

Job Description for Volunteers

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA) Guardian ad Litem Program

PROGRAM GOALS

1. To provide independent factual information to the Family Court regarding abused, neglected, and dependent children.
2. To provide advocacy for abused, neglected, and dependent children who are the subject of judicial proceedings.
3. To monitor cases involving abused, neglected, and dependent children until the terms of a Court Order have been fulfilled.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. To conduct independent investigations concerning abused, neglected, and dependent children.
2. To factually and objectively report findings and observations to Family Court.
3. To insure representation of the child's best interest in all judicial proceedings.
4. To monitor cases following a Court Hearing or decision as designated by the Court.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Complete an intensive independent investigation
 - a. Interview the child and relevant adults
 - b. Review appropriate records and reports
 - c. Observe the child and significant others
2. Report findings to the Court
 - a. Provide a written report containing factual information
 - b. Testify at Court Hearings concerning the child
 - c. Participate in case conferences concerning the child

3. Insure representation of the child's best interest
 - a. Attend all Court proceedings to see that all relevant facts are presented
 - b. Attend appropriate interagency meetings regarding the child
 - c. Request legal counsel for the child when necessary
 - d. Prod public systems into action
4. Monitor case following a Court Hearing or decision as designated by the Court
5. Attend training arranged by Program Coordinator
 - a. Attend initial training sessions
 - b. Complete specific tasks during internship
 - c. Attend on-going training/support sessions and business meetings
6. Consult regularly with the Program Coordinator concerning assigned case
 - a. Develop a case plan
 - b. Discuss preliminary findings
 - c. Review progress in the case
 - d. Review reports
7. Participate in evaluations of your performance
 - a. Evaluate quality of your work
 - b. Assess your job satisfaction
 - c. Set learning/performance objectives
 - d. Evaluate quality of supervision

REQUIRED SKILLS/ABILITIES

1. Ability to keep all client and Court information confidential
2. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing
3. Ability to respect and relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural, educational) in a variety of settings
4. Ability to transport self to a variety of locations
5. Ability to deal with hostility, anger, and other emotional attitudes
6. Ability to maintain objectivity
7. Ability to gather and accurately record factual information
8. A basic understanding of child development
9. A basic understanding of family relationships

TRAINING

Volunteers in the Guardian ad Litem Program are required to attend thirty hours of initial training. The training is followed by a period of internship during which specific skills are practiced. Upon completion of initial training and internship, the CASA is eligible for case assignment.

One on-going training/support session and one business meeting are scheduled each month. Attendance at these meetings is expected. CASAs will also receive direct supervision and guidance from the Program Coordinator.

TIME COMMITMENT

Volunteers are required to commit themselves to the program for one year. Volunteers are expected to be available for case assignment and to accept cases upon request of the Program Coordinator unless:

- a. The CASA is already active with a case
- b. A serious conflict in values exists between the CASA and an issue relative to the case
- c. The CASA has informed the Program Coordinator of a pre-planned vacation or personal commitment
- d. The CASA cannot participate due to illness
- e. The CASA has requested a temporary respite from service

SCHEDULE and OBJECTIVES
for GUARDIAN AD LITEM Training Program

Tuesday September 13, 1983

9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

1. Orientation to Family Court

- a) To familiarize CASAs with the jurisdiction, organization, and services provided by Family Court.
- b) To familiarize CASAs with their rights and responsibilities as Family Court volunteers.

2. History and Background of the Guardian Ad Litem Program

- a) To familiarize CASAs with the state and national history of Guardian Ad Litem programs.
- b) To familiarize CASAs with the content and procedures of investigations from the beginning to the end of CASA involvement.

Thursday September 15, 1983

9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

3. Permanency Planning

- a) To familiarize CASAs with the concept of permanency planning and why it is important for children.
- b) To familiarize CASAs with permanency planning alternatives.
- c) To familiarize CASAs with foster care review systems in the state of Delaware.

4. CASA and the Law in Delaware

- a) To familiarize CASAs with the difference between the role of the DCPS worker and the role of the CASA.
- b) To familiarize CASAs with the concepts of "best interest" and "minimal adequate care" as they relate to DCPS and CASA responsibilities.

- c) To familiarize CASAs with basic legal concepts, proceedings, statutes, and issues associated with CASA cases.
- d) To familiarize CASAs with the role of the staff attorney.

Monday September 19, 1983

9:30 a.m. - 3:30p.m.

