****

Dear Prospective CASA Volunteer Advocate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming an advocate with our program, CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties.  Enclosed in the packet is an application, various information release forms, information about the CASA volunteer advocate role and an overview of the CASA program.  After your completed application is received, you will be contacted by telephone to schedule an interview with staff.  Advocate training is comprised of 15 classroom hours, 15 independent reading/study hours, and a courtroom observation.  Completed applications may be mailed, faxed, or scanned to the CASA office using the contact information below:

CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties

P.O. BOX 2506

Mt. Pleasant, Texas 75456

903-717-8940 office number

903-717-8959 fax number

michelle.wdrff@gmail.com

If you have additional questions, please feel free to call or email us.  We look forward to speaking with you personally.  And again, thank you for your interest in CASA.

“Every Child has a Chance, It’s YOU!”

Michelle Cobern

Executive Director

CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties

[www.casatcm.org](http://www.casaoftcm.org/)

**CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties**

**General Requirements of All CASA Volunteer Advocates**

Must be a minimum of 21 years of age, complete the volunteer advocate application and related forms, including the Pledge of Confidentiality.

Must complete the required Volunteer Advocate training course and interview with CASA staff.

Must consent to a background check of criminal history and child abuse registry, a Texas and National Sex Offender Registry check, a social security number verification, Local Law Enforcement and an FBI fingerprinting.

Attend a minimum of twelve (12) hours of Continuing Education training per year (which is provided by CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties).

**Qualifications of CASA Volunteer Advocates**

Willingness to work within the guidelines, policies, and standards of CASA.

Good human relations skills and the willingness and ability to be objective.

Commitment of time, interest, and energy necessary to fulfill responsibilities of an advocate position.

Willingness to accept guidance and direction.

Sensitivity towards cultural/ethnic/religious/etc. differences.

Ability to formulate and maintain an independent position throughout the assignment.

Ability to communicate both verbally and in writing.

Understanding of confidentiality and a personal commitment to maintain confidentiality at all times.

Able to provide your own transportation, licensed and insured.

CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties

Volunteer Position Description

**Basic Function:** A CASA Volunteer Advocate is a trained community citizen appointed by a Family Court Judge to speak for the best interest of an abused and/or neglected child. A CASA works as an official part of the judicial proceedings, working alongside attorneys and social workers. By handling only one or, occasionally, two cases at a time, the CASA has time to thoroughly explore the history and circumstances of each assigned case.

**Supervision:** Direct supervision and guidance is provided by the Volunteer Supervisor. These individuals will be available to Volunteer Advocates to discuss case plans, progress, or problems, as well as provide other information needed by the Volunteer Advocate to fulfill his/her role as a CASA. Volunteer Advocates will periodically be asked for feedback regarding supervision and overall satisfaction with the CASA program.

**Duties and Responsibilities:**

+Complete an extensive, independent review of each case

* Meet face-to-face with the child monthly
* Meet or make contact with the social worker monthly to discuss case history, obtain pertinent case information, and to insure development of a permanency plan
* Speak with the child and relevant adults (parents, family members, school officials, doctors, therapists, and others involved in the child's life who may have facts about the case)
* Review appropriate records
* Observe the child and significant others
* Report immediately, any incident of suspected child abuse/neglect to the assigned social worker, and then to the Child Abuse Hotline number within 24 hours.

 +Report Findings to the court by submitting formal reports to the Judge at every scheduled hearing:

* Provide a written report containing factual information to the CASA office at least 5 business days prior to every hearing
* Attend court hearings concerning the child

 +Ensure representation of the child's best interest

* Be certain that all relevant facts are presented at the court hearings
* Attend all appropriate meetings concerning the child
* Participate in all planning conferences concerning the child

 +Monitor case following a court hearing or decision as designated by the court

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

 +Consult monthly with the CASA Volunteer Supervisor concerning the assigned case

* Develop a CASA case plan
* Review progress and reports
* Arrange with the Volunteer Supervisor for coverage of any conferences or court proceedings if unable to attend

**Training Support Plan:**

* CASA Volunteer Advocates are required to complete approximately 30 hours of pre-service training and 12 hours of Continuing Education annually
* CASA Volunteer Advocates will appear before a judge upon completion of training to be sworn in as an appointed officer of the court
* CASA Volunteer Advocates follow guidelines outlined in the Volunteer Policies and Procedures
* CASA Volunteer Advocates have access to additional training opportunities offered by other agencies
* CASA Volunteer Advocates receive direct supervision and guidance from program staff
* CASA Volunteer Advocates are encouraged to call their Volunteer Supervisor at any time with any questions or concerns

