



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Court Appointed Special Advocate

Name:

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Court Appointed Special Advocate with CASA of Los Angeles! This application will help us assess your eligibility to serve as a volunteer and is a part of the mutual screening process. The information you provide is for internal use only.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete all sections of the application as thoroughly as possible while keeping to the space allotted for the responses. The application will take approximately 60 minutes to complete. If you haven't already done so, please review our Volunteer Position Description, Frequently Asked Questions and Application Process, found on our [website](http://www.casala.org).

The application must be completed on your computer. Please download this application, save to your computer, complete thoroughly, and then resave before submitting it electronically to volunteer@casala.org.

CASA of Los Angeles promotes equal opportunity for all applicants. In doing so, we comply with local, state and federal laws and regulations to ensure an equal opportunity for everyone. We do not discriminate in opportunities or practices on the basis of race, ancestry, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, citizenship, military service obligation, veteran status or any other basis protected by federal, state or local laws. Our policies and practices are intended to ensure that all are treated equally and our decisions are made to further the principle of equal opportunities.

BACKGROUND SCREENING

CASA of Los Angeles thoroughly screens all applicants for the Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteer position. The process of initial and subsequent background screening includes:

1. Fingerprinting (Live Scan)
2. Personal interviews
3. Reference checks
4. Social Security number verification
5. A local security clearance, which requires a valid CA ID (e.g. driver's license)
6. Criminal records (including, but not limited to the local court, CA Department of Justice (DOJ), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI))
7. National Sex Offender Registry
8. Child abuse registries (e.g. Child Abuse Central Index)
9. DMV records
10. Any other investigation that CASA deems appropriate

Administrative Use Only:

Date Application Received: _____ Date of Information Session: _____ Staff Initials: _____

All applicants must submit the required information and authorize a release of information related to the above listed background checks. Refusing to do so will result in a rejection of the application. All applicants accepted for training will be fingerprinted as part of the criminal background check.

Criminal history does not necessarily disqualify you from service. However, any applicant found to have been convicted of, or having 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 will not be accepted as a CASA volunteer.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Legal Name

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First Middle Last

Other Names Used

--

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)

--

Permanent Address

--

Address Line 2

--

City

--

ZIP Code

--

State

--

Main Phone Number

--

--

###-###-####

Type

Alternative Phone Number

--

--

###-###-####

Type

Email

--

Emergency Contact

Emergency Contact Address

Address Line 2

City

ZIP Code

State

Main Phone Number

###-###-####

Type

Alternative Phone Number

###-###-####

Type

Relationship

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Please list the names of your present and/or previous employers in chronological order with present or last employer listed first. Be sure that your employment and educational background will cover the **past seven years**.

Are you or have you ever been employed?

Yes

No

If no, please explain:

Name of Current Employer or, if Retired or Unemployed, Previous Employer

Title/Position

Dates of Employment (MM/YY)

Start Date

End Date (or type current)

Employer Address

Address Line 2

City

ZIP Code

State

Employer Telephone Number

###-###-####

What is your current employment status?

- Full time
- Part time
- Self-employed
- Retired
- Student
- Unemployed and not seeking employment
- Unemployed and seeking employment
- Employed and seeking other job opportunities

Please attach additional sheets to provide information about prior positions to account for the past seven years, as necessary. The information should include the employer's name, address, and telephone number along with your title and the start and end dates of your employment (MM/YY).

EDUCATION

Please provide your educational experience below (starting at high school or equivalent).

School Name	City, State	Years Completed	Degree/Diploma	Area of Study

Are you currently attending school? Yes No I will be soon

If applicable, please provide:

Name of School: _____

Area of Study: _____

Anticipated Graduation Date: _____

POSITION DUTIES

CASA volunteers deal with sensitive issues that may be emotionally demanding. It is important that you possess emotional maturity, self-control and the ability to handle stress; have common sense; are diplomatic, objective and flexible; and exhibit self-assurance and assertiveness. CASAs must be able to interview, observe, listen and analyze written material, write clearly and concisely, and make decisions and set goals. In addition, the CASA volunteer position includes making calls, sending emails, reading and writing reports, composing monthly progress notes and court reports online, attending meetings and traveling to court and visits, etc.