5. Overview of Child Development

- a) To familiarize CASAs with the stages of child development.
- b) To recognize age-appropriate behavior in each stage of development.
- c) To understand how separation from a caretaker can influence behavior in each stage.

6. Overview of Child Abuse

- a) To familiarize CASAs with the history, dynamics, and indicators of child abuse.
- b) To familiarize CASAs with treatment resources available for abusive parents and abused children.

Tuesday September 20, 1983

9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

7. Interviewing

- a) To familiarize CASAs with interviewing theory and techniques.
- b) To provide information and exercises on interviewing so that CASAs will feel confident in a variety of interview situations.

8. Report Writing

- a) To familiarize CASAs with the format for reports to the Court.
- b) To understand the importance of objectivity, factual information, and documentation in report writing.
- c) To familiarize CASAs with ways to avoid some common errors in report writing.

Thursday September 22, 1983

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

9. Courtroom Procedures

- a) To familiarize CASAs with legal terminology, courtroom procedures, and appropriate courtroom conduct.
- b) To prepare CASAs to present their findings in verbal testimony.

10. CASA Experiences

- a) To introduce new CASAs to active CASAs so that they may learn from case examples.
- b) To involve active CASAs in the training of new CASAs in order to encourage their active participation in the Guardian ad Litem program.

11. Mock Hearing

- a) To observe courtroom procedures.
- b) To understand the roles of judges, attorneys, and witnesses.
- c) To observe how testimony is presented in the courtroom.

12. Swearing in of New CASAs

GUARDIAN AD LITEM PROGRAM

CASA Internship Requirements

- _____ 1. Read Before the Best Interest of the Child by Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit. Some copies are available in the Family Court counselors' library, or you may wish to purchase your own paperback copy (\$3.95).
- _____ 2. Review a legal file with the Program Coordinator.
- _____ 3. Write a case plan based on the information in the file.
- _____ 4. Observe an interview conducted by an active CASA or other staff member approved by the Coordinator.
- _____ 5. Visit a community resource of your choice and share what you have learned with other CASAs in a group discussion.
- _____ 6. Observe a Court Hearing at Family Court. (Arrange this through the Program Coordinator.)
- _____ 7. Learn where to get supplies for the CASA office.
- _____ 8. Learn how to use the telephone in the CASA office.
- _____ 9. Learn how to use the copy machine on the second floor.
- _____ 10. Learn how to sign out a file from the Records area.
- _____ 11. Learn how to refer and schedule clients for alcohol/drug evaluations and psychological evaluations at Family Court.
- _____ 12. Participate in a tour of the Family Court building.
- _____ 13. Interview a parent of your choice and discuss the interview with the Program Coordinator.
- _____ 14. Interview a child of your choice and discuss the interview with the Program Coordinator.

Internship Requirements completed on _____.
(date)

CASA

Program Coordinator

FAMILY COURT

Job Description for Volunteers

PERSONNEL ASSISTANT TO THE COORDINATOR OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Purpose

To assist the Personnel Department in the development and implementation of its volunteer program.

Areas of Responsibilities

The amount of responsibility carried by the personnel assistant is determined by the length of time the assistant will be with the Court.

1. Recruitment of Volunteers and Public Relations

Examples of specific tasks:

- a. Distribute recruitment materials to community groups
- b. Speak to individuals and groups about the volunteer program
- c. Develop public relations materials, such as press releases and posters

2. Screening of Volunteers

Examples of specific tasks:

- a. Make telephone reference calls on applicants
- b. Gradually assume responsibility for interviewing applicants

3. Orientation and training of Volunteers

Examples of specific tasks:

- a. Put together orientation manuals
- b. Help plan and administer the orientation program
 1. Arrange for speakers
 2. Invite participants

4. Recognition of Volunteers

Example of specific tasks:

- a. Plan annual recognition event in the spring
- b. Write about volunteers for in-house newsletter

5. Recordkeeping

Examples of specific tasks:

- a. Update records on composition of volunteer staff
- b. Keep records on number of volunteer hours worked

Required Abilities

1. Ability to work with people from a variety of economic, cultural and educational backgrounds.
2. Ability to speak and write clearly and concisely.
3. Ability to keep all Court information confidential.
4. Ability to be organized and complete assigned tasks with attention to small details.

Training

The Personnel Assistant will receive six hours of orientation training on Family Court policies and procedures and on-going on-the-job training from the Coordinator of Volunteer Programs.

The Personnel Assistant may also request to attend any in-house training offered to court staff.

