firearms, knives over three inches in length, or other weapons covered by law. Legal chemical dispensing devices, such as pepper spray, which are sold for personal protection, are not prohibited by this policy.

Premises covered by this policy include, without limitation, all CASA-owned or leased buildings and surrounding areas, such as sidewalks, walkways, driveways and parking lots under CASA's ownership or control, unless the prohibition is not allowed by applicable state law.

CASA reserves the right to conduct searches of any person, motor vehicle or object that enters onto the premises in order to enforce this policy. Items that may be searched include, but are not limited to, lockers, desks, purses, briefcases, baggage, toolboxes, lunch sacks, clothing, vehicles parked on CASA premises, and any other item in which a weapon may be hidden regardless of whether these articles are locked or secured. CASA management or local authorities may conduct searches. To the extent the search is requested by CASA and the employee is present, the employee may refuse the search; however, such refusal can result in discharge from employment for refusal to cooperate.

4.11 WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

A whistleblower is an employee, Board member or volunteer who informs a supervisor, the Executive Director or Board President about an activity which that person believes to be fraudulent or dishonest.

Whistleblower Protection

CASA will protect whistleblowers as defined below.

- CASA will use best efforts to protect whistleblowers against retaliation, as described below. It cannot guarantee confidentiality, however, and there is no such thing as an "unofficial" or "off the record" report.
- CASA will keep the whistleblower's identity confidential, unless:
 - the person agrees to be identified;
 - identification is necessary to allow CASA or law enforcement officials to investigate or respond effectively to the report;

- identification is required by law; or
- the person accused of violations is entitled to the information as a matter of legal right in disciplinary proceedings.

CASA employees and volunteers may not retaliate against a whistleblower with the intent or effect of adversely affecting the terms or conditions of employment. Whistleblowers who believe that they have been retaliated against may file a written complaint with the Executive Director or Board President, if retaliation is from the Executive Director. A proven complaint of retaliation will result in a proper remedy for the person harmed and the initiation of disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against the retaliating person. This protection from retaliation is not intended to prohibit supervisors from taking action, including disciplinary action, in the usual scope of their duties and based on valid performance-related factors. Whistleblowers must be cautious to avoid baseless allegations.

SECTION 5: LEAVING CASA PROGRAM

5.1 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A CASA volunteer may request a leave of absence from (*CASA Program, Inc.*) at any time. The length of the leave may be up to one calendar year from the beginning date of the leave. After one calendar year, the volunteer will no longer be eligible to return to his/her duties as a CASA volunteer unless he/she completes (*CASA Program, Inc.*)'s returning volunteer refresher course, as discussed in the "Reinstatement" policy below.

5.2 REINSTATEMENT

It is the policy of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) to offer a mandatory refresher course to any CASA volunteer who takes a leave of absence for a length of time that exceeds one (1) calendar year from the time of departure of volunteer work with CASA Program. For a CASA volunteer to be considered reinstated, a documented discussion with the Volunteer Supervisor must be approved by the Executive Director, with completion of the (*CASA Program, Inc.*) refresher course. The Executive Director will then place this document into the volunteer file. The refresher course will consist of one hour training with the Volunteer Supervisor to discuss new work-related forms, policies and/or procedures that may or may not have changed during the leave of absence. The CASA refresher course may vary from the one hour time length, as the needs for training vary and depending on the amount of documentation, policies and/or procedures that have changed during the time the CASA volunteer was not active.

A volunteer who has been dismissed is not eligible for reinstatement.

5.3 VOLUNTEER DISMISSAL

The CASA program has policies and procedures that specify the conditions for disciplinary action and non-voluntary dismissal of volunteers.

The Executive Director has the authority to dismiss a volunteer for appropriate grounds to include, but not limited to:

- Taking action without program or court approval that endangers the child or is outside the CASA program role or powers of the CASA/GAL program.
- Engaging in ex-parte communication with the court.
- Violating a program policy, court rule or law.
- Failing to complete required pre-service and in-service training.
- Failing to demonstrate an ability to effectively carry out assigned duties.
- Falsifying a volunteer application or misrepresenting facts during the screening process.
- Having allegations of child abuse/neglect brought against them.
- Experiencing an irresolvable conflict of interest.
- Taking a child to the volunteer's home or any other home other than the child's.
- Taking a child on an overnight outing.
- Engaging in activities which are likely to result in conflict of interest or exposes the program or volunteer to criminal or civil liability.
- Is employed in such a way as might result in a conflict of interest.

- Knowingly putting a child in contact with someone with who has a criminal history involving violence, child abuse, neglect, drugs, or a sex-related offense

5.4 VOLUNTEER EXIT

We hope you 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 leave the program, please give as much notice as possible in writing to your supervisor. Written notice should include the reason for the resignation and the last day the volunteer will work their case, along with the volunteer's signature and the date the notice is being given.

If CASA ends your relationship, we will contact all the parties involved in the case and discuss next steps to ensure the best interest of the children you were serving are met.

All records and the CASA badge must be returned within ten (10) days of last day of working the case.

Exit Interviews:

Upon leaving CASA's service, you may be asked for your comments concerning your period of volunteerism. Your input helps us to evaluate our policies, procedures, work environment, and other variables affecting your volunteer experience with us. Exit interviews are scheduled through the Volunteer Supervisor.

References and Recommendations:

It is the policy of CASA not to provide references regarding former volunteers without the volunteer's written consent. CASA will verify service information only with the expressed written permission of the volunteer. Requests for references should be directed to the Executive Director. No other volunteer or staff member may give a professional reference without the approval of the Executive Director.

VOLUNTEER POLICY MANUAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have received, read and understand all matters set forth in the Volunteer Policy Manual for (CASA Program, Inc.); and I agree to abide by their 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 cause or notice.

