



***Kalamazoo County CASA Program
Policies and Procedures Manual
For Volunteers***

***To leave the world a better place - whether by
a healthy child, a garden patch or an
improved social condition - that is to have succeeded.
That only one life breathed easier because you lived
THAT is success."***

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Program Affiliations

National CASA Association

National CASA Association
100 West Harrison Street
North Tower – Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98119-4123
206.270.0072

Michigan CASA Association

MICASAA
324 Pine Street #1
Lansing, MI 489-1024
517.482.7533

Kalamazoo County CASA Program

Ninth Circuit Court, Family Division
1400 Gull Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
269.385.6078

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Mission Statement

KALAMAZOO COUNTY CASA PROGRAM

Mission Statement

The Kalamazoo County Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA), through the use of trained community volunteers, will provide direct, objective advocacy for neglected and abused children who have been found to come within the jurisdiction of the Kalamazoo County Ninth Circuit Court of Michigan - Family Division.

Program Definition and Structure

The Kalamazoo County CASA is a court-based program having the primary focus to provide competent advocacy for abused and neglected children in child protective proceedings of the Ninth Circuit Court. The Kalamazoo County CASA Program will appoint trained community volunteers to advocate for the best interest of children, who have been, or are at risk of being removed from the care of their parents or legal guardian(s). CASA volunteers serve to present well-documented information to the court with the ultimate goal of ensuring a safe, permanent home, as soon as possible.

Kalamazoo County CASA Program's volunteers will have the additional goals to reduce the time a child spends in out-of-home care and provide continuity for the child(ren) by having at least one person involved for the duration their case is before the Court.

Other goals of the program include increasing public awareness of abuse and neglect and its effect on children and the community, to bring awareness of gaps between the ideal deliveries of services as expressed in the legislation and practical constraints to service providers.

Specifically, these goals include, but are not limited to:

- I. The Kalamazoo County CASA Program will operate under the direction of the program director and the administrator of Family Services of the Ninth Circuit Court.
- II. The CASA Program Director will receive all substantiated petitions of abuse and/or neglect. These petitions will be made available for review by CASA volunteers for their possible appointment to a case. In addition, Judges, Attorney Referees, Attorneys for the children/family, and/or Caseworkers may refer a case (based on program guidelines) to the CASA Program Director. The Program Director will oversee case assignment and supervise volunteers.
- III. The Kalamazoo County CASA program will operate with access to a legal advisor.
- IV. The Kalamazoo County CASA program shall maintain affiliation with the National CASA organization and the Michigan Association of Court Appointed Special Advocates Association (MACASA).
- V. The Kalamazoo County CASA program staff and volunteers will be covered under the County's liability and worker's compensation policies.

Recruiting of Potential CASA Volunteers

Each potential CASA volunteer shall receive an initial packet, which includes a letter explaining the purpose of the CASA program, the role and responsibilities of the CASA volunteer and information concerning the minimal commitment of time involved, a Kalamazoo County CASA Program Brochure (**Attachment 1**), and Volunteer Application (**Attachment 2**).

The recruitment efforts shall be directed at obtaining both male and female volunteers, from a variety of socio-economic levels and ethnic backgrounds in accordance with the demographics of Kalamazoo County.

Interested volunteers who live outside Kalamazoo County may, at the discretion of the program director, be accepted into the Kalamazoo County CASA Program, provided their residence is within a reasonable distance of Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Recruitment efforts may include, but are not be limited to, multi-media outreach, speaking engagements, and community awareness events.

Screening:

Each potential volunteer must complete a written application containing information regarding their educational background, employment history, personal experiences with child abuse and neglect. In addition, it will be required of the applicant to submit the names of three or more persons, unrelated to the applicant, as references.

The applicant must sign a consent/authorization to conduct a formal criminal background record check with state and local law enforcement agencies (**Attachment 3**). If the applicant lived in another state within the past five years, the records in that state will also be checked. A release to conduct a formal inquiry with the Family Independence Agency's Central Registry (**Attachment 4**) will also be acquired from the applicant and the inquiry conducted to determine an applicant's possible history regarding child abuse/neglect history.

