

CASA VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT TIMELINE



1 ATTEND AN INFORMATION SESSION



If you have not already done so, we encourage you to attend an information session via Zoom to learn more about our organization, the volunteer experience, and the application/training process. You can see a list of dates and register for an information session here:

<https://airtable.com/shr5lYaygWTHC2P3p>

NOTES:

COMPLETED:



Ready to move forward?



SUBMIT AN ONLINE APPLICATION



<https://pa-delcocasa.evintosolutions.com/volunteerapplication>

REVIEW TRAINING SCHEDULE & INTERVIEW WITH STAFF

2

Please take a moment to look at the training schedule on the pages to follow. If your schedule allows for your participation in one of these training series, and you would like to move forward with the process, the next step is an interview with a staff member. The interview typically takes 45 minutes or less and takes place in either our Media or West Chester office.



NOTES:

COMPLETED:



3 ATTEND TRAINING SESSIONS



If you are accepted to participate in training following your interview, you will receive an information packet that includes pre-reading for training. There is homework, including reading and video clips, to be completed in advance, as well as during the weeks of training. Due to the dense content each night, you must attend each session. In the event of a conflict/emergency, please contact **Ashleigh McCarron** (amccarron@delcocasa.org) to discuss. Training also includes a one-time court observation, which will be scheduled once you complete the interview.

NOTES:

COMPLETED:





4 POST-TRAINING INTERVIEW, COMPLETE CLEARANCES & ON-LINE MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING

A second interview will be scheduled for after all training sessions have been completed. All CASA advocates are required to have a PA State Criminal Record check, PA Child Abuse Record check, and FBI fingerprint check. Advocates must also complete a mandated reporter training (available on-line) prior to being assigned a CASA case. Information for obtaining these clearances will be provided to you after your interview is completed.

COMPLETED:  NOTES:



ATTEND A SWEARING-IN CEREMONY & PREPARE TO ACCEPT A CASE 5

Once training is complete, your training class will be sworn in by a Juvenile Court judge in either Delaware or Chester counties. In advance of the swearing in you will be asked to review an advocate manual and sign some documents acknowledging your intent to commit to the advocate role and your understanding of the expectations of a CASA advocate. After training, clearances, and swearing in are complete, you will be ready to take your first case!

NOTES:



COMPLETED: 

6 WITHIN FIRST YEAR ATTEND HISTORY OF RACISM IN CHILD WELFARE COURSE

This course will be offered twice a year; you are encouraged to attend the training within the first 6 months of being sworn in and required to attend it within 1 year. This is a 2-part course, with each part lasting 2 hours.

NOTES:

COMPLETED: 



CONTINUE READING FOR SCHEDULES AND
IMPORTANT ADVOCATE INFORMATION

CASA

INFORMATION SESSIONS '24-'25



Please follow the link to register:

<https://airtable.com/shr5lYaygWTHC2P3p>

All sessions will be held via Zoom & information/links will be sent out via email in advance of the scheduled session.

- **Tuesday, May 21, 2024 - 5 PM**
- **Thursday, June 13, 2024 - 9 AM**
- **Tuesday, July 23, 2024 - 12 PM**
- **Thursday, August 15, 2024 - 5 PM**
- **Monday, September 16, 2024 - 9 AM**
- **Friday, October 18, 2024 - 12 PM**

NEW ADVOCATE TRAINING SCHEDULE 2024

Chapter	Topic	Sept PM, Media	Oct AM, Media
1	The CASA Volunteer Role	Tue 9/10 5:00-8:00	Mon 10/21 10:00-1:00
2	Child Welfare Law & the Child Welfare System	Wed 9/11 5:00-8:00	Tue 10/22 10:00-1:00
3	The Well-Being of a Child	Thur 9/12 5:00-8:00	Wed 10/23 10:00-1:00
4	Trauma, Resilience & Mental Health	Tue 9/17 5:00-8:00	Thur 10/24 10:00-1:00
5	Poverty, Substance Abuse & Domestic Violence	Wed 9/18 5:00-8:00	Fri 10/25 10:00-1:00
6	Cultural Humility	Thur 9/19 5:00-8:00	Mon 10/28 10:00-1:00
7	Educational Advocacy, Working with Older Youth & Working with LGBTQIA+ Youth	Tue 9/24 5:00-8:00	Tue 10/29 10:00-1:00
8	Advocate Panel, Teamwork & CASA in Action	Wed 9/25 10:00-1:00	Wed 10/30 10:00-1:00
9	Court Report Writing, Self-Care & Wrap Up	Thur 9/26 5:00-8:00	Thur 10/31 10:00-1:00



CASA Youth Advocates, Inc

serving Delaware and Chester counties



Mission

Empowering community volunteers to connect with and champion children and youth involved in the child welfare system, advocating for equity, resources, stability and permanency.

Vision

We envision a bright future in which all children and youth have the resiliency, consistent relationships with caring adults, and access to child welfare, education, health, and human services they need to fully experience the joys of childhood and pursue their dreams.

Values

Authenticity Effectiveness
Collaboration Equity
Compassion Volunteerism
Consistency

Becoming a CASA Advocate

Prospective volunteers are asked to attend an information session, submit an application, complete core training program lasting approximately 37 hours, (including a combination of live training and independent study) and complete required clearances. Once sworn in by the court and matched with a child, advocates are asked to commit to 18 months of service with the agency, dedicating 10-15 hours of volunteer time per month.