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

Volunteer's Printed Name: _____

Volunteer's Signature: _____

Date: _____

VOLUNTEER IN-SERVICE TRAINING SCHEDULE: STANDARD 7.C.9.

CASA Program, Inc. In-Service Training 2016 Subject to change as additional dates are often added throughout the year. Please check www.casaprogram.org for the most up-to-date schedule			
1/15/2016	Transportation Policy and Safety	12:00-1:00 p.m.	CASA Café
1/30/2016	Trauma-Focused Therapy	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.	Onsite Training
2/6/2016	Permanency Toolkit for Aging Out Youth- Texas CASA	1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	Webinar
2/24/2016	Parenting Wisely	6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	CASA Café
2/27/2016	The CAC Role During Investigation	6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Onsite Training
3/13/2016	Prenatal Alcohol Exposure	7:30- 8:30 p.m.	CASA Café
4/14/2016	Trauma Informed Advocacy	6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Webinar
4/23/2016	Testimony Prep and Courtroom Decorum	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.	Onsite Training
5/10/2016	CASA Case Files	6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	CASA Café
5/29/2016	Legislative Advocacy	12:00-1:00 p.m.	CASA Café
06/03 -06 /2016	National CASA Conference		Conference
6/21/2016	Understanding Educational Advocacy	12:00-1:00 p.m.	CASA Café
6/26/2016	"Talk with the Tiff's" Round-table group	6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Onsite Training
7/3/2016	Medical Advocacy	11:30 - 12:30 p.m.	Webinar
7/22/2016	Permanent Managing Conservatorship	2:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Webinar
8/2/2016	The Truth about Adolescent Bi-Polar Disease and ADHD	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.	Onsite Training
8/19/2016	Finding Motivation & Strength	12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Webinar
8/21/2016	Psychological Evaluations...A Closer Look	6:30 - 8:00 p.m.	Onsite Training
8/27/2016	Drugs in our Community / Elwin Swift	5:30 - 6:30p.m.	CASA Café
9/1/2016	Children: Grief & Loss	12:30 - 1:30 p.m.	Webinar
9/9/2016	Sibling Groups- National CASA	9:00 - 10:30 a.m.	Webinar
10/23 - 25/2016	Texas CASA Conference		Conference
10/27/2016	Drugs in our Community	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.	Onsite Training

FINANCIAL & RISK MANAGEMENT

STANDARD 10: FINANCIAL, FACILITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Operating Budget

Chart of Accounts

Financial Policies and Procedures

Fidelity Bond

FY17 Internal Controls Questionnaire

OPERATING BUDGET: STANDARD 10.A.1.

Budget Projection Worksheet: Serve 100% of Children in CPS Care by 2020

		YEAR	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED							
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS							
REVENUE							
4130	CVC Fund						
4131	VOCA Fund						
4132	OVAG						
4160	Fundraising Events						
4155	Foundations						
4140	Corporations/Businesses						
4120	Individual Gifts						
4133	City/County/CDBG						
4150	United Way						
4450	National CASA						
4460	Other Grants						
4410	Carry over from previous year						
TOTAL REVENUE							
EXPENSES							
5010-5070	SALARY AND BENEFITS:						
	Executive Director						
	Volunteer Supervisor						
	Recruiter/Trainer						
	Fringe (Payroll Tax & Benefits)						
	<i>Total Salary and Benefits:</i>						
	OPERATING EXPENSES:						
5220	Rent/Mortgage and Utilities						
5735	New Furniture/Equipment						
5840	Postage						
5820	Office Supplies						
5730	Equipment/Maintenance						

5320	Printing/Advertising/Recruitment					
5310	Telecom/Internet, Website					
5850	Dues/Subscriptions, Library					
5110	Accounting (Audit)/ Fees					
5950	Miscellaneous					
	<i>Total Operating Expenses:</i>					
	Professional:					
5510	Travel/Local Mileage					
5600	Fundraising Events/Meetings					
5825	Volunteer Training					
5810	General Liability & D&O Insurance					
5520	Staff Training					
	<i>Total Professional Expenses</i>					
	TOTAL EXPENSES					
5920	Reserve Funds					
	REVENUE/EXPENSES:					

CHART OF ACCOUNTS: STANDARD 10.D.2.B.

ACCOUNT CODE	ACCOUNT TITLE	ACCOUNT TYPE
1010	Operating Account	CASH
1110	Reserve Account	CASH
1210	Grants Receivable	ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE OTHER
1220	Accounts Receivable -Other	ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE OTHER
1310	Furniture/Equipment	FIXED ASSETS
2000	Accounts Payable	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
2014	Donations Payable	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OTHER
2015	Payroll Payable	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OTHER
2016	Medical Payable	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OTHER
2017	Life, LTD & AD&D Payable	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OTHER
2018	403B Payable	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OTHER
2019	Workers' Comp Payable	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OTHER
2020	Payroll Taxes Payable	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OTHER
2021	SUTA Payable	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OTHER
2025	Employee Withheld Payable - Other	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OTHER
2110	Accrued Vacation Payable	OTHER LIABILITIES
3000	Fund Balance	ASSET ACCOUNT
4120	Individual Contributions	REVENUE
4130	CVC Fund	REVENUE
4131	VOCA Fund	REVENUE
4132	OVAG Fund	REVENUE
4133	City/County/CDBG	REVENUE
4140	Corporate Contributions	REVENUE
4150	United Way	REVENUE
4155	Foundations	REVENUE
4160	Fundraising Events	REVENUE
4410	Carry over from Previous Year	REVENUE
4450	National CASA	REVENUE
4460	Other Grants	REVENUE
5010	Salaries	EXPENSE
5020	Contract/Temporary Labor	EXPENSE
5030	Employer Payroll Taxes (FIT/FICA)	EXPENSE
5040	Unemployment Taxes (SUTA)	EXPENSE
5050	Workers' Comp Insurance	EXPENSE
5060	Health Insurance	EXPENSE
5061	Life & Related Insurance	EXPENSE
5070	Retirement Plan Contributions	EXPENSE
5110	Audit Services	EXPENSE