Time Commitment

A minimum of one day or two half days per week. A one year time commitment is preferable. A student will be accepted, however, if able to work two consecutive semesters.

JOB DESCRIPTION for VOLUNTEERS

Victim/Witness Information Program (V/WIP)

PROGRAM PURPOSE:

- 1) To gather information from Victims concerning their losses so that the Court will be informed and thus be better able to consider the victims' losses (for example, by ordering the offender to make restitution or perform community service) at the time of disposition.
- 2) To provide information about Family Court to victims and witnesses so they might better understand how the Court functions and what to expect when participating in Court proceedings.
- 3) To provide information to certain victims about the status of their cases in Family Court.

OVERALL PROGRAM GOALS:

- 1) To alleviate any undue confusion or frustration the victim or witness might experience as a result of participating in Family Court proceedings.
- 2) (As a result of accomplishing No. 1) to strengthen relations with the community.
- 3) To help victims present statements of their losses and requests about disposition on their cases to the Court.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1) V/WIP volunteers will send out victim loss forms to victims, and upon request from the victim, help the victim fill out the form. The volunteer will offer this assistance either over the phone or in their office in Family Court.
- 2) V/WIP volunteers will be available to victims and witnesses in Family Court to provide them with information and answer their questions about how Family Court operates. The volunteer will provide this information by phone, in their office, or on the floors where the hearings are held.
- 3) V/WIP volunteers will call or write certain victims to inform them of the status of their case (e.g., the outcome of their case after any given hearing).

REQUIRED SKILLS AND/OR ABILITIES:

- 1) Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- 2) Ability to relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural and educational).
- 3) Ability to listen and be empathetic.
- 4) Ability to deal with hostility, anger and other emotional attitudes.
- 5) Ability to keep all client and Court information confidential.
- 6) Ability to be an objective, neutral representative of the Court in dealing with possible victims of crime.

TRAINING:

VWIP volunteers are required to attend approximately six hours of orientation on general Court procedures before receiving on-the-job training for the job responsibilities mentioned above. In addition, VWIP volunteers will be afforded ongoing training in the form of in-house and other special training offered to other paid staff members. On-going training sessions on V/WIP are held on Wednesdays.

TIME COMMITMENT:

A minimum of one-half day per week for a period of six months.

JOB DESCRIPTION for VOLUNTEERS

Receptionist

PURPOSE:

To greet clients, attorneys, witnesses, and victims upon arrival to Family Court for hearings and/or appointments with judges or other staff members.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. To greet clients, attorneys, witnesses, and victims upon arrival to Family Court.
2. Insuring that all clients are checked-in for hearings.
3. Calling judges or other staff when their appointments arrive.
4. Answering phones and taking messages at the reception desk.
5. Receiving information about a case from the legal assistant and/or bailiff after a court hearing and writing it down for the court record.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND/OR ABILITIES:

1. Sincere interest in helping people.
2. Polite manner on the telephone and in person.
3. Ability to keep all court information confidential.
4. Must be organized, and neat in work habits and appearance.
5. Ability to do light typing (preferable, not required).

TRAINING:

The volunteer will receive an orientation to Family Court from the Office of Volunteer Services. The volunteer will receive on-the-job training for the job responsibilities mentioned above by receptionist personnel. In addition, the volunteer will receive direct supervision and guidance from the Clerk of Court.

TIME COMMITMENT:

A minimum of one-half day per week for a period of six months. One school semester (4-5 months) is acceptable for students.

JOB DESCRIPTION for VOLUNTEERS
Clerk Typist - Data Control Unit

PURPOSE:

To type form notices, make docket entries, and assist the Data Control Unit with their duties.

JOE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Type form notices for hearings.
2. Type entries on the docket sheets.
3. Prepare notices for mailing.
4. Pull files.
5. Maintain subpoena log.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND/OR ABILITIES:

1. Accuracy, not speed, in typing.
2. Must be organized and neat in work habits and experience.
3. Ability to keep all Court information confidential.

TRAINING:

The volunteer will receive an orientation to Family Court from the Office of Volunteer Services. The volunteer will receive on-the-job training for the job responsibilities mentioned above by the supervisor in the Data Control Unit. In addition, the volunteer will receive direct supervision and guidance from the data control supervisor.

TIME COMMITMENT:

A minimum of one-half day per week for a period of six months. One school semester (4-5 months) is acceptable for students.