The Kalamazoo County CASA Program Director or a person(s) designated by the director will conduct the initial personal interview with each applicant. Kalamazoo County CASA will **not** accept applicants if they have been convicted of, or have charges pending for a felony or misdemeanor involving a sex offense, child abuse or neglect, or related acts that would pose risks to children or to the CASA program's credibility.

The final decision regarding acceptance into the program will rest with the program director and/or other designated program/court staff.

Requirements to become a CASA:

1. Must be 21 years old or older.
2. Must complete application, pre-screening interview, training, and post-interview.
3. Must appear at court hearings regarding assigned case.
4. Must have own insured transportation
5. Must attend a minimum of twelve (12) hours in-service training sessions per year.

6. Must commit to the program for approximately two years (training and one case completion).
7. Must be able to maintain confidentiality of all cases.

Court Appointed Special Advocates Must Have:

1. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
2. Ability to respect and relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural, educational) in a variety of settings.
3. Ability to maintain professional conduct
4. Ability to work independently
5. Ability to ask questions whenever there is a need or doubt
6. Ability to remain objective

Other important factors that will determine the acceptance of a volunteer:

- If an applicant is accepted into the program, who has been convicted or has pending misdemeanor charges, there will be written documentation explaining the reason for acceptance into the program. This written documentation will be placed in the volunteer's personnel file.
- Applicants who have had previous personal or familial involvement in a neglect or abuse situation are required to discuss that involvement with the CASA director in detail. If, from that discussion, the director believes that the applicant has not resolved the issues, active involvement in the program will be temporarily postponed or denied.
- CASA volunteers must be available via telephone, e-mail, or cell phone.
- The CASA director or appointed court staff reserves the right to disqualify any person from becoming a CASA if it appears that he or she will not be able to maintain the child's best interest as the priority focus.

All applicants will be notified about the outcome of the screening process. The applicants not selected shall be treated with dignity, respect; and when possible referred to alternate volunteer opportunities.

CASA Volunteer Initial Training

CASA volunteers shall receive a minimum of 35 hours of initial training. In addition to thoroughly covering the material in the volunteer training manual the training will also include a requirement for courtroom observation prior to a case assignment.

The initial training for CASA volunteers shall include the following topics:

- A. Introducing the CASA Role
- B. Introducing Law; Child Protection
- C. Exploring Cultural Awareness

- D. Understanding Families - Part I
- E. Understanding Families - Part II
- F. Understanding Children
- G. Communicating as a CASA Volunteer
- H. Practicing the CASA Volunteer Role -Gathering Information
- I. Practicing the CASA Role - Reporting & Monitoring
- J. Pulling It All Together

Topics of discussion will include:

- Attitudes and values
- Principles and Concepts of CASA Volunteer work
- How a case enters the system
- Confidentiality
- The Family Division Court Process
- Cultural Awareness
- Family Strengths and Weaknesses
- Stress in Families
- Domestic Violence
- What all people need
- Attachment and Separation-effect on children
- Permanence for Children
- Basic Communication
- Interviewing Skills
- Writing Skills
- Record Keeping
- The Legal System
- The Juvenile Code
- Court rules
- Judges & Referees
- Advocacy Skills and Testifying
- Child Development
- Child Abuse & Neglect
- Community Agencies and Resources

A variety of presenters may be included in training sessions.

Participation in monthly in-service trainings will be mandatory. It is required that trained advocates attend regular monthly meetings for feedback and additional training (i.e. Domestic violence, substance abuse, child sexual abuse, etc.) The CASA program director will provide at least twelve (12) hours of in-service, annually.

