

**Child Advocates of Fort Bend: CASA Pre-Training Interview**

*(Some questions derived with permission from CASA of Travis County)*

Interviewee Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Interview Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Staff Members Conducting Interview (Minimum of 2 Interviewers):

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***ALL INTERVIEWERS MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING OVERVIEW SCRIPTS PRIOR TO STARTING INTERVIEW***

**OVERVIEW OF THE INTERVIEW PROCESS:**

* We use interviews for several different reasons. We prefer to meet applicants in person before training and to give you a chance to ask questions you may have.
* The interview is also used for screening purposes and CAFB will be asking some personal questions. WE ARE SELECTIVE BECAUSE WE HAVE TO BE. WE VIEW THIS AS A TYPICAL JOB INTERVIEW, FOR YOU AS WELL AS US. Please be sure to ask questions.
* We have a ZERO TOLERANCE policy for abuse and go to great lengths to protect our children and families. In addition, in our agency, we have a strict confidentiality policy to ensure our children are safe and protected in our building and at home in their communities. ***Do you agree to adhere to these policies?***
* The information gathered will only be used for CAFB screening purposes. We will be taking notes along the way so we can remember.

**OVERVIEW OF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND CASA VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION**

* Attend the volunteer training course provided by Child Advocates of Fort Bend- 40+ hours.
* Complete 3 hours court observation. Training staff will organize this.
* Complete post-training interview with a CAFB staff member following the training.
* Must always understand confidentiality and the personal commitment to maintain confidentiality (see confidentiality statement). MUST sign and agree to all volunteer policies and procedures.
* All volunteers must submit to a criminal and a personal background check (child abuse background check).
* Once you become a volunteer, the time commitment for case management is an average of 15-20 hours a month. This is usually flexible and based on your schedule.
* You have an Advocacy Specialist on staff for support and guidance on your CASA case.
* We ask for a minimum of 1 year- 18-month commitment (timing based on case dynamics). We ask that you remain on your assigned case until completion.
* Attend court hearings as scheduled by Family Court. You will have advance notice.
* Expect additional CPS/educational meetings based on the case needs. You will have advance notice.
* Complete 12 hours of continuing education each year, as provided by CAFB. Failure to do so can result in corrective action, up to and/or including dismissal.

**REVIEW VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

Interviewer should review the volunteer application prior to the interview. The interviewer should review and follow up on any notes made by the Community Engagement Team (i.e., incomplete information, information needing further clarification, etc.). The interviewer should double check the following information to ensure eligibility into the program:

* 1. **Residence Information: Did the applicant list all places resided within the last 7 years?** *Please document any missing residence information below including cities/states/countries lived in and dates of residence***.**
	2. **Out-of-Country Residence:** *If the applicant resided out of country within the last 7 years, please document responses to the following questions below:*
		1. When did you reside out-of-country (specific dates)?
		2. What activities did you engage in while traveling/residing out of country? (i.e., native born, school, work, volunteering, etc.)
		3. Have you had a background check completed in the country you resided in? Are you familiar with the process of obtaining a background check in the country you resided in?
		4. If you were outside the U.S. due to military service, will you give CASA permission to talk with your unit deployment officer?
	3. **Driver’s License:** Did the applicant obtain a driver’s license outside of Texas within the last 7 years?*Please document any missing information include states and/or countries driver’s license was issued including dates.*
	4. **Criminal History:** Have you listed your entire criminal history including ALL arrests, charges and/or convictions, even if you were told the charge was dismissed and expunged? If yes, please ask for details and document below**.** *If the charge would not automatically disqualify them b/c it does NOT involve violence, child abuse, neglect, or sex related offenses, please ask the applicant how they addressed the charge, what they learned from the experience and how they are different now. Please document their responses below.*

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Given all this information, are you able to commit to all that we have discussed?
2. Do you speak any additional languages? If yes, please specify.
3. CPS cases typically last 12-18 months or longer. Case workers, social workers, etc. may change throughout this time, but it is important to us that the CASA remains a constant. CASA volunteers visit their child(ren) at least twice a month, attend meetings and court hearings. Are you able to fulfill this commitment? (Discuss time commitment if needed)
4. Out of all the volunteer opportunities available in Fort Bend County, why do you want to be a volunteer with Child Advocates of Fort Bend? What motivates you to be a CASA specifically?
5. Do you have any limitations that would restrict you from carrying out the requirements as a CAFB volunteer including any physical limitations, transportation, etc. If yes, please describe.
6. Court reports will need to be completed in preparation for court hearings and all documentation for your case is completed online. Are you comfortable using the computer and using Microsoft Office apps?
7. What age group do you prefer working with and why?
8. Tell us about your previous volunteer or working experiences with children.
9. How do you build rapport with children? Adults?
10. What do you feel is important in child/youth development?
11. Have you worked with sibling groups? If so, how do you handle giving attention to that group dynamic?
12. What does trauma mean to you?