5220	Rent and Utilities	EXPENSE
5310	Telecommunications Services	EXPENSE
5320	Printing/Advertising/Recruitment Materials	EXPENSE
5510	Travel/Local Mileage	EXPENSE
5520	Staff Training	EXPENSE
5600	Fundraising Events/Meeting Charges	EXPENSE
5730	Equipment Repair & Maintenance	EXPENSE
5735	New Equipment and Furniture Purchases	EXPENSE
5810	Insurance-Business	EXPENSE
5820	Office and Training Supplies	EXPENSE
5825	Volunteer Training Supplies	EXPENSE
5840	Postage & Shipping	EXPENSE
5850	Dues, Memberships & Subscriptions	EXPENSE
5920	Reserve Fund Expenses	EXPENSE
5950	Miscellaneous Expense	EXPENSE

GENERAL FINANCIAL POLICIES

1. The Board of Directors is responsible for authorizing all bank accounts and check signers.
2. The Board of Directors and Executive Director of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) shall be responsible for raising sufficient funds to finance the program.
3. (*CASA Program, Inc.*) will not act as a fundraising agent nor make financial contributions to other nonprofit organizations.
4. All grant applications and fundraising activities will have Board approval.
5. (*CASA Program, Inc.*), through its Treasurer, Finance Committee and Executive Director, shall account for all funds raised, received and disbursed.
6. (*CASA Program, Inc.*) shall use generally accepted nonprofit accounting methods.
7. The Board of Directors ensures (*CASA Program, Inc.*) conducts its business in accordance with its tax-exempt status.
8. The Board of Directors shall review and approve the budget annually prior to the start of the fiscal year. This includes approving all deviations from and revisions to the budget.
9. (*CASA Program, Inc.*) shall maintain a written budget reflecting the current fiscal year. The budget shall guide the program's management of its financial resources based on:
 - i. Funding anticipated during the program year.
 - ii. Fixed and incremental costs of operating the program.
 - iii. Identification of potentially changing costs and conditions.
10. The Executive Committee may approve emergency expenditures.
11. (*CASA Program, Inc.*) reserves the right to refuse contributions or third-party fundraisers.
12. Fidelity bonds shall be obtained as required by grantors. The coverage must, at minimum, equal the value of (*CASA Program, Inc.*) total CVC and VOCA grant awards. The bond must provide for indemnification of losses due to fraudulent or dishonest acts committed by any (*CASA Program, Inc.*) employee or volunteer who has access to funds, either individually or in concert with others.
13. Safeguarding and verification of assets will be ensured through an annual inventory report to the Board. Any discrepancies will be investigated and reported to the Finance Committee.
14. Internal operating costs will be allocated each year using a Chart of Accounts.
15. The Board of Directors shall approve all new leases and renewals.
16. No loans or advances shall be made to any employee, Board member, or volunteer.
17. (*CASA Program, Inc.*) will prepare an annual report for its stakeholders that includes financial, statistical and service data summary information.
18. Board members and employees will sign (*CASA Program, Inc.*) Conflict of Interest Policy annually.

GENERAL FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

Cash Receipts

- (*If Applicable*) The contract bookkeeping firm will designate one employee to conduct bookkeeping duties, and another to reconcile the monthly bank statement to ensure segregation of accounting duties.

- Mail will be sorted and opened by two employees. Together, these designated employees will stamp each “for deposit only”. Both employees will initial and date all checks received in the Check Receipt Log. The designated employees are the *(Position)* and *(Position)*. If one of the designated employees is unavailable, the *(Position)* will act as a backup for this position.
- The *(Position)* shall make copies of all checks and prepare the deposit slips.
- The *(Position)* will review the deposit for accuracy. The *(Position)* will then deposit the money in the bank. *(Position)* will deliver the bank deposit slip to the *(Position)*.
- All documentation shall be filed.
- Receipts and the Check Log shall be reconciled with the bank statement by the contract bookkeeping firm monthly.

Cash Disbursements

- Checks shall be written twice monthly, or as needed.
- Unbudgeted purchases over (\$#) shall be not made without the Treasurer’s written approval. No unbudgeted purchases over (\$#) shall be made without the Board of Directors’ approval.
- No budgeted purchases shall be made without the Executive Director’s prior written consent. A Purchase Order shall be submitted to the Executive Director for all such expenditures.
- The *(Position)* will receive all invoices and shall code all general expenses. The Executive Director shall code all program expenses.
- Bills will be reviewed by the Executive Director, initialed and dated prior to being paid. Once approved, the *(Position)* will forward the invoice to the contract bookkeeper to record in the accounting software package and prepare checks.
- All checks submitted for signature shall be accompanied by supporting documentation, i.e. receipts, invoice, timecards, and include the payee, the amount and the date. Signing blank checks is prohibited.
- All checks over (\$#) issued by *(CASA Program, Inc.)* shall be co-signed by two authorized signers. Authorized signers are limited to the Executive Director and members of the Executive Committee.
- The *(Position)* will process the checks for mailing and date stamp “paid” on bills with the appropriate check numbers and dates.
- All bills shall be filed in the proper vendor file.
- The contract bookkeeping firm will reconcile disbursements on the general ledger/bank statement reconciliation form monthly.

