



## Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate

2801 10<sup>th</sup> Street ▪ Everett, WA 98201-4046

Office: (425) 388-7854

Fax: (425) 388-7856

[CASA@snoco.org](mailto:CASA@snoco.org)

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Dear Prospective CASA Volunteer:

Thank you for your interest in becoming a court appointed special advocate with the Snohomish County Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate. By advocating for an abused or neglected child, you give that child a voice – and a chance for a better life.

Due to the confidential nature of the volunteer CASA role, the interview and screening process is in-depth. We appreciate you taking the first step by requesting an application. Based on an initial review of the completed application, qualified applicants will be contacted for an in-person interview.

During the interview process, applicants will be required to complete a fingerprint-based background check and a Washington State Child Abuse/Neglect (CAN) history check (per RCW 13.34.100). A consent to release information will need to be signed at the time of the interview in order to conduct the required background checks. After the in-person interview, qualified applicants will be invited to participate in a required 32+ hour pre-service training

**Becoming a CASA volunteer is an investment of time, energy and heart.** The Snohomish County Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate has been serving the community since 1979 (formerly as the Snohomish County VGAL/CASA Program). During that time, the lives of many vulnerable children were forever shaped by the important advocacy work done by CASA volunteers serving the community.

For more detailed information about the CASA volunteer position, please feel free to research National CASA at <https://nationalcasagal.org> or Washington Association of Child Advocate Programs at [www.wachildadvocates.org](http://www.wachildadvocates.org).

After completing the CASA volunteer application and supplemental questions, please return it to our office via fax, email, US mail or personal delivery Monday-Friday between 8am – 5pm. Upon receipt, we will initiate the intake process and contact you to advise of the next steps. Training dates and times are regularly updated online: <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/CASA>.

Thank you for your interest in applying to become a CASA volunteer. We look forward to hearing from you.

With Gratitude:

The Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate

Snohomish County

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Everett, WA 98201

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## Directions to Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate 2801 10<sup>th</sup> Street - Everett WA 98201

### **FROM THE NORTH:**

Immediately after passing the Marysville exit take the Port of Everett exit into Everett. Remain on this road (Old 99) until crossing the bridges. Take the first exit to the right. Turn right onto E. Marine View Drive. Stay on E. Marine View Drive for approximately one-half mile to 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Take a right on 10<sup>th</sup> Street and travel two blocks. The Youth Center is on the right-hand side of the street, opposite the substation.

### **COMING FROM THE SOUTH:**

Continue on I-5 through Everett to the last Everett exit (No. 195), East Marine View Drive – (this is a right turn lane exit). At the bottom of the exit hill, take a left turn onto E. Marine View Drive. Travel on this road approximately one-half mile to 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Turn left on 10<sup>th</sup> Street and travel two blocks. DJJC is on the right side of the street, opposite the substation.

### **COMING FROM THE EAST:**

Upon crossing the trestle, take the Vancouver (or North I-5) exit. Continue on I-5 to Exit No. 195. Then continue as if coming from the south (paragraph above).

### **COMING FROM EVERETT:**

Traveling north on Broadway, turn right onto 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Proceed through the three-way intersection to Poplar. Take a left onto Poplar and travel two blocks to 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Turn right onto 10<sup>th</sup> Street. DJJC is located on the left, opposite the substation.

**There is a sign on the east side of E. Marine View Drive which reads, “Juvenile Court – Youth Center,” which will direct you west on 10<sup>th</sup> Street.**



# Court Appointed Special Advocate Job Description

## **Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate:**

The mission of the Snohomish County Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate is to recruit, train, and support quality volunteer advocacy for the best interests of abused and/or neglected children involved in the court system. The program's goal is to provide representation for the dependent children in Snohomish County through well-trained and supported community volunteers acting in the role of court appointed special advocates.

## **Who is the dependent child?**

Dependent children are defined as those children who are under 18 years of age, who have no parent willing or able to care for them, or who are abandoned, abused, or neglected and under the care of Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF). A court appointed special advocate may be appointed for these children to represent what is in their best interests to the court during the dependency process.

## **CASA Volunteer Duties:**

The Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is appointed by a Snohomish County Superior Court judge, by and through the Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate, to serve as an advocate for the best interests of a child who is the subject of a dependency proceeding. The primary duties of the CASA volunteer are:

**Investigate:** Collect relevant information about the child's situation; gather objective, fact-based information about the child's situation; review confidential, case related documents, speak with individuals related to the case (parents, relatives, caseworker, teachers, counselors, foster parents, doctors) and report to the court factual information regarding the best interests of the child;

**Interview:** To meet with, interview, or observe the child, depending on the child's age and developmental status, and report to the court any views or positions expressed by the child on issues pending before the court;

**Monitor:** To monitor all court orders for compliance and to bring to the court's attention any change in circumstances that may require a modification of the court's order; To report to the court information on the legal status of a child's membership in any Indian tribe or band;

**Report:** To complete, in a timely manner, written reports to the court that address the historical and current facts of the child's situation, the CASA's conclusions based on the facts, and the CASA's recommendations to the court to serve the best interests of the child;

**Recommendations:** CASAs may make recommendations based upon an independent investigation regarding the best interests of the child, which the court may consider and weigh in conjunction with the recommendations of all of the parties;

**Advocate:** To represent and be an advocate for the best interests of the child; attend all court hearings pertaining to the child, submit timely court reports, and attend case staffings;

**Right to Counsel:** To inform the child, if the child is twelve years old or older, of his or her right to request counsel and to ask the child whether he/she wishes to have counsel.



## **MINIMUM JOB REQUIREMENTS:**

A Court Appointed Special Advocate must be at least 21 years of age, have a high school education, must possess a valid driver's license and have access to transportation. The CASA must complete an application form and authorize the Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate to check at least three references unrelated to the applicant. The CASA must consent to and pass a fingerprint-based criminal history background check and a Washington State Child Abuse/Neglect (CAN) history check. The CASA Program Coordinator or Program Senior will interview the qualified applicants to determine suitability for the required pre-service training program and CASA volunteer position.

The CASA must be comfortable speaking, reading and writing in the English language, be able to write coherent reports that are fact-based and logical in conclusions and recommendations, and to assertively speak to the child's best interests in court. The CASA must agree to perform the duties as described above, in an ethical and lawful manner, and consistent with the policies of the Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate, and in accordance with the Guardian ad Litem Rules and Washington State RCWs. The CASA must be willing to make a minimum commitment of volunteering for the duration of their assigned case.

## **Court Appointed Special Advocate Pre-Service Training**

The CASA Pre-Service Training Program has three primary goals:

1. To give the volunteer specific guidelines as to the role and function of a CASA;
2. To impart knowledge of the Juvenile Court Dependency System and the support services provided by the Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate; and
3. To provide training in the necessary skills needed to perform the role of the CASA, such as interviewing, gathering information, report writing, cultural competency, confidentiality, records management, testifying and courtroom etiquette. Case consultation and legal support are also provided to all CASAs.