Can you perform the functions of a CASA volunteer, with or without reasonable accommodation?

Yes No

INFORMATIONAL QUESTIONS

Time Availability

CASA of Los Angeles requires a two-year minimum commitment. The time demands for CASA volunteers vary with the case assignment. We estimate volunteers devote an average of 15–20 hours per month to case activities. These activities will include phone calls, in-person meetings and online documentation. Court appearances and some case activities will require you to be available, at times, during regular workweek hours (i.e. contact with CASA coordinators, social workers, teachers, therapists, etc.). Court hearings are scheduled in advance and ample notice is given, barring any unforeseen circumstances.

Are you able to make this time commitment? Yes No

Training

CASA of Los Angeles' pre-service training totals approximately 40 hours and includes in-person instruction and online work. The in-person component is offered in a variety of locations and at different times, including evening and weekend options. Successful completion of the training is required for acceptance into the CASA program and attendance at all training sessions is mandatory.

Can you commit to the training with advance notice? Yes No

When would you be available for training? (check all that apply)

Mornings Afternoons Evenings

Weekdays Weekends

Travel

CASA of Los Angeles serves children throughout Los Angeles County. Traveling is necessary as the duties of a Court Appointed Special Advocate include monthly, face-to-face contact with a child wherever the child is residing. Traveling may also be necessary for information gathering with parties related to the case or conferences as scheduled.

Are you willing to travel in order to undertake your advocacy work? Yes No

Volunteers who transport children or drive on behalf of the organization are required to maintain automobile liability coverage, which satisfies the requirements under California law. In that case, CASA of Los Angeles requires verification of automobile insurance and a valid California driver's license.

REFERENCES

Please list three **non-relative** references who have known you for at least **two years** and who can describe your personal and/or professional capacity to work as a volunteer with CASA. At least one reference should be from employment or volunteer experiences. These references will be contacted and asked to complete a reference questionnaire. Email addresses are required.

1. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Email: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

2. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Email: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

3. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Email: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

PERSONAL STATEMENT

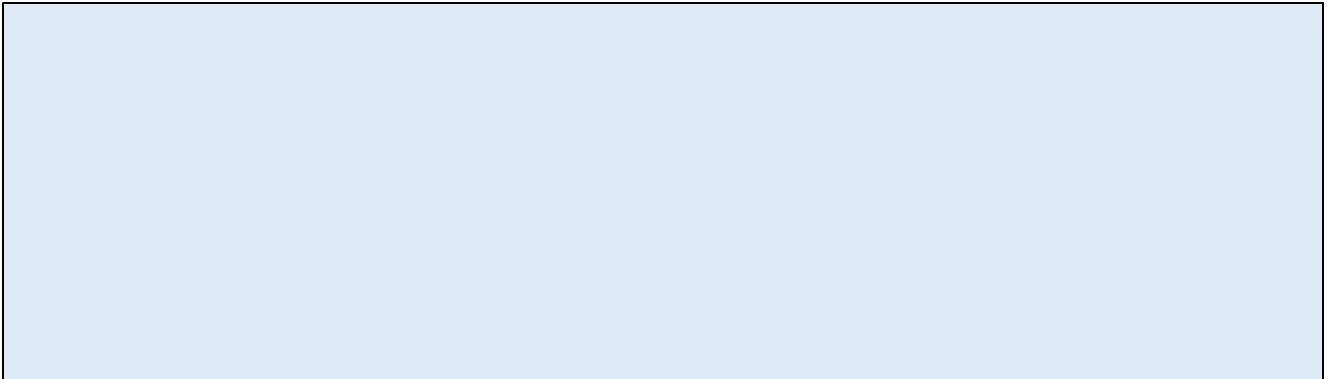
1. How did you hear about CASA of Los Angeles?