Bank Statement Reconciliation

- The contract bookkeeping firm will designate one employee to do bookkeeping duties, and another to reconcile the monthly bank statement to ensure segregation of accounting duties.
- The contract bookkeeping firm shall open and reconcile bank statements with the checkbook ledger monthly.
- A reconciliation report shall be prepared for each account and any adjusting journal entries shall be recorded and attached to the report by the contract bookkeeping firm.
- The Board Treasurer shall conduct a second reconciliation of the bank statement monthly. The Finance Committee will then review the reconciliation reports and adjusting entries. The full Board

of Directors shall review the monthly financial statements at board meetings and no less than quarterly.

Petty Cash

(CASA Program, Inc.) maintains a petty cash fund with a balance of (\$#), whether in cash or receipts. The petty cash fund is kept in a locked box. The (Position) and the (Position) are the custodians of the petty cash box.

Disbursement of Funds:

All petty cash transactions require a receipt and petty cash voucher. A specific amount of cash is given to an employee from the fund to make a purchase. Upon completing the purchase, the receipt and any change is to be returned to the custodians. The (Position) or the (Position) shall review the receipts of all transactions for accuracy. The employee's name and purpose of the purchase will be recorded. Receipts shall be placed in the petty cash box until the funds are to be replenished.

Replenishing Funds:

- The custodian shall count the remaining cash and total all of the receipts monthly. The combination of the remaining cash and total of all receipts should equal (\$#).
- All receipts are to remain in the petty cash fund until the request for reimbursement is submitted.
- A check request, with receipts attached, is to be submitted to the Executive Director for payment.
- The Executive Director will issue a check to the custodian for the amount requested and the check is to be cashed to replenish the petty cash fund.
- Expenses and replenishment of the fund will be tracked with all other agency expenditures in the accounting software.

Financial Statements

- All journal entries shall be prepared, entered, posted and reviewed monthly by the contract bookkeeping firm. These entries will be reviewed by the Treasurer and Finance Committee.
- The Treasurer and the Finance Committee shall review the General Ledger monthly after the contracted bookkeeping firm reconciles the bank statement.
- Monthly Balance sheet and Profit and Loss statements shall be printed from the computerized bookkeeping system.
- The expenditures shall be compared to the budget and any budget variances noted.
- After the Finance Committee's approval, the financial statements will be presented at each Board meeting.

Credit Card Policy

The (CASA Program, Inc.) business-issued credit card is designated for official business expenses.

The Executive Director will have the authority to apply for and use a credit card issued to (CASA Program, Inc.) Should an Executive Director leave the program, the card issued must be canceled or transferred prior to leaving the agency.

Checks are the preferred method of payment. When a credit card is used, staff will abide by the following policies and procedures and are subject to disciplinary action for violation of these:

- The card’s credit limit will be (\$#).
- The Executive Director will have discretion to make purchases up to (\$#). If a purchase is over (\$#), Executive Director must obtain email approval from the Finance Chair or Board President.
- The credit card(s) will be kept in the Executive Director’s office. Staff members may sign out the card when needed, with the exception of (Position). Staff members have discretion to make purchases up to (\$#). Purchases over (\$#) require Executive Director approval. The card shall be returned as soon as possible with receipts and any other purchase documentation.
- Credit card statements shall be paid off each month to avoid finance charges.
- The (Position) will reconcile the credit card statement monthly. It will be reviewed by the Executive Director and Treasurer. The (Position) shall not have access to the credit card.
- Credit card statements will be reviewed with all financial statement at board meetings.

Cardholder:

- Ensure purchases do not include sales tax. If requested, the Executive Director has tax-exempt certificates available.
- Must use the business-issued credit card to purchase airfares.
- May use the business-issued credit card for incidental business travel-related expenses (i.e. Super Shuttle, parking, cab fare, car rental, and lodging) or for business related expenses (i.e. training registration, meals, and volunteer recruitment expense).
- Cannot use the business-issued credit card for charges that do not occur during official business travel or for business expense.
- Must obtain transaction receipts from the merchant/supplier for every transaction.
- The purchase of alcohol or personal items with the credit card is forbidden.

<i>Examples</i>	<i>Appropriate Business Credit Card Use</i>	<i>Inappropriate Business Credit Card Use</i>
<u>Meals</u>	Meals while on CASA business, out of town, or overnight	Meals/tips while on personal business
<u>Telephone Calls</u>	Long-distance <i>business</i> calls added to a lodging bill, while out of town on CASA business, out of town, overnight	Long-distance personal calls made while out of town or in CASA office
<u>Rental Car</u>	Pre-approval and gasoline for rental car.	Gasoline for a personal use rental car
<u>Airfare</u>	For attendance at a business-approved training or meetings.	Airfare to a personal travel destination.

At the request and sole discretion of the Executive Director, an employee who has used the credit card will be required to:

1. Justify any expense that may appear to be non-business related.
2. Justify any expense that may appear to be personal.

Any violation of the business-issued charge card policy and procedures will result in disciplinary action up to termination of employment.

1. First Violation: A written warning is issued.
2. Second Violation: Termination of employment.

Note: Multiple personal purchases made during a billing cycle can constitute a single violation.

Travel Policy

Staff will be reimbursed at the federally approved rate for mileage and/or meals incurred when program business requires the use of personal vehicles to carry out (*CASA Program, Inc.*) operations. Employee travel requires the written approval of the Executive Director, with the exception of case travel. Case travel shall be verbally approved by the (*Position*). Travel by the Executive Director shall be approved by a member of the Executive Committee. All airline travel must receive written approval from the Executive Director or Board President. A Mileage Log Sheet must be submitted for reimbursement and must include the following information for each business trip taken on behalf of CASA:

- Date
- Total Mileage for the Trip (*Provide a printout from Google Maps.*)

A per diem will be allocated for meals and expenses when an employee must travel over (#) miles from their designated office. The per diem rate will be paid based on the federal guidelines for the destination. The employee must print the federal meal reimbursement rate information and submit it with their travel reimbursement information. Any amount in excess of the federally approved rate will not be allocated to any federal grant. Any amount in excess may be reimbursed by available pre-approved unrestricted funds at the discretion of the Executive Director. The (*Position*) will review the Expense Reports/ Reimbursement Form for accuracy and authorize reimbursement.