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR VOUNTEERS

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

PURPOSE:

To gain detailed information about the filings processed in Family Court.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

To categorize information gathered from logs and some research into some files.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND/OR ABILITIES:

1. Must be reasonably well organized.
2. Legible handwriting.
3. Must be able to keep Court information confidential.
4. Basic mathematical concepts. In this position one will use mostly simple math skills: addition, subtraction, percentage.
5. Some ability to graph information, usually line or bar graphs, is helpful.
6. Accuracy is more important than speed.
7. The ability to ask questions whenever information or a situation is unclear.

TRAINING:

The volunteer will receive an orientation to Family Court from the Office of Volunteer Services. The volunteer will receive on-the-job training from the statistician with whom he/she will be working.

THE COMMITMENT:

One-half day per week through June.

JOB DESCRIPTION for VOLUNTEERS

File Room Clerk

PURPOSE:

To assist file room personnel with their general duties.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Logging in and filing Family Court legal records.
2. Answering telephone and taking messages.
3. Greeting attorneys, military personnel, and pre-sentence officers at the file room reception area and taking down their requests for information.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND/OR ABILITIES:

1. Sincere interest in helping people.
2. Polite manner on the telephone and in person.
3. Ability to keep all court information confidential.
4. Must be organized, and neat in work habits and appearance.

TRAINING:

The volunteer will receive an orientation to Family Court from the Office of Volunteer Services. The volunteer will receive on-the-job training for the job responsibilities mentioned above by the supervisor of the file room. In addition, the volunteer will receive direct supervision and guidance from the file room supervisor.

TIME COMMITMENT:

A minimum of one-half day per week for a period of six months. One school semester (4-5 months) is acceptable for students.

FAMILY COURT

Job Description for Volunteers

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS CASE AIDE

Program Goal

The case aide will serve the Court and the public by assisting the professional counselor in conducting thorough Pre-Sentence and Amenity Investigations.

Case Aide's Objectives

1. To gather the required informations for specific portions of investigative reports, thereby freeing the Investigating Counselor to concentrate more thoroughly on other areas.
2. To also assist in routine Court functions such as coordinating appointments and copying and delivering reports.
3. To develop dispositional alternatives by researching existing community resources, especially those of a recreational nature for juveniles.
4. As available time and skill level permit, to independently conduct whole investigations.

Job Responsibilities

1. Investigation Casework - The Case Aide will be responsible for compiling the following sections of selected investigative reports:
 - A. Offense Information
 - 1) Official Version - The Case Aide will obtain copies of police reports and be available for additional liaison work with police agencies and the Attorney General's Office. The Case Aide will review Court files of co-defendants for current status.
 - 2) Victim's Version - The Case Aide will solicit input from victims (in person, by mail, or by telephone) for their account of their losses and their opinions on disposition.
 - B. Prior Record
 - 1) Family Court - The Case Aide will chronologize all prior Court activity, making copies of dispositions, reports, and other important documents.
 - 2) Other Jurisdictions - The Case Aide will also obtain records from other Courts in this and other states through computer print-outs and other liaison work.

C. Education

The Case Aide will arrange to visit school officials to obtain information about the client's current and former records of grades, attendance, and discipline.

2. Clerical Assistance

- A. The Case Aide will make copies of completed reports and deliver them to Judges/Masters, Attorneys, and Counselors.
- B. The Case Aide will arrange appointments for clients to undergo psychological/psychiatric and drug/alcohol evaluations.

3. Research and Development of Community Resources - The Case Aide will search out and gather information about existing recreational activities for clients, such as Police Athletic Programs and Community Centers.

Required Skills and/or Abilities

- 1. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- 2. Ability to relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural, and educational).
- 3. Ability to empathetically listen even in the face of hostile attitudes.
- 4. Ability to keep all client and Court information confidential.
- 5. An understanding of adolescents and youth culture.
- 6. An interest and aptitude for investigative research.

Training

Criminal Investigations Case Aides are required to attend approximately six hours of orientation training on general Court policies and procedures before receiving on-the-job training for the job responsibilities mentioned above. On-the-job training will be accomplished by accompanying an experienced counselor as they perform their task.

Criminal Investigations Volunteers will be afforded ongoing training in the form of in-house and other special training offered to other paid staff members.

Time Commitment

A minimum of six hours a week for no less than six months. Special

consideration may be made for students available for one semester only; however, a time commitment for two consecutive school semesters is preferable.

Additional Information

This is not a counseling position. The most suitable Case Aide would be someone with a background in Criminal Justice or Police Science and an interest in investigative work.