Role Description for CASA Volunteers:

Volunteers of the Kalamazoo County CASA program are appointed by the Kalamazoo County Ninth Circuit Court to act as advocates for children in the Court's child protective proceedings. It is the CASA volunteer's mandate to provide to the Court an independent assessment of all aspects of a child's life. The primary focus of this assessment being the best interests of the child(ren) regarding their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

In their role as an advocate, the CASA volunteer will meet with the child, as well as persons involved in the child(ren)'s life. These individuals may include, but are not limited to: Natural parent(s), FIA caseworker, child(ren)'s attorney, primary care giver, teachers, extended family members, and therapists. The CASA will present the gathered information and facts in written and oral reports to the Court, and will include their recommendations regarding the best interests of the child(ren). Furthermore, the CASA volunteer will advocate for compliance with the Court's orders.

Specific duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Become familiar with the facts and circumstances underlying the allegation(s) including, but not limited to: the child, the child's siblings, the parents, social workers, care provider, and any other person(s) necessary for a proper assessment.
2. The CASA will read all pertinent material in the Court's legal and social file for the children they are assigned, and receive copies of all reports, case plans and Court orders filed in the matter.
3. The CASA will consult with the child's attorney, and other parties, to determine what is in the child's best interest
4. The CASA will meet regularly with the child(ren) to whom they are assigned.
5. Explain the CASA volunteer's role, duties, and responsibilities, to all parties associated with the case.
6. Appear at all court regularly scheduled hearings and pre-trial conferences pertaining to their assigned case.
7. CASA volunteers will offer a written report of findings and recommendations with regarding the best interests of their assigned child(ren), and will discuss the reports and recommendation with the program supervisor prior to submitting the reports to the Court.
8. The CASA volunteer will be able explain the court proceedings to the child as necessary.
9. Identify potential resources that will facilitate family preservation, early family reunification, or alternative permanency planning.
10. Participate in the formulation of the case service plan by making recommendations with regard to appropriate services, programs and suggesting alternative solutions.

11. Determine whether services for the family, specified in court approved case plans and court orders, are provided in a timely manner, and are accomplishing their purposes. Inform the Court of any barriers that prevent, or may potentially, prevent the family's ability to take advantage of the services. These services may include: evaluations, assessments, home-based services, and/or treatment for the child(ren) and their family.
12. Become familiar with the facts as well as the interests of the child in judicial or administrative proceedings outside of the Kalamazoo County Ninth Circuit Court-Family Division. (i.e. Criminal abuse and neglect proceedings, or other criminal proceedings in which the child(ren) are cited as a victim and/or witness.)
13. Advocate for the child's best interest in the mental health, educational, welfare, juvenile justice, and other community systems when related to the circumstances bringing the child(ren) within the court's jurisdiction
14. File written monthly reports (**Attachment 5**) with the program director.
15. Be familiar and comply with the State of Michigan's Child Protection Law and Juvenile Code.
16. Report incidents of child abuse and neglect to the program director and to the appropriate authorities.
17. The CASA volunteer will conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, having the intention of cooperating with all parties involved in the case.
18. Remain actively involved in the case until permanency is achieved and wardship is terminated.
19. A CASA volunteer will attend monthly trainings/support groups of the Kalamazoo County CASA Program. (Nine two-hour sessions are scheduled per year).
20. Attend annual State and National CASA conferences if able to do so.

The CASA volunteer does not/will not engage in the following:

- Provide services to the child or the family
- Take a child to the CASA's home
- Give legal advice or therapeutic counseling
- Make placement arrangements for the child(ren)
- Give money or expensive gifts to the child(ren) or family
- Be related to any persons involved in the case or be employed in a position and/or agency that might result in a conflict of interest.

Responsibilities of Position:

1. **Complete an intensive independent investigation**
 - a) Visit with the child and relevant adults
 - b) Review appropriate records and reports
 - c) Interview and observe the child and significant others

2. **Report findings to the court**
 - a) Provide signed written reports containing factual information and recommendations to the court on what placement and services are best for the child
 - b) Testify at court hearings

3. **Ensure representation of the child's best interest**
 - a) Attend all court proceedings to see that all relevant facts are presented
 - b) Attend appropriate interagency meetings regarding the child
 - c) Identify gaps in services

4. **Monitor Cases**
 - a) Monitor court orders for compliance
 - b) Monitor compliance with Parent-Agency Treatment Plan
 - c) Maintain regular contact (at least once every 10 days) with the child/ children

5. **Attend Training**
 - a) Attend initial training sessions (35 hours)
 - b) Visit the Court while it is in session to observe proceedings
 - c) Attend a minimum of 12 hours each year of monthly in-service meetings.
 - d) Attend National and/or State CASA conferences, trainings when able to do so.

6. **Consult regularly with the Program Director concerning assigned case**
 - a) Develop a case investigation plan
 - b) Discuss preliminary findings
 - c) Review reports
 - d) Submit monthly reports of CASA activity/training
 - e) Speak with or visit CASA director monthly regarding case or the CASA program
 - f) Evaluate the quality of your work as a CASA volunteer
 - g) Assess your satisfaction with your role as a CASA volunteer.

Case Assignment Procedures:

Procedures For Referral And Assignment of Cases:

A. Priorities for case referral:

1. Cases that are appropriate for assignment of a CASA volunteer will be those in which the children are removed from their home, or are at risk of removal.
2. Cases that are appropriate for assignment of a CASA volunteer will be those in which there are serious allegations of abuse and/or neglect, and in which permanency is an issue.
3. Cases that are appropriate for assignment of a CASA volunteer will be those in which the children are of any age, up to 18.

B. Referring Parties:

In addition to the director of the CASA Program receiving all substantiated petitions of neglect and abuse made to the Court for consideration of a CASA volunteer assignment, the following parties may also make referrals:

1. Judges and attorney referees of the Ninth Circuit Court.
2. Family Independence Agency (FIA) and contract agency caseworkers
3. An Attorney, or Guardian Ad Litem for the child(ren).

C. Method of referral from referring party:

1. An appropriate referring party determines a case to be suitable for assistance and assignment of a CASA volunteer.
2. A CASA assignment request form will be completed and submitted to the CASA Program Director.
3. The case shall be determined appropriate after being reviewed by the CASA program director.
4. Depending on availability, a CASA volunteer will be contacted to review the case.
5. Providing that a CASA volunteer is able to accept the assignment of the case an Order for Appointment (**Attachment 6**) of a CASA will be signed by the supervising judge of the case. If the supervising Judge is not available, any available Family Division Judge may sign the order.

D. Method of voluntary assignment of a CASA

1. A CASA volunteer, not already assigned to a case, may contact the CASA Program Director to indicate his or her desire to consider appointment to a case.
2. The CASA volunteer and director will meet review current and appropriate Neglect/Abuse petitions.
3. The CASA volunteer and director will review the specifics of each case and determine if there are any areas of conflict of interest.
4. The CASA volunteer and director agree on a case for appointment.

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E. Assignment of a CASA volunteer

1. The CASA and the supervising, or available Family Division Judge will sign the Order for Appointment of a CASA .
2. All information that is currently in the case file will be copied and given to the CASA.
3. The CASA will be given a Case Information Form (**Attachment 7**) which will include all information including dates and times of pending Court hearings.
4. The CASA will be expected to immediately contact the FIA and/or contract agency caseworker, the child's attorney, the foster parent(s), the natural parent(s) and the child(ren) within one week of the appointment

Initially, CASA volunteers will be assigned one case each. However, if a volunteer is nearing the end of a case they are assigned to he/she may be assigned an additional case. Volunteers will not be assigned more than two cases simultaneously. In rare cases, two CASA volunteers may be assigned to a single case, at the discretion of the Program Director.

In addition to the above, the following will also be expected of the CASA volunteers when assigned to a case:

- When a CASA is appointed and agrees to take a case, he or she is reminded they are committing to stay actively involved for the duration of Court involvement.
- The director will provide Monthly Report forms to be completed by the volunteer. These forms will be completed and submitted to the CASA program director by the 7th day of each month for the month prior.
- After the initial meeting between the volunteer and supervisor, the volunteer will contact the FIA or contract agency caseworker to determine the name/location of the foster family if the child(ren) have been removed from their home. If the CASA is unable to contact the caseworker, contact should then be directed to the caseworker's supervisor.
- The volunteer will then arrange to meet with the caseworker for introductions and to notify the worker of his/her involvement; and that he/ she expects to have contact with the child and will contact the foster parent to set up a convenient time to meet with the child. The volunteer will request that the caseworker inform the foster parent(s) that the CASA will be in contact to set up an appointment to meet with the child.
- Once the appropriate contacts have been completed, and adjudication of the case has commenced the volunteer is free to contact other parties involved. The volunteer will have copies of the Order of Appointment and signed release forms (**Attachments 8, 9**) on hand when in contact with foster parents, medical personnel, school officials, etc.
- The volunteer will keep program director informed of all important developments in the case.
- Case conferences will occur prior to the CASA volunteer writing their Court reports.
- Court reports will be submitted to the Program Director ten (10) working days prior to court hearings.

Advocate Supervision

Supervision of the CASA volunteers is the responsibility of the program director, designated program or Court staff. In doing so, the program director will ensure the following:

- The assigned volunteer to supervisor ratio shall not exceed 30:1.
- The CASA program director shall be easily accessible and make every effort to provide quick and thorough guidance to the CASA volunteers.
- The director or supervisor shall hold case conferences with volunteers to review the progress of their cases. Case conferences can be in person and/or via phone or electronic mail.
- Frequency of individual or group supervision is arranged on the basis of volunteer needs, the complexity and size of the workload, and the newness of the assignment.
- The director shall conduct or arrange monthly in-service meetings for volunteers.
- The director shall review the volunteer's written court reports before they are submitted to the Court. If there are concerns with the volunteer's report or recommendations a conference will be convened to discuss and address the issue(s). The CASA program director will not alter reports or recommendations without the knowledge and agreement of the CASA volunteer.

Conflict Resolution

Undoubtedly, the time will come when a volunteer and other parties involved in a case will disagree on how the case ought to be handled. Although it is preferable to have the parties work out the disagreement between them it may be necessary for a meeting to be held in order to assist in the resolution of a conflict.

A meeting to resolve the issue(s) will consist of at least the program director and the parties involved in the conflict and may also include the Administrator of Family Services for the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court. Efforts to resolve the conflict will be made through a careful review of the issues by all parties, without personal judgment. It will be the expectation of this meeting that all persons will conduct themselves in a non-judgmental, non-threatening manner.

If resolution of the conflict cannot be reached such that objectivity by the CASA volunteer is significantly compromised, and it is assessed that the best interests of the child(ren) in the matter will be jeopardized by the conflict, the director may resort to formally dismissing the CASA from the case.

Discharge/Termination of a Volunteer

The CASA is a part of the Court's volunteer staff and therefore can be requested to resign, or may be discharged by the Program Director or designated court staff with the approval of the Program Director. Depending on circumstances a CASA may be discharged or terminated from a specific case or from the CASA program entirely.

Conduct Leading To Immediate Dismissal from a case, or from the CASA program, includes but is not limited to:

- Taking action without program or court approval, which could endanger the child, or is outside the role and/or responsibilities of the CASA volunteer or program.
- Breach of confidentiality
- Violating a program policy/procedure, court rule, or law.
- Falsifying volunteer application or misrepresenting facts during the screening process.
- Taking a child home.
- Acting as the program representative to the public/media, i.e., providing public testimony or making statements to the media without direct permission from the CASA Program Director.
- Failing to notify the CASA director and F.I.A. within 48 hours of any accident, injury, report of child abuse or any other incident involving the CASA and/ or the child.
- Existence of, or filing of child abuse/ neglect allegations against the volunteer whether criminal or as a child protective allegation.

Conduct That May Lead To Dismissal includes, but is not limited to:

- Failing to follow established program guidelines
- Inability and/or unwillingness to effectively carry out CASA duties.
- Failing to complete required in-service training.
- Failing to maintain case logs/notes and submit reports as defined by policy and procedure.
- Unwillingness to adhere to court and program policies and procedures.
- Exparte communication with anyone other than the child's attorney and caseworker(s) .
- Existence of a conflict of interest, which cannot be resolved.

- Failing to maintain a valid license and auto insurance, if operating a motor vehicle to conduct CASA business; failing to provide proof of insurance to CASA office annually; and failure to notify CASA office of termination or revocation of license or auto insurance within 48 hours.
- Failing to follow any policies set forth by supervisor/program not specifically mentioned above

The CASA Program Director will inform a volunteer in person, whenever possible, when termination or discharge is necessary.

Record Keeping/Data Management

To maintain the efficiency of the CASA program and uphold its integrity the director will formally maintain the following:

1. Case assignments records.
2. Up-to-date calendar of court hearings.
3. Monthly case log system.
4. Files and copies of all CASA reports and correspondence concerning the case.
5. Volunteer personnel files.

The CASA Program will collect statistical information regarding the following information.

1. Child Information:
 - A. Number of children served per year
 - B. Age ranges, race and gender of children
2. Case Information:
 - A. Number of cases assigned to the CASA program
 - B. Case outcome
 - i. family reunification
 - ii. parental rights terminated
 - iii. relative placement
 - iv. other
 - C. Length of time a case is in the Court System
 - D. Breakdown of types of cases (sexual, physical, neglect, etc.)
 - E. Number of cases closed
3. Volunteer Information:
 - A. Total number of volunteers
 - B. Total number of volunteer hours
 - C. Number of active and inactive volunteers
 - D. Ethnic background / Gender
 - E. Length of stay
 - F. Reason left program
 - G. Emergency contact information
 - H. Reference documentation
 - I. Security check documentation
 - J. Automobile insurance verification
 - K. Case assignments

4. The statistical information will be collected annually as well as for the entire length of the program.
5. The CASA Program Director shall compile a year-end report that illustrates the accomplishments of the program. The report will be distributed to the National CASA Association, Michigan CASA Association, the Court and other interested parties.
5. Case files must be returned to the program when a volunteer is discharged or closes a case.
6. Closed case files will be maintained for three years and then destroyed.
7. Volunteers will have access to their records upon written request to the Program Director. Review of said records will take place in the CASA office. Any additions, deletions, or corrections to the records requested by the volunteer will be promptly reviewed by the Program Director and acted upon appropriately.
8. The Comet software program provided by National CASA will be used to record the above referenced data. Access to the software program and data will be restricted to those designated by the Program Director.
9. Access to records is limited to those designated by the Program Director under the National CASA guidelines.

Statement of Understanding with Other Agencies

- I. The CASA volunteer will share any relevant information obtained during their fact finding with the appropriate agency caseworker and child's attorney.
- II. The Family Independence Agency and/or contract agency caseworker will allow the CASA Volunteer access to relevant information in the case file with a the signed Court order indicating the CASA volunteer's appointment to a case.
- III. CASA volunteers will make a genuine effort to contact the agency caseworker and/or supervisor to share information prior to court hearings.
- IV. CASA volunteers will work collaboratively with all parties involved in a case.

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Attachment 1

Kalamazoo County CASA Program Brochure

TO: NACASAA Standards Self-Assessment reviewing committee members

The program used to create our program brochure is no was recently removed from our network computers and therefore, cannot be electronically inserted in this location. Please refer to the hard copy of the brochure included in the binder submitted by our program.

Thank You

Janet Brode, Director

Kalamazoo County CASA Program

#462

Attachment 2

Volunteer Application

APPLICATION TO VOLUNTEER

Kalamazoo County CASA Program

Name: _____

Birthdate: _____

Address: _____
(Street)

Social Security # _____

(City) (Zip Code)

Phone Numbers:

Home: _____

Work: _____

Cell: _____

E-Mail: _____

Have you lived in the State of Michigan for at least five years? ____ Yes ____ No

If no, please provide all addresses for the last five years:

(Street)

(City) (State) (Zip Code) (Mo./Yr.)

Resided at this address from:
_____ to _____
(Mo./Yr.) (Mo./Yr.)

(Street)

(City) (State) (Zip Code) (Mo./Yr.)

Resided at this address from:
_____ to _____
(Mo./Yr.) (Mo./Yr.)

(Please use an additional sheet if more space is required.)

Marital Status: ____ Single ____ Married
____ Divorced ____ Widowed

Educational Level Attained: _____

Do you own and insure an automobile? _____

Insurance Company _____ Policy Number _____

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Driver's License Number and State of Issue: _____

In case of emergency, please call (name and phone):

How did you hear about the CASA program?

What qualities do you have that you feel makes you qualified to work as a CASA volunteer?

What experience(s) do you have related to working with children?

What skills, talents or hobbies do you have that you could share with children?

Current community activities you are involved in, including past and present volunteer service:

Languages spoken:

Have you, or any member of your family had any personal experience involving the Court system, Child Protective Services, Foster care, or any other agencies offering services to a child?

_____ Yes _____ No.

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If "yes", please explain:

Have you ever been under the care of a mental health clinician? (Psychologist, psychiatrist, therapist) _____ Yes
_____ No

If "yes", please explain:

Do you have any medical, physical conditions that would impair your driving and therefore prevent you from visiting assigned children or others associated with a potential CASA case? _____ Yes _____ No

If "yes", please explain:

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal act? _____ Yes _____ No

If "yes", please explain (what charge, date convicted, where?): _____

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION:

Are you currently employed? ___ Yes ___ No

If "yes" your present occupation: _____

Employer: _____
(Name)

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Length of time with this employer: _____

May we contact your employer? ___Yes ___No

If you are not currently employed please list your two most recent employers:

1.) From _____ to _____ Title or Position: _____

Name of Employer: _____ Phone: _____

Duties: _____

Contact Person: _____

May we contact this person? _____

2.) From _____ to _____ Title or Position: _____

Name of Employer: _____ Phone: _____

Duties: _____

Contact Person: _____

May we contact this person? _____

REFERENCES

Please list 3 personal references of people who know you well, other than relatives, and include addresses and phone numbers:

1.) Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

2.) Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

3.) Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

***Attachment 3
Consent for Criminal Background Check***

Attachment 4

Sample letter for check with FIA's Central Registry

Ms. Karen Tripp
Children's and Adult Services Program Manager
Kalamazoo County FIA
322 Stockbridge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Dear Ms. Tripp:

I am requesting and hereby authorize an inquiry with the State of Michigan, Family Independence Agency's Central Registry regarding myself: _____,
D.O.B. _____

This request is being made for the purpose of my completing the application requirements for the Kalamazoo County Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program.

My signature indicates my consent for you to complete this inquiry.

My address:

Attachment 5

Monthly Report

Monthly Report

CASA: _____ **CASE NAME:** _____ **FILE:** _____

For the month of _____

Today's date _____

Case Hours:
Training Hours:
Other Hours:
Total Hours for Month:

Monthly hours should include hearings, visits, case related meetings, phone calls, report preparation time, monthly meetings, conferences with director, and so on.

Contacts this Month:

	visit	phone	email		visit	phone	Email
Children				Teachers			
Parents				Day Care			
Care Provider				Therapist			
Caseworker				Director			
Case Aide				Attorney			
Other Family				Other			

NEXT COURT DATE: _____

NEXT REPORT DUE: _____

Next Hearing Status: ___Pre-trial ___ Trial ___ Disposition ___ Review
___ Rehearing ___Permanency planning ___Termination ___Adoption ___Administrative
review ___Guardianship

Progress:

Problems:

Additional Comments/Needs from Director:

My CASA kids are safer this month because:

I have taken time for myself this month:

Additional Comments:

Attachment 6

Order of Appointment of CASA Volunteer

STATE OF MICHIGAN 9TH CIRCUIT COURT-FAMILY DIVISION COUNTY OF KALAMAZOO	ORDER FOR APPOINTMENT OF COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE	FILE NUMBER
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1. In the matter of:

2. It appears that the best interest of the above child(ren) requires a trained volunteer to :
 - a. Act as a Special Advocate on behalf of the child(ren) before the Court;
 - b. Visit the child(ren) on a regular basis wherever they reside;
 - c. Share time with the children away from the children’s normal routines and residence;
 - d. Observe visitations between the children and their parents;
 - e. Visit and make inquiries of other interested persons;
 - f. Consult with the attorney for the child(ren) and/or guardian ad litem;
 - g. Review Court files and documents;
 - h. Provide written reports and an independent recommendation to the Court at each hearing after assignment;
 - i. Under the supervision of the Court and the CASA Program Director, assist the Court in ways that will be beneficial to the child(ren).