Reimbursement for business meals and expenses must be accompanied with original receipts including the itemized food and beverage receipts and payment receipts including gratuity. The Reimbursement Request Form must include:

- Payee/Establishment
- Amount
- Classification of purchase (i.e. meal)
- Date
- Purpose
- Place/Location
- Names of Attendees (Employee and Guest)
- Business Relationship to the Employee
- Signature of the Responsible Employee

Occasionally (*CASA Program, Inc.*) employees may be required to travel out of the program service area to attend trainings, conferences, or to visit children. Mileage is to be logged on the Mileage Log Sheet, as noted above, and accompany the Reimbursement Form. When reimbursement at the federally approved rate is greater than the cost incurred by car rental and the necessary renters' insurance, a rental car should be used. The Executive Director will have the discretion to authorize the use of a rental vehicle in such circumstances.

The Executive Director will approve the Rental Car Agreement and contracts prior to signing. All rental cars must be returned with a full gas tank. Staff must provide the car rental invoices upon their return to the office.

Meal and lodging expenses must be recorded as the above policy describes. Whenever possible a daily per diem will be issued before travel.

If a (CASA Program, Inc.) employee is required to travel out-of-state for training, conferences or to visit children, airfare and travel related expenditures for out of state travel must be pre-approved by the Executive Director and/or Board President. Such travel must be within the current budget and/or, when applicable, specifically noted within the budget detail of any federal grant. When not specified in such grants, all costs will be the responsibility of (CASA Program, Inc.).

Expense Report Reimbursement Procedure

- Employee expense reports will be reviewed by the (*Position*) and approved by the Executive Director.
- The Executive Director's expense report will be reviewed by the Board President and signed by the Treasurer or a member of the Executive Committee.
- Supporting itemized documentation/receipts will be required for all reimbursable items.
- Every receipt attached to a expense report should be initialed by the Treasurer and Executive Director noting:
 - The validity of the business related cost; and
 - The source of original payment.
- Although sometimes unavoidable, the use of personal checking accounts or credit cards is strongly discouraged. If an employee must use these methods, original supporting documents must be included with the reimbursement form. If supporting documentation is not provided, the reimbursement will not be allowed.
- Careful adherence to the travel policy must be followed to receive reimbursement for mileage.
- Employees must record travel in their calendars for any mileage that is to be reimbursed.
- Employees must adhere to the travel policy in order to be reimbursed for meals and lodging.

Payroll and Taxes

Each Pay Period:

- (*Vendor*) generates payroll statements on all salaries. A detailed payroll report is generated and emailed to the Executive Director for review.
- After reviewing the report for accuracy, the Executive Director requests payroll checks to be processed by the (*Day*) of the month.
- Paystubs are generated and provided to employees.
- (*Vendor*) shall process and submit the 941 tax deposit through EFTPS within 3 days of the pay date.
- Paystubs and the report are to be filed in the paid bills file.

Quarterly:

- (Vendor) shall complete and file the 941 report.
- The TWC quarterly report shall be computed and filed by (Vendor).
- Taxes due shall be computed.
- Paperwork will be prepared.
- All written checks will be copied.
- The reports and checks shall be mailed.
- All documentation shall be filed in the Payroll file.
- All reports are due by the end of the month following the quarter end.

Year End:

- (Vendor) will prepare and mail W-2s by January 31.
- The W-3 form shall be prepared and mailed with the W-2s after review by the Treasurer.
- The form 990 Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return shall be prepared by a certified accountant and filed by the Treasurer and the Board of Directors.
- Any 1099s shall be sent to the appropriate individuals and the proper report filed.
- Substantiation of annual contributions shall be sent to all donors for their records by January 31.

Reserve Fund Policy

The financial objective of (CASA Program, Inc.) is to establish a financial reserve that is equivalent to six (6) months of operating expenses. The amount in reserve shall be (\$#), which is equal to six months of operating expenses at (\$#) per month. Board authorization is required for expenditures out of this reserve fund. Funding shall be through any surplus from operations and the net operating excess for each fiscal year. In addition, 10% of the gross revenue from fundraising events will be set aside until a 6-month operating reserve is accumulated.

Independent Financial Audit

An annual independent financial audit shall be conducted by a certified public accountant (CPA) to ensure an accurate, current and complete disclosure of the financial results that tie to the general ledger accounts and external reports within nine months of the end of the fiscal year. The CPA shall prepare a management letter containing recommendations for improvements in the financial operations of the organization. The board shall review and approve the audit report, management letter and, with staff support, institute any necessary charges. The Board of Directors shall be responsible for soliciting bids, interviewing auditors, and hiring an auditor for the organization.

The audit of an organization [prepared annual report that includes financial statements] shall be made available to volunteers, contributors, and funding sources, i.e., foundations, Corporations and government agencies.

Procedures:

- The Executive Director and Finance Committee will be responsible for responding to the auditor's request for financial information.

- To ensure proper documentation and authorization of all business transactions the Executive Director and Finance Committee will conduct periodic reviews of the financial records.
- Upon completion of the audit, the Executive Director will ensure that the auditor returns all records in the same order and condition that records were submitted.
- The Executive Director and Finance Committee will review a draft of the audit report before a final draft is prepared and submitted to the Board of Directors for review and approval.
- The Board of Directors shall promptly review any recommendations of a management letter (if one accompanied the audit), and ensure that management acts upon those recommendations.