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR VOLUNTEERS

PUBLIC DEFENDER CASE AIDE

Public Defender's Office
Family Court

Program Purpose

1. To obtain an additional resource for the attorneys in the Public Defender's Office. The case aide, by performing the more routine case-related tasks, will free the attorneys to conduct the more complex aspects of their job.
2. To educate and involve students in the process of providing legal representation to indigent juvenile delinquents.

Job Responsibilities

1. Attend court hearings for the purposes of evaluating and analyzing court proceedings. The student can provide objective feedback to the public defenders concerning witness credibility and courtroom demeanor. This also provides a learning experience for the student.
2. Interview witnesses for the purposes of a.) establishing income eligibility, and b.) gathering facts to assist the attorney in developing a case.
3. Serve as witness when public defenders interview police officers and other adverse witnesses.
4. Review office legal files and court dispositions.

Required Skills and/or Abilities

1. Completion of one year of college with course work in criminal justice, political science, or sociology.
2. An understanding of adolescents and youth culture and an interest in the criminal justice system.
3. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
4. Ability to relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural and educational).
5. Ability to listen and be empathetic.
6. Ability to deal with hostility, anger, and other emotional attitudes.
7. Ability to keep all client and Court information confidential.

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Public Defender Case Aide
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Training

Case Aides are required to attend approximately six hours of orientation training on general Family Court policies and procedures provided by the Coordinator of Volunteer Services. In addition, case aides will receive on-the-job training from Public Defender staff as needed in order to do their job responsibilities.

Time Commitment

A minimum of one-half day a week for one semester is acceptable; however, two or three half-days a week is preferable. It should be understood that the depth of the student's experience will be directly proportional to the amount of time the student can work.

Additional Information

The Public Defender's Office will be happy to assist students in fulfilling any requirements for an independent study or for course credit.

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEER ARBITRATION ASSISTANCE

Program Purpose

To provide follow-up services to clients placed on conditions by the Arbitration Hearing Officer to assure that those conditions are met.

Overall Program Goal

To prevent any further law violations and to direct clients from any further involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Job Responsibilities

1. Monitoring cases under the supervision of the Arbitration Hearing Officer to make sure conditions are met.
2. Reading and evaluating clients' letters and essays.
3. Scheduling follow-up conferences when necessary. Any necessary field visits will be discussed with the Hearing Officer.
4. Helping clients set up appointments and follow thru with referrals to other agencies.
5. Volunteer may, with training and supervision, interview parties and explain the Arbitration process.
6. Volunteer may review arbitration files for purposes of completing the participant list.
7. The volunteer will summarize contacts with each client on an Arbitration follow-up form.

Required Skills and/or Abilities

1. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
2. Ability to relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural and educational).

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Volunteer Arbitration Assistant
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3. Ability to listen and be empathetic.
4. Ability to deal with hostility, anger, and other emotional attitudes.
5. Ability to keep all client and Court information confidential.
6. An understanding of adolescents and youth culture.

Training

Arbitration Assistant Volunteers are required to attend approximately six hours of orientation training on general Court policies and procedures before receiving on-the-job training for the job responsibilities mentioned above. The assistant will receive eight hours of on-the-job training provided by the Lead Arbitration Hearing Officer and additional training from the Arbitration Hearing Officer responsible for supervising the volunteer.

Arbitration Assistant Volunteers will also be afforded on-going training in the form of in-house and other special training offered to other paid staff members.

Time Commitment

The volunteer will be required to serve a minimum of four hours, once per week for at least three months. A volunteer will be assigned cases to follow-up according to his/her time and abilities.

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR VOLUNTEERS

PROBATION UNIT

Program Purpose

To obtain an additional resource to the professional counselor in the supervisory unit. The counselor aides, by performing the more routine case-related tasks such as: restitution investigations, file room work, transporting of clients to appointments, etc., will free professional staff to conduct the more complex aspects of the caseload. Also, to enlist and involve citizenry in the process of redirecting juvenile delinquents and correcting family problems.

Overall Program Goal

To form a substantial corps of volunteers in treatment services, capable of assisting the professional staff and providing an important linkage and involvement between the community and the rehabilitative processes of the Court. Secondary objectives would be:

- a) To provide agency orientation and training to volunteers interested in exploring careers in the justice system;
- b) To provide intrinsic satisfaction to the volunteers for his/her contribution to Family Court, to individual clients, and to the community.

Job Responsibilities

1. Case Aide - Under the direct supervision of a professional