2. Why would you like to become a CASA volunteer?

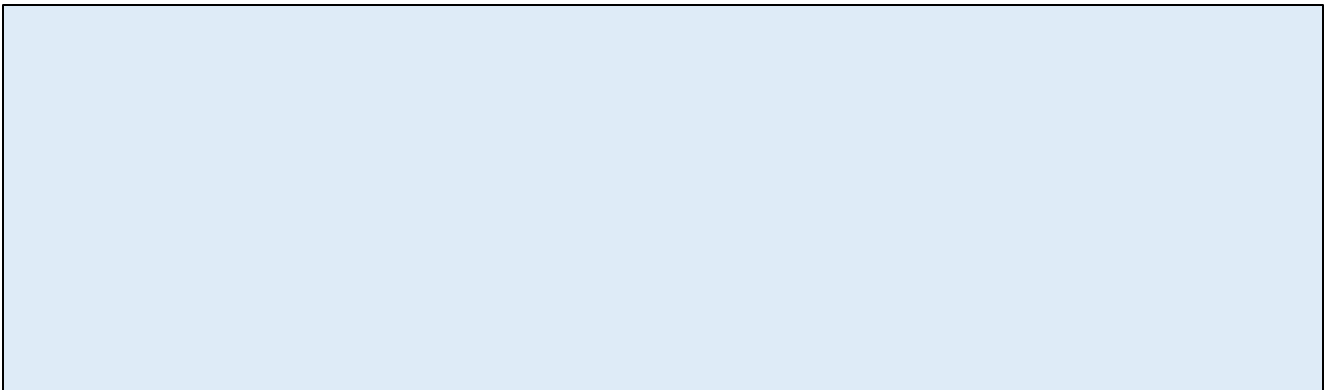
3. How do you hope to benefit personally from this volunteer experience?

4. Please describe any experiences you have had involving people of cultural, social, ethnic and/or economic circumstances different from your own.

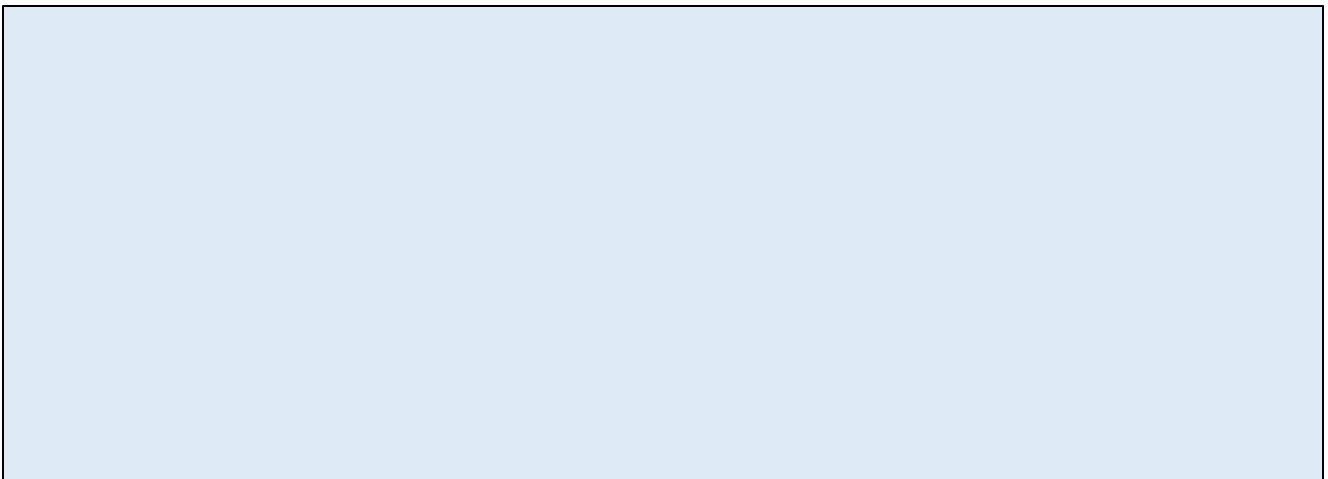
5. Please describe any personal, professional or volunteer experience with foster children and/or their families.