Procurement Policies and Procedures

General Policy:

When (CASA Program, Inc.) considers purchasing equipment, furniture, materials, supplies, real property, or services valued at least at (\$#), the following policies and procedures shall be followed. (CASA Program, Inc.) will conduct all procurement transactions in a manner that maximizes opportunities, increases quality and reduces cost. Therefore, more stringent guidelines may be applied to the procurement process than specified below when changes occur with a particular supplier or contractor; or when changes occur in the business marketplace that negate the factors previously used in award bids. (CASA Program, Inc.) reserves the right to reject any bids or offers if doing so is deemed to be in CASA's best interest.

Utilizing the bid solicitation procedure is not required for three years after the initial contract or agreement is executed unless it is believed by an employee or board member that conditions have changed with the contractor or with pricing in the marketplace.

Conflict of Interest:

All board members, employees, or agents who participate in the selection or acceptance of a contract for equipment, materials, supplies or services must comply with (CASA Program, Inc.) Conflict of Interest Policy and will not participate in the process when a conflict of interest is involved without obtaining prior approval of the Board. "Conflict of Interest" includes situations in which the employee or any family member, board member or any family member, or agent has a financial interest in the business selected to provide a service or product.

Purchase of Items for Personal Use:

Personal use of equipment, furniture, materials, supplies, real property, or services purchased by (CASA Program, Inc.) is prohibited for all board members and their family members, employees and their family members, or agents of the organization.

Receipt of Gratuities:

No board member or their family members, employee or their family members, or agent shall solicit or accept for personal use any gratuities, favors, or anything of value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to agreements and/or contracts with (CASA Program, Inc.)

Purchase of Items Not Approved in the Budget:

No director, employee, or agent shall solicit, approve for purchase, or accept and purchase equipment, furniture, materials, supplies, real property, or services that have not been approved by the Board of Directors in the annual budget without obtaining prior approval from the Executive Director.

Document of Cost Analysis:

(CASA Program, Inc.) shall conduct a cost analysis and document the analysis in the procurement files whenever required by these policies and procedures. The procurement files should include a justification for the lack of completion if competitive bids or offers are not received.

Bid Solicitation Procedures

Type Requirements

One of the following procedures shall be utilized for all purchases of equipment, furniture, materials, supplies, real property, or services involving federal funds or whenever the anticipated cost for the aggregate of products and/or services from a single supplier or bidder is over (\$#)

- ***Oral Request for Oral Competitive Bid***
(CASA Program, Inc.) will request competitive oral bids from at least three different sources if the anticipated cost is (\$#) or more, but less than (\$#)

- ***Written Request for Written Competitive Bids***
(CASA Program, Inc.) will request competitive written bids by letter from at least three different sources if the anticipated cost is (\$#) or more, but less than (\$#)

- ***Formal Proposal Procedure***
(CASA Program, Inc.) will solicit written competitive bids through a formal bid procedure if the cost is anticipated to be (\$#) or more. A newspaper advertisement soliciting bids will run in the local newspaper at least three times. Bids will remain sealed, and will not be opened until the date specified in the advertisement. As directed by the Board, bids may be opened privately by staff or at a board meeting. All advertisements shall contain the phrase "Equal Opportunity Employer."

If (CASA Program, Inc.) decides to accept a bid that is not the lowest in price or does not offer the most features or services, the basis for the decision must be documented in the procurement file.

Documentation of Bids

(CASA Program, Inc.) shall maintain documentation for three years on all solicited bids and offers received and any criteria for selection. In all instances in which the lowest bid is not awarded in the contract, justification for the selection must be contained in the procurement file.

Contract with Winning Bidder

If property or services are competitively bid and the bid is accepted, (CASA Program, Inc.) will enter into a contract or purchase agreement with the winning bidder that specifies:

- The equipment, furniture, materials, supplies, real property, or services rendered;
- The payment terms; and
- The contract's beginning and ending effective dates.

Evaluation of Contractors

(CASA Program, Inc.) will evaluate each contractor at the completion of each contract to inform future decisions to award contracts.

Property and Equipment Policy

When purchasing property (both real estate and equipment), the following procedures must be followed.

If the execution of a title is traditional for the type of property being procured, the title will be in the name of (CASA Program, Inc.) If the property was purchased with federal funds, see "Policies Using Federal Funds".

An inventory list of all property owned by (CASA Program, Inc.) shall be maintained showing:

- The type or property;
- Brand name or manufacturer; and
- Identification numbers.
- The original cost and depreciated value will be included if that information is available.

The inventory list must be updated annually at the end of (CASA Program, Inc.)'s fiscal year. (CASA Program, Inc.) will maintain insurance coverage for all property owned by CASA.

Federal Debarment

Before purchasing property or services using federal funds, (CASA Program, Inc.) must review the federal government's "Excluded Parties Listing System" for any persons or business excluded from federal procurement programs. This verification process will be documented with a printout from the website indicating that the bidder is neither debarred nor suspended from doing business with the federal government nor delinquent in a debt to the United States as defined in OMB Circular A 1-29. CASA will not make purchases or engage in contracts with persons or businesses debarred or suspended from federal procurement programs.

Equipment purchased with federal funds that costs more than \$5,000 is generally considered the property of the federal government and must be disposed of at the end of the grant period of designated use through the applicable federal procedure.

Federal Restrictions of Conflicts of Interest

Since many federal programs require approval from the federal government before engaging in a transaction in which a conflict of interests exists, CASA will not solicit contracts or purchases involving a conflict of interest unless the board specifically authorizes seeking federal approval of such a contract or purchase.

Record Retention Policies

(CASA Program, Inc.) shall provide efficient, economical, and effective controls over the creation, distribution, organization, maintenance, use and disposition of all (CASA Program, Inc.) records.

Confidentiality of sensitive information contained in both electronic and hard copy files is maintained by limited access to the following types of documentation:

- Board member records
- Personnel records
- Volunteer records
- Donor records
- Salary information
- Case files

Access to such documents is limited with locked filing cabinets and password protection.