**Time Commitment:**

* Volunteer Advocates are required to make a twelve-eighteen month minimum commitment to the program in order to complete the assigned case
* Volunteer Advocates are expected to attend all court hearings on their cases – usually 5 per year
* Volunteer Advocates are expected to be available for case assignment and to accept a case immediately upon completion of pre-service training, unless other arrangements are made
* CASA Volunteer Advocates, on the average, spend 5-10 hours per month on each case

**Necessary Knowledge and Skills:**

* Ability to keep all client and court information confidential
* Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing
* Ability to respect and relate to people from various backgrounds
* Ability to transport self
* Ability to maintain objectivity
* A basic understanding of child development and family relationships
* Good common sense
* Does not require specific educational training beyond a high school diploma or GED

**Benefits:** Although CASA cannot provide you with monetary rewards, there are many benefits to volunteering as a CASA child advocate. These include the opportunity to:

* Make a difference in the life and future of a child 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 an understanding of the Family Courts, legal proceedings, and social service agencies
* Develop/Utilize communication skills
* Form friendships with like-minded people in your community
* Have access to training via local, state, and national CASA

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

 Volunteer Advocate Signature Date

**Mission Statement**

The Mission of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties, Inc., is to train and supervise community volunteers to be a leading voice in advocating for safe, permanent, nurturing homes for court appointed children in need of our services.

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Volunteer Advocate Signature Date

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

CASA Executive Director/Chairperson Date

**VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Today’s Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Are you known by other names?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Age:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Cell/Work Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address: (Mailing or Street Address/City/State/Zip)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How long have you lived at this address?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If less than 5 years, your last address? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about CASA?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Drivers License # State issued:

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Education: O HS Diploma O Some College O College Degree

 O Post Graduate O PhD/MD O Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity: O African American O Anglo O Asian/Pacific Islander

O Hispanic O Native American O Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: O Single O Married O Widowed O Divorced O Partner

Name of Spouse/Partner (if applicable):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Partner Employer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Children’s names: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

All CASA volunteer advocates must have a valid driver’s license and current automobile insurance. A copy of the most up-to-date liability insurance card and current driver’s license is required in order to process your application.

Do you have a valid Texas driver’s license? Y N

Do you have current auto liability insurance? Y N

Do you have access to a car? Y N

**EMPLOYMENT**

Employment Status: O FT O PT O Retired O Student

O Homemaker O Unemployed O Self-Employed

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**EXPERIENCE, SKILLS, & INTERESTS**

Please list any past or current volunteer experiences, hobbies, or interests which enhance your ability to advocate for children.

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

Please indicate any languages you speak with fluency:

O English O Spanish O Chinese O Portuguese O Arabic

O Tagalong O Vietnamese O Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

VOLUNTEER HISTORY (You may attach an additional sheet if necessary)

Please list your most recent volunteer history (begin with most recent):

ORGANIZATION & VOLUNTEER DATES OF REASON FOR

VOLUNTEER PROJECTS/ VOLUNTEER LEAVING

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES TENURE

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

List any other current community activities and memberships, in clubs, churches, and other organizations:

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

**PERSONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1. Have you had any personal experience involving the following?

(Please check all that apply. Family includes parents, grandparents, siblings, and children.)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Abuse**  |  **Self**  | **Immediate/Extended Family** |
| Sexual Abuse |  |  |
| Physical Abuse |  |  |
| Emotional Abuse |  |  |
| Neglect |  |  |
| Exposure to Domestic Violence |  |  |
| Involved with Child Protective Services |  |  |
| Substance Abuse (Including prescriptions, alcohol, illegal drugs) |  |  |

1. If you checked “Yes” to any of the preceding questions, how do you think your experiences will impact your work with CASA?

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

1. Have you ever been charged with a Civil or Criminal Offense?

O Yes O No

If yes, what charge? Please explain? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL REFERENCES**

Please list three unrelated references:

* At least one reference must be from someone other than a friend or co-worker (ie. Minister, rabbi, teacher, employer, etc.)
* Please provide complete mailing addresses and/or email address where a reference questionnaire may be sent.
* References from relatives are not accepted. Personal letters are not accepted.
* Volunteers must have three (3) positive references submitted prior to completing pre-service training in order to take a case.

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Position:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Company:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Volunteer applicant:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Position:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Company:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Volunteer applicant:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Position:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Company:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Volunteer applicant:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND COMMITMENT**

I hereby certify that the above information is correct and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and I authorize inquiries concerning my suitability as a CASA volunteer Advocate. I understand that all the information will be held in strict confidence and used only for the purpose of determining my suitability as a volunteer advocate.

I understand that qualities of a successful CASA volunteer Advocate include interpersonal skills, compassion, punctuality, and reliability. I further understand that if concerns arise, CASA reserves the right to reject and applicant at any time, including during the training process or after certification.