6. Please describe any additional training, special skills or languages you may have acquired through employment, volunteer service or life experience that may contribute to being a CASA volunteer.



7. Please describe how you will balance your current obligations with the CASA volunteer role. In your response, consider any work, school and other commitments, such as volunteer work, extracurricular activities and family obligations.



8. **Autobiography:** Please write a short autobiography (100–500 words). Please include any relevant information about your childhood, background and family history that may impact your volunteer advocacy role with children in the foster care system. Please include in your response any experience with issues which you may encounter as a volunteer advocate, such as: domestic violence; substance abuse; physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, or neglect/abandonment of children; psychotropic medication or mental health. Attach additional sheets as necessary.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/EXPECTATIONS (please type in your initials)

INITIALS

1. I am over 21 years of age.

INITIALS

2. I am not a foster parent nor do I receive financial compensation from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or any DCFS contractor.

INITIALS

3. Upon successful completion of the screening and volunteer training, I will be expected to serve approximately 20 hours a month for at least 24 months as a CASA volunteer.

INITIALS

4. I will submit to a background investigation to determine my suitability of serving as a CASA volunteer, including but not limited to, a criminal background check with fingerprinting.

INITIALS

5. I will participate in on-going supervision and continuing education training classes, cooperating fully with staff and adhering to all agency-approved report-writing criteria.

INITIALS

6. As an applicant of CASA of Los Angeles I understand and acknowledge that CASA of Los Angeles is not obligated in any way to accept me into the volunteer training program by submission of this application.

INITIALS

7. I understand and agree that CASA of Los Angeles retains the right to refuse any individual, at any time, it feels would not serve the best interests of the child or the program. CASA of Los Angeles is not required to state the reason for declining an applicant into the program if they so choose.

INITIALS

8. I understand that any applicant found to have been convicted of or having current charges pending for a felony or misdemeanor involving a sex offense, child abuse or child neglect must not be accepted as a CASA volunteer.

Please read the statement below and type your name and today's date.

I understand that I am applying to be a CASA volunteer, to serve without promise, expectation or receipt of any compensation for the service performed.

I hereby agree to a complete background check, and that CASA of Los Angeles may do whatever is necessary to verify the validity of my statements. Further, I fully consent to the communication and sharing of any information learned about me during the screening process and subsequent service, including with outside people and organizations, regardless of the nature of the information, as necessary to ensure a complete background investigation and protect children and the integrity of the CASA Network.

I certify that I understand that volunteer placement is a selection process and that not all applicants are accepted into the program. I understand that volunteers are selected based on individual ability to meet the responsibilities of the CASA Program.

I also understand that because of the nature of the screening process, CASA of Los Angeles is not obligated to disclose to me reason(s) for any decision concerning my acceptance or non-acceptance into the program.

Furthermore, I understand that CASA of Los Angeles has to consider the best interests of the children first when matching them with CASA volunteers. Thus, I understand that the agency is not obligated to assign to me a child and that submission of this application in no way obligates me to perform volunteer services.

I hereby certify, under the penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of California, that the information provided by me in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Full legal name: _____

Date: _____

Before submitting, please review the following checklist to make sure your application is complete:

Did you ...

- Provide employment history for the last 7 years (as appropriate)?
- Ensure that you provided three non-relative references who have known you for at least two years, including an individual who can speak to your volunteer or work experience?
- Address all personal statement questions thoroughly?
- Type your initials by all statements on p. 11?
- Type your name and the date on p. 12?

Please submit your typed application electronically to CASA of Los Angeles at volunteer@casala.org.