Records Release

In the event that CASA is served with a subpoena or court order, or in the event that any employee becomes aware of a government investigation or the commencement of any litigation against or concerning (CASA Program, Inc.), such employee shall inform the ED. The ED will notify the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors, and if determined necessary, seek the advice of counsel for appropriate action. Notice of any governmental or grantor audit will be provided to the Board of Directors and the ED in coordination with the Board of Directors will provide a response. Requests for Federal Tax Return Form 990 must be made via mail or email and directed to the ED for response.

Public Information Act

As a recipient of government funding, (CASA Program, Inc.) is required to maintain compliance with the Public Information Act. Open records requests received via mail or email will be directed immediately to the ED for review. Requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the requirements in the Public Information Act. The Executive Committee of the (CASA Program, Inc.) Board of Directors will be advised of the request within a reasonable time frame. The ED and the Executive Committee shall seek counsel as determined appropriate, given the nature of the request.

Record Retention Chart

(CASA Program, Inc.) adheres to the following record retention guidelines:

DOCUMENT TYPE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
FINANCIAL:	
Accounts payable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Audit reports	Permanently
Bank reconciliations	2 years
Bank statements	3 years
Checks (for important purchases & payments)	Permanently
Contracts, mortgages, notes, leases (expired)	7 years
Deeds, mortgages and bills of sale	Permanently
Duplicate deposit slips	2 years
Depreciation schedules	Permanently
Expense analyses/expense distribution schedules	7 years
Year end financial statements	Permanently
Insurance policies (expired)	3 years
Insurance records, current accident reports, claims	Permanently
Internal audit reports	3 years
Inventories of products, materials, supplies	7 years
Invoices (to customers, from vendors)	7 years
Payroll records and summaries	7 years
Tax returns and worksheets`	Permanently
Trademark registrations and copyrights	Permanently
Withholding tax statements	7 years
HUMAN RESOURCES:	
Employment applications	3 years
Personnel files (terminated employees)	7 years
Retirement and pension records	Permanently
Timesheets	7 years
Correspondence (general)	2 years
Correspondence (legal and important matters)	Permanently
VOLUNTEER FILES:	
Volunteer applications	3 years
Volunteer files (former or terminated volunteers)	7 years
CASE FILES:	
All case file documentation (supervisors and volunteers) for closed cases	7 years

CASA PROGRAM, Inc. keeps VOCA files three (3) years and CVC four (4) years after the grant term closing or resolution of all audit findings concerning either grant, whichever is longer.

**FY17 INTERNAL CONTROLS QUESTIONNAIRE
CVC/VOCA GRANT CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS**

PROGRAM NAME:	DATE:	
Information included in this questionnaire should be an accurate reflection of current practice and should match existing financial policies or procedures. Programs will be required to revise policy, procedure or practice if a discrepancy is found. Please list position titles, not the names of individuals (i.e. ED, Treasurer, Vol. Supervisor, and Office Manager).		
Which two positions open the mail and record cash or checks received?	TITLE:	
	TITLE:	
If one of the persons designated to receive and record the mail and record cash or checks received is unavailable, which position serves as backup?	TITLE:	
Which two positions review and sign bank deposits?	TITLE:	
	TITLE:	
Which position(s) is responsible for making bank deposits?	TITLE:	
Which board and staff positions are approved by the board to sign checks?	TITLE:	
	TITLE:	
	TITLE:	
	TITLE:	
Are two signatures required on all checks? If not, what is the limit for one signature?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	LIMIT:
Which position(s) is responsible for maintaining the books?	TITLE:	
Which position serves as backup for maintaining the books?	TITLE:	
Which position(s) conducts the initial bank reconciliation? (cannot be responsible for maintaining the books)	TITLE:	
Does the person(s) who conducts the initial bank reconciliation receive the bank statement unopened or utilize online access for reconciliation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, receives statement unopened <input type="checkbox"/> The reconciler utilizes online access	
Which position conducts a second bank reconciliation?	TITLE:	
Are bank reconciliations conducted monthly?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Do accounting records clearly identify the source and application of grant funds?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO HOW? _____	
What accounting software does your program use?		

Does your program utilize credit or debit cards? If yes, which positions have cards issued to them directly?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
	TITLE:	TITLE:
	TITLE:	TITLE:
Which position(s) reconciles the credit or debit card statements? (cannot have card access)	TITLE:	
Are credit or debit card reconciliations conducted monthly?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Do credit or debit cards have both total and individual purchase limits?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	\$____ individual purchase limit
	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	\$____ total card purchase limit

REQUIRED SIGNATURES

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	DATE
BOARD PRESIDENT	DATE
BOARD TREASURER	DATE

ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN

STANDARD 9: PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Judicial and Stakeholder Survey

Volunteer Survey

JUDICIAL AND STAKEHOLDER SURVEY: STANDARD 9.C.1.A.

(CASA Program, Inc.) continuously strives to increase the effectiveness of the work that we do when handling cases assigned by the Courts. We value your feedback and believe that your participation will help us identify program strengths and weaknesses to continue to make improvements as necessary. We ask that you give a general rating of your experience with volunteer CASAs/GALs and not a specific volunteer. We ask that you assist us by providing constructive feedback on your experience with CASA. We appreciate your time!