3. I accept these duties, agree to comply with the program guidelines and request appointment as an unpaid, Court Appointed Special Advocate.

Date

Signature

CASA Name

ORDER

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED in accordance with MCR 3.917, that _____ is found to be a person of good character and has successfully completed training to be appointed as a Court Appointed Special Advocate with no compensation, for the duties performed under this appointment until further order of this Court.

Date

Judge

Bar No.

Attachment 7

Case Information Form

Case Name: _____ **File Number:** _____

FIA / Contract worker: _____

Phone Number: _____

Child's Attorney: _____ Phone Number: _____

Child (ren)'s Placement: Home/mother _____
Home/father: _____
Home/both parents _____
Relative care: _____
Foster care _____
Other _____

Address of Placement: _____

Tel. Number: _____

Next Hearing Date:

Time:

Hearing Official:

Hearing Type:

Additional information:

Attachment 8

Release of Information (for child)

STATE OF MICHIGAN



DOUGLAS W. SLADE
COURT ADMINISTRATOR
PHONE: 269-383-8928

DEVONA I. LANGE
ADMINISTRATOR OF
COURT SERVICES
PHONE: 269-384-8253

CONSTANCE L. LAINE
ADMINISTRATOR OF
FAMILY SERVICES
PHONE: 269-385-6039

**NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT
GULL ROAD COURTHOUSE
1400 GULL ROAD**

**KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49048
269-385-6000**

HON. J. RICHARDSON JOHNSON, CHIEF JUDGE

SUSAN M. SAYLES
ADMINISTRATOR OF
FINANCE SERVICES
PHONE: 269-383-6415

ROLAND C. FANCHER

FRIEND OF THE COURT
PHONE: 269-384-8200

DONALD NITZ

**ADMINISTRATOR OF
JUVENILE HOME**
PHONE: 269-385-8550

RUTH A. GRUIZENGA
ADMINISTRATOR OF
RECORDS SERVICES,
CHIEF COURT CLERK
PHONE: 269-384-8003

TO: _____

RE: _____

I, the undersigned adult, hereby give my permission for you to release any pertinent information or copies of records pertaining to the above named children to _____, Court Appointed Special Advocate, for inclusion in court reports. My signature properly witnessed being your authority to do so.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Child(ren) Release

Kalamazoo County CASA Program 9th Circuit Court, Family division
Policies & procedures Manual

Attachment 9

Release of Information (for adult)

STATE OF MICHIGAN



DOUGLAS W. SLADE
COURT ADMINISTRATOR
PHONE: 269-383-8928

DEVONA I. LANGE
ADMINISTRATOR OF
COURT SERVICES
PHONE: 269-384-8253

CONSTANCE L. LAINE
ADMINISTRATOR OF
FAMILY SERVICES
PHONE: 269-385-6039

**NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT
GULL ROAD COURTHOUSE
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PHONE: 269-384-8200**

DONALD NITZ

**ADMINISTRATOR OF
JUVENILE HOME
PHONE: 269-385-8550**

RUTH A. GRUIZENGA
ADMINISTRATOR OF
RECORDS SERVICES,
CHIEF COURT CLERK
PHONE: 269-384-8003

TO:

RE: _____

I, the undersigned adult, hereby give my permission for you to release any pertinent information or copies of records pertaining to myself to _____, Court Appointed Special Advocate, for inclusion in court reports. My signature properly witnessed being your authority to do so.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Adult Release

Kalamazoo County CASA Program 9th Circuit Court, Family division
Policies & procedures Manual

