



## CANOPY CENTER

### COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA)

Program/Administration	CASA of Dane & Columbia Counties		
Location	2445 Darwin Road, Ste. 15, Madison, WI		
Volunteer Title	Court Appointed Special Advocate		
Reports to	Your assigned case coordinator	Title	CASA Case Coordinator

Type of Position	Hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time <input type="checkbox"/> Limited-term Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Intern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Volunteer	2-3/week

#### AGENCY VISION AND MISSION

Our vision is to give every person an opportunity to have a voice in identifying and addressing their needs; and to provide social connections, to fully develop their sense of self and community.  
 Our mission is to help strengthen families and support children, teens, and adults impacted by trauma and adversity.

#### CASA OF DANE & COLUMBIA COUNTIES MISSION

The mission of CASA is to be an independent voice for children who are under the legal protection of the courts due to abuse or neglect. We do this by training, supporting, and supervising community based volunteers who advocate for these children in the community and in the courts with the goal of establishing them in safe, permanent homes as soon as possible.

#### POSITION SUMMARY

Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) provide a voice in the court for a child involved with the Dane and Columbia Counties child welfare systems for cases of abuse, neglect, or other situations impacting the child's safety, permanency, or well-being. This is a crucial role for some of Dane & Columbia Counties' most vulnerable children!

CASAs are appointed by and act as the eyes and ears for the juvenile court judge. Advocates make weekly visits to their assigned child (either in the parental home, foster home, residential treatment facility, at school, or in the community), as well as correspond with caregivers, teachers, and other service providers to get a complete picture of the child's history and current circumstances. CASAs, with the support from CASA of Dane & Columbia Counties staff, provide written reports to judges and parties to the case, helping them to make more informed decisions that ensure the child reaches a safe and permanent home as soon as possible. CASAs also work cooperatively with social workers, attorneys, and other professionals involved in the case to recommend and coordinate services that support the best interests of the child.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Must be at least 21 years old with a high school diploma or G.E.D.
- Complete a volunteer application, clear a background check, and attend a volunteer interview.
- Attend training(s) specific to the volunteer position.
- Ability to work with a diverse population.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and objectivity.
- Access to reliable transportation.
- Warm, friendly demeanor and positive attitude.

## Preferred Knowledge and Skills

- Computer skills and familiarity with Microsoft Office.
- Excellent organizational skills.
- Personal and/or professional experience with child protective agencies, foster care, juvenile court, or other child service agencies.
- Bilingual volunteers are strongly encouraged to apply.

## DUTIES

- Weekly meetings with an assigned child, as well as ongoing communication with family members and other professionals involved in their case.
- Review and monitor documents and records related to the case
- Minimum of once monthly phone or in person conversation with assigned Case Coordinator.
- Advocate for the child's best interests to the court and raise concerns about the child's health, education, mental health, etc. with the appropriate professionals.
- Keep the court informed by providing written reports for court hearings, appearing in court when necessary and able, and updating the court on developments with agencies and family members.
- Work cooperatively with individuals and organizations involved in the child's life to ensure that the child and their family are receiving appropriate services. As one volunteer said: *Be the glue that connects the pieces in a complicated child welfare system.*

## TIME COMMITMENT

- Minimum 12 month commitment from time of case assignment.
- A minimum of 1 weekly (1-2 hour) visit with the assigned child.
- Estimated 8-12 hours monthly to prepare weekly status updates, monthly court reports, and communicate with other professionals involved in the case.

## POSITION BENEFITS

- Direct experience for those interested in counseling, social work, law, and other related fields.
- Learn about issues facing children and families with special needs.
- Develop communication and report-writing skills.

## TO APPLY

- Visit our website: [www.canopycenter.org](http://www.canopycenter.org)
- Or Contact: [volunteercoordinator@canopycenter.org](mailto:volunteercoordinator@canopycenter.org)
- The Canopy Center and CASA of Dane & Columbia Counties are equal opportunity organizations.