



Important Information for Judges Handling CPS Cases

Notification to Courts of New CASA Screening Procedure

We are forwarding the following information from Texas CASA regarding a new procedure for notification to the court of completed training and background checks for volunteers and staff who supervise volunteers.

Texas CASA and its network of seventy-two CASA programs appreciates the crucial nature of support and partnership that exists between our courts and CASA, allowing CASA to serve the best interest of abused and neglected children in Suits Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship.

Both National and Texas CASA Standards and the Texas Administrative Code require a thorough vetting of volunteers prior to their service on a case. Volunteers complete a fingerprint-based criminal history check, child abuse and neglect registry check, and social security number verification. Volunteers also complete at least thirty hours of pre-service volunteer training to prepare them for their role as a Guardian ad Litem/CASA volunteer.

Beginning **September 1, 2016**, local CASA programs will provide documentation confirming that each volunteer has been thoroughly vetted. This documentation will include the dates that background checks and pre-service training were completed on each new volunteer and new staff hired to supervise volunteers.

CASA programs may inform the court in a variety of ways prior to or at case appointment. You may want to work out a particular method of notification with your local chapter.

CASA deeply respects the judiciary's trust in CASA volunteers. That confidence is foundational to the CASA role.