For More Information

www.delcocasa.org
www.chescocasa.org
610-565-2208

CASA Youth Advocates serving Delaware and Chester Counties does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please contact our Manager of Advocate Engagement, **Ashleigh McCarron**, with any questions or concerns:
amccarron@delcocasa.org

FOLLOW CASA ON SOCIAL MEDIA



www.delcocasa.org



www.facebook.com/casayouthadvocates



[@casayouthadvocates](https://www.instagram.com/casayouthadvocates)

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

Job Description

Purpose

Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteers are appointed by the court to advocate on behalf of children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Their best-interest advocacy helps ensure that children are safe, have a permanent home and have the opportunity to thrive.

Qualifications

- Must be at least 21 years of age.
- Must successfully complete volunteer application, pass screening and provide up to date criminal, child abuse, and FBI background checks.
- Must complete core training program lasting approximately 37 hours, including a combination of live training and independent study.
- Must complete mandated reporter training prior to case assignment.

Additional Requirements

- Must be willing to commit to serving on a minimum of one (1) assigned case for the duration of the case life (or serve a minimum of 18 months).
- Must be able to provide own transportation and be willing to travel.
- Must possess strong interpersonal skills and be capable of respecting and relating to individuals from various backgrounds and cultures in a caring and sensitive manner.
- Must be willing to accept supervision, training, and evaluation by the professional staff.
- Must adhere to all agency policies regarding the advocate role.
- Must complete History of Racism in Child Welfare training within first year of involvement with the agency.
- Must participate in in-service training, attending at least 12 hours of on-going training annually (pro-rated to 1 hour per month during year of swearing in)
- Must renew clearances and updated mandated reporter training every three years.
- Must notify agency (via Associate Director) of any new arrests or criminal charges filed against you during the course of your involvement with the agency.

Responsibilities

- Have regular and sufficient in-person contact with the child where they live to ensure in-depth knowledge of the case and make fact-based recommendations to the court. The CASA will meet in-person with the child once per month at a minimum. An exception may be granted in the discretion of the CASA program staff; however, the decision to permit a less frequent in person contact shall be documented as to the justification for and reasonableness of the exception.
- Obtain firsthand a clear understanding of the needs and situation of the child by conducting an on-going review of all relevant documents and records and interviewing the child, parents, social workers, teachers, and other persons to determine the facts and circumstances of each child's situation.
- Consult with CASA Supervisor to discuss case and recommendation(s) at least twice monthly to ensure that advocacy in the best interest of the child/children is occurring.
- Inform CASA supervisor immediately of any major developments on case, including placement moves, injuries, re-abuse, runaways, or any situation in which the advocate has reason to

believe the child is in imminent danger.

- Follow specific, actionable guidance provided by CASA Case Supervisor, or, in the event of disagreement regarding that guidance, follow volunteer grievance process.
- Seek cooperative solutions by acting as a facilitator among parties.
- Provide a written report at every hearing, which includes findings and recommendations. Appear at all hearings to advocate for the child's best interests and provide testimony when necessary.
- Make specific recommendations for appropriate services for the child and, when appropriate, the child's family.
- Determine if a permanent plan has been created for the child and make recommendations concerning permanency.
- Monitor implementation of service plans and court orders assuring that court-ordered services are implemented in a timely manner and that review hearings are held in accordance with the law.
- Inform the court promptly of important developments in the case through appropriate means as determined by court rules or statute.
- Advocate for the child's best interests in the community by interfacing with mental health, educational and other community systems to assure that the child's needs in these areas are met.
- Maintain complete records about the case, including appointments, interviews and information gathered about the child and the child's life circumstances.
- Attend all meetings regarding child/children, including but not limited to school, foster care or residential treatment team meetings, and meetings at Children and Youth Services.
- Visit any potential future caretaker for the child/children prior to placement.
- Submit written updates regarding your case into program's on-line case management system (Optima).
- Return case files to the program after the case is closed.

Time Commitment

- Monthly time commitment varies - approximately 10-15 hours each month for the duration of the case.

Equal Opportunity

CASA Youth Advocates is committed to a policy of equal opportunity in accepting, training, and assigning applicants. CASA Youth Advocates believes that each team member's experience with the agency should be free from discrimination because of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected under federal, state or local law, except as permitted by law. Even though the law does not require it, CASAYouth Advocates extends the above protections to also include freedom from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Educational Decision Maker (EDM)

Job Description

Purpose

In cases where a parent is unable or unwilling to participate in decision making regarding a child's education, the court may choose to appoint CASA as the child's Educational Decision Maker. In these cases, the program will also provide traditional CASA advocacy services.

When CASA is appointed as EDM, an additional court order specific to this role is generated by the court. The EDM appointment may be added to the case, or may be vacated at any time in the case, depending on the specific need for CASA to serve in this role.

Responsibilities

- Make all decisions regarding a child's education services, including general education, special education, and early intervention. All decisions made must be consistent with the child's best interest.
- Specific tasks may include:
 - Requesting an initial evaluation or re-evaluation for eligibility for special education services.
 - Signing a child's Request to Evaluation (RTE).
 - Reviewing and signing child's Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP).
 - Reviewing and signing a child's initial and annual Individual Education Plan (IEP).
 - Monitoring implementation of IEP services and requesting revisions to the IEP as needed to meet the child's needs.
 - Monitoring the school district's adherence to legal timelines regarding special education services.
 - Attending disciplinary meetings for child and ensuring any disciplinary actions against child are in keeping with special education law.
 - Maintaining regular communication with school staff.
 - Monitoring child's school performance and addressing any concerns as they arise.
 - Attending parent-teacher conferences.
 - Participating in Best Interest Determination (BID/ESSA) meetings when a child changes living arrangements.
 - Assisting with school enrollment if child changes schools.
 - Coordinating team efforts to plan for the child's post-secondary education or transition to independence.
 - Maintaining communication with child's biological or legal parent, foster parent, CYS/CYF worker, and vendor agency worker in regards to the child's education, by soliciting information needed for appropriate educational decision making and providing updates on plan to all parties.