1. What do you feel are your strengths? Weaknesses?
2. Tell us about your family.
3. What was it like being a child in your family when you were growing up? *Ask about siblings, parents, family dynamics, etc.*
4. Have you ever abused or molested a child?

**Interviewer should say**: ***The following questions are more personal in nature but are relevant what many of our children have experienced. I will be asking about you and your own family’s experiences with these issues.***

1. Have you or a family member had any personal experience with alcohol or drug abuse?

*\*\*If yes, can you tell us about the situation? How did it impact you? Did you receive any type of help to deal with the issue? How do you see this experience affecting your work as a volunteer advocate?*

1. Were you or anyone in your family ever physically abused?

*\*\*If yes, can you tell us a little bit about the situation? How did it impact you? Did you receive any type of help to deal with the issue? How do you see this experience affecting your work as a volunteer?*

*\*\*IF YES--We want to make sure that this is the right fit for not just us, but for you. Have you considered and thought about walking into a place knowing that children have experienced this type of abuse? Will that be something that triggers a difficult response in you?*

1. Were you or anyone in your family ever sexually abused?

*\*\*If yes, can you tell us a little bit about the situation? How did it impact you? Did you receive any type of help to deal with the issue? How do you see this experience affecting your work as a volunteer?*

*\*\*IF YES--We want to make sure that this is the right fit for not just us, but for you. Have you considered and thought about walking into a place knowing that children have experienced this type of abuse? Will that be something that triggers a difficult response in you?*

1. Were you or anyone in your family ever emotionally abused?

*\*\*If yes, can you tell us a little bit about the situation? How did it impact you? Did you receive any type of help to deal with the issue? How do you see this experience affecting your work as a volunteer?*

***Before moving to the next set of questions, please thank the interviewee for sharing if they disclosed any abuse history.***

1. Tell me about an experience you have had interacting with someone whose background (such as socioeconomic, cultural and/or racial background) was different than yours, to include what you found challenging.
2. Children are placed in homes regardless of the caregiver’s race, religion, sexual orientation, or immigration status. Would that challenge your personal belief system or hinder you in your ability to be objective? (If yes, please explain)
	1. The definition of Sexual Identity is who a person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to.

The definition of Gender Identity is what gender a person identifies as.

Tell me about an experience you have had interacting with someone who was or has dealt with their Sexual or Gender Identity? - (If no answer or do not have an experience of their own to describe) prompt: A same sex couple wants to foster/adopt, a child or youth has expressed they identify as gay or transgender…

1. What are your feelings about engaging with the parents or family in a CASA case, and advocating for family reunification if it is in the child’s best interest?
2. Tell me about an experience you have had in dealing with a disruptive child or teenager. Describe a time when a child/youth refused to cooperate with you.
3. Describe a time when you had a disagreement or conflict with another adult.
4. Explain a time when you had a project that changed drastically while it was in progress.
5. Describe a time when you really made a difference in a child’s life. What were the circumstances? What was the result?
6. What are your personal experiences and/or views on:
	1. law enforcement?
	2. CPS?
	3. Immigration Status? (Explain that we have may work with parents/children undocumented and in our care if they need additional information)
7. Describe how you take care of yourself particularly after stressful events. Tell us about your emotional support system.

*\*\* DISCUSSION POINT: Please know as a volunteer, we never want you to leave here in a bad place. Meaning, if there was something that affected you or may have been difficult for you to process, we encourage you to talk to someone on staff. We would love to have a chance to help you debrief and unpack those feelings, instead of keeping them to yourself or discussing them with someone outside of our agency.*

1. After going through this interview process, what would you find the most challenging in the CAFB?

**FOLLOWING THE INTERVIEW, INTERVIEWERS SHOULD COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING CHECKLIST:**

* Thank applicant for sharing and responding to the questions with honesty and candor.
* Check for any additional references if applicant worked or volunteered for any child related organizations.
* Inform applicants that they will be notified about their fingerprint appointment.
* Copy applicant’s driver’s license
* Confirm training start date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Inform applicants they will be notified regarding acceptance/denial into training after the interview and background check process are completed.
* Thank the applicant for his/her time and interest!
* Complete the Post-Interview Evaluation

\*\*Please make note of any concerns from the Interview\*\*