1. What is your role?

- Judge
- Attorney ad litem
- Attorney for parent
- DFPS Staff
- Other: _____

<u>Please circle one number for each question using a 5-point scale:</u>		
1- Strongly Disagree	3- Neither Disagree nor Agree	5- Strongly Agree
2- Disagree	4- Agree	

2. CASA volunteers share information and seek your assessment at appropriate times.

- 1 2 3 4 5

3. CASA volunteers' participation speeds the process of the case.

- 1 2 3 4 5

4. CASA volunteers enhance the family's or child's participation in the process of achieving permanency.

- 1 2 3 4 5

5. CASA volunteers seem to understand the issues in their cases.

- 1 2 3 4 5

6. I consider the CASA staff to be responsive to my requests.

- 1 2 3 4 5

7. I consider the CASA staff to be responsive to my suggestions.

- 1 2 3 4 5

Please circle one number for each question using a 5-point scale:

1- Strongly Disagree

3- Neither Disagree nor Agree

5- Strongly Agree

2- Disagree

4- Agree

8. The CASA volunteer's court reports provide information that affects the way I see the case.

1 2 3 4 5

9. Volunteer CASA/GALs act professionally.

1 2 3 4 5

10. Volunteer CASA/GALs understand the court system.

1 2 3 4 5

11. Volunteer CASA/GALs understand the child welfare system.

1 2 3 4 5

12. Volunteer CASA/GALs understand the needs of children.

1 2 3 4 5

13. Volunteer CASA/GALs respect my opinion.

1 2 3 4 5

14. Volunteer CASA/GALs are working for the best interest of the child(ren).

1 2 3 4 5

15. Volunteer CASA/GALs make a difference with the children they serve.

1 2 3 4 5

16. Volunteer CASA/GALs are prepared for the court hearings.

1 2 3 4 5

17. Volunteer CASA/GALs make appropriate recommendations.

1 2 3 4 5

Please circle one number for each question using a 5-point scale:

1- Strongly Disagree

3- Neither Disagree nor Agree

5- Strongly Agree

2- Disagree

4- Agree

18. Volunteer CASA/GALs are valuable to the courts.

1

2

3

4

5

19. I would like for (CASA Program) serve more children.

1

2

3

4

5

20. It is important for volunteer CASA/GALs to attend court hearings.

1

2

3

4

5

21. Volunteer CASA/GALs have a positive reputation in my community.

1

2

3

4

5

22. I usually request the assignment of a CASA volunteer when:

23. My perception of the CASA volunteer's role is:

24. I wish the volunteers or CASA program would:

25. Please estimate the total number of cases you have worked in which a CASA volunteer was assigned:

26. In what ways could volunteer CASA/GALs serve children better?

27. In what ways could CASA/GAL volunteers work better for you?

28. Do you have any other comments about volunteer CASA/GALs?

VOLUNTEER SURVEY: STANDARD 9.C.1.A

CASA Program, Inc. aims to effectively support all volunteers to the best of our ability as they advocate for the children they serve. We value constructive feedback, and would appreciate your participation in this survey. The feedback you provide will be confidential and anonymous and will offer our program's staff and board insight to help improve our overall service to you and the children we serve. We appreciate the critical role you play in the program.

How long have you served as a CASA volunteer?

- Less than 1 year 3-4 years
 1-2 years More than 4 years

Please circle one number for each question using a 5-point scale:

1- Strongly Disagree	3- Neither Disagree nor Agree	5- Strongly Agree
2- Disagree	4- Agree	

1. I feel adequately trained to serve as a CASA volunteer.
1 2 3 4 5
2. My CASA supervisor respects my role and knowledge of my case.
1 2 3 4 5
3. Do you think that the requirements for the volunteer position are explained adequately?
1 2 3 4 5
4. I am comfortable making recommendations about my case.
1 2 3 4 5
5. I feel prepared to testify at court hearings.
1 2 3 4 5
6. I feel prepared to write court reports.
1 2 3 4 5
7. I believe the judge reviews and considers my court reports.
1 2 3 4 5

Please circle one number for each question using a 5-point scale:

1- Strongly Disagree

3- Neither Disagree nor Agree

5- Strongly Agree

2- Disagree

4- Agree

8. I feel like all parties in the case take my opinions seriously.

1 2 3 4 5

9. I am able to work well with CPS staff.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I am able to work well with Attorneys ad Litem.

1 2 3 4 5

11. I believe I am making a difference for the children with whom I work.

1 2 3 4 5

12. I feel comfortable bringing a problem or concern about the program to CASA staff.

1 2 3 4 5

13. I feel challenged to grow and develop my skills within my CASA program.

1 2 3 4 5

14. The CASA staff is professional and courteous when I call the CASA office.

1 2 3 4 5

15. Messages are received and transmitted in a timely, professional and accurate fashion.

1 2 3 4

16. The staff provides adequate guidance through the Child Protective Services system.

1 2 3 4 5

17. Staff provides knowledgeable information regarding services/resources needed to work CASA case.

1 2 3 4 5

18. The staff provides adequate emotional support regarding CASA work.

1 2 3 4 5

Please circle one number for each question using a 5-point scale:

1- Strongly Disagree

3- Neither Disagree nor Agree

5- Strongly Agree

2- Disagree

4- Agree

19. Staff supervising my case is accessible.

1

2

3

4

5

20. The CASA office keeps me informed about court hearings and staffings.

1

2

3

4

5

21. The CASA office keeps me informed about relevant issues (such as changes in laws, procedures and ongoing trainings).

1

2

3

4

5

22. Please indicate your overall satisfaction with CASA Program.

1

2

3

4

5

23. From what venue have you gotten the most information?

a. Monthly meetings with/Updates from Supervisor

b. CASA Updates Email

c. In-Service Trainings

Topics:

24. What are some suggestions or goals you would offer to improve the CASA program?

25. I understand that I am expected to attend ongoing training sessions each year. I would attend presentations on the following topics:

a.

b.

c.

26. What was (is) your expected time commitment with the CASA program and has that been met (if applicable)? Changed?

27. What are some of the aspects of the volunteer role that you are finding most enjoyable? Least?

28. Is there anything missing from your volunteer experience?

29. Have your expectations of this volunteer opportunity been met?
