

**THE JACKSON COUNTY CASA PROGRAM
COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES**
www.jacksoncountycasa-mo.org

OFFICE NUMBERS:

(816) 842-2272 phone number

(816) 842-7788 fax number

MAILING ADDRESS:

Family Justice Center

625 East 26th Street

Kansas City, MO 64108

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE:

2544 Holmes

Kansas City, MO 64108

1. CASA is appointed as the Guardian ad Litem in abuse and neglect cases pursuant to 210.160.1(1), just as the Office of the Guardian ad Litem. The Jackson County CASA program then selects a CASA volunteer for each case. The volunteer works directly with one of the program's attorneys. The attorney is the recognized Guardian ad Litem for the case who voices recommendations regarding the child's best interest at all court hearings. The volunteer is supervised by a Case Supervisor, who provides support and guidance to the volunteer. Other statutes regarding the Guardian ad Litem's role fall primarily within the provisions of Chapters 210 and 211.
2. The CASA administrative office is located directly north of the Family Justice Center. The best way to reach a CASA supervisor, volunteer, or staff attorney is by phone. It is possible to leave a message for a volunteer on his or her supervisor's voice mail. As a parent's appointed attorney, you may find that most of your communication is done with the CASA attorney. If you are at court and looking for the CASA representatives, have their names paged at the Information Desk located near the courtrooms.
3. Jackson County CASA is a not-for-profit organization, founded in 1983. It is one of over 900 CASA programs nationwide. Our mission is to represent children and speak for their best interests in court. In the Jackson County program we have 13 paid staff members, two of which are attorneys, approximately 150 active CASA volunteers, and several volunteer attorneys.
4. CASA volunteers must complete 30 hours of pre-service training. They are responsible for monitoring a case, observing the family, maintaining contact with the Division of Family Services worker and any other service provider, and working one-on-one with the child or children, all of this in tandem with the Guardian ad Litem. Because the volunteer has only one case, he or she is better able to know each child and build a level of trust with that child.

5. The CASA team of attorney, volunteer, and case supervisor follows all the rules of professional conduct and does not have any contact with the Court outside the courtroom. As the Juvenile Officer does, CASA liberally apply the rules of discovery. It is our practice to consider anything the CASA volunteer knows as attorney-client privilege and thus protected from discovery or testimony. CASA will contact a parent's attorney prior to any contact with the parent.

6. In working for the best interest of the child, CASA attempts to maintain open lines of communication with all of the people participating in a case. Often, mis- information can confuse and drag out the legal process. That is why maintaining contact with the case worker, parent aid, therapist, and others who hold information is an important job for the Guardian ad Litem and key to the child's welfare.