I understand that all information provided to and obtained by CASA will be held in the strictest of confidence. CASA may, however, disclose to other agencies and organizations, which utilize volunteers, the fact that I applied for and/or served with CASA as a volunteer. Furthermore, all information obtained by CASA will be deemed to be the sole property of the Agency, and shall not be available to me or anyone outside the services of a CASA volunteer advocate, and that CASA is not obligated to assign or actively seek to assign a child to me.

I am aware that, as a CASA volunteer advocate, my primary focus is to advocate for the needs of the abused and neglected children in Titus, Camp, and Morris counties, ranging from birth to age 18, that have been removed from their families by Child Protective Services. I will collaborate with family members, caseworkers, lawyers, therapists, and caregivers (foster parents, relatives, etc.) to provide a recommendation to the judge as to where the children will have a safe and permanent home. I understand I am expected to interview people involved with the child, attend court hearings, submit reports, and communicate with all parties involved during the legal process.

**As a CASA Volunteer Advocate, I will be willing to:** (Please check each circle for “Yes”)

* Commit a minimum of one year to being a CASA Volunteer Advocate
* Complete CASA’s 30+ hour volunteer training program
* Complete 12 hours of continuing education training yearly
* Visit in person with the child(ren) to which I may be assigned at least monthly, in their approved home or foster home to help assess their situation
* Prepare written reports to the court with guidance from CASA Staff
* Participate and attend court hearings, CPS staffing’s, and meetings on my child’s case
* Record and turn in a monthly log (timesheet) of my activities on my case.

**PERMISSION TO RELEASE PRIVATE INFORMATION**

I DO / DO NOT give my permission for you to release my home address and telephone numbers from my volunteer file.

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

Volunteer Applicant Signature Date

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

Printed Name

**CASA OF TITUS, CAMP, AND MORRIS COUNTIES**

**PROGRAM POLICY**

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

The following shall be considered CASA Program policies on confidentiality and shall be strictly followed.

1. In conducting interviews with parents, children, foster parents, teachers, and other professionals pertaining to the case, the CASA may collect information but is prohibited from giving out information to the person(s) being interviewed. There should always be a free exchange of information with the CPS social worker, the Guardian ad Litem, the court appointed therapist, the court, and the CASA staff.
2. When discussing your case with other CASAs, making a presentation (if requested), or with your family, the CASA shall NOT reveal any identifying information, such as names or addresses or other pertinent facts that would cause involved parties to be known. Remember that our town is smaller than you think. The law strictly protects the identities of families and children involved with the Juvenile Court.
3. Remover: You are not a “Privileged information” professional. Anything that you may be told, you may have to report to the court. Tell your CASA child and family in advance, at the onset of establishing your relationship with them that anything they tell you, may be reported to the court. This can prevent many problems and misunderstandings later.
4. Never make any statements to the press about your case or the CASA program. If you are approached by the media, find out their deadlines and inform them that your Executive Director will contact them prior to that deadline.
5. Mark your binders, CASA log books, or any other records pertaining to your CASA case as “CONFIDENTIAL”. Keep these records in a drawer or in a private place at home where family members will not have access to them. Likewise, password protect your phone and your email account so that confidential information may not be shared accidentally. It may be necessary to create a separate email address specifically for your CASA work.
6. Always keep in mind your obligation to maintain confidentiality. If you are ever in doubt as to what to discus with someone, call your CASA Volunteer Supervisor before releasing any information.

Remember, a breach of confidentiality is a serious issue; one that can result in removal from your CASA case at the very least, and other repercussions from the court if serious enough.

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

Volunteer Applicant Signature Date

VERIFICATION OF APPLICATION INFORMATION

AND RELEASE FOR CPS, FBI and LOCAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, do hereby affirm that all of the answers provided on my volunteer application are true. I hereby authorize CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties to investigate my background as part of the screening process to determine my fitness/appropriateness as a potential volunteer. I understand that not all applicants who apply to be a volunteer are chosen to participate in the program and that CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties reserves the right to deny an applicant into the program for any reason.

I understand that the information requested in this application will be used only for the purpose of determining suitability as a CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties volunteer Advocate. Further, I understand that after the successful completion of my training, it will be my goal to serve a minimum of one year in the CASA of Titus, Camp, and Morris Counties program. If unforeseen circumstances prevent me from fulfilling this goal, I will submit my written resignation to my Volunteer Supervisor or the Executive Director with as much advance notice as possible. I am aware of the sensitive and confidential nature of the official documents, reports and other material I will examine in my capacity as a volunteer advocate. I will discuss these matters only with those persons directly involved in the case, or who will be consulted for their professional knowledge and expertise.

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

Volunteer Advocate Signature Date

Revised: May 4, 2017/Approved: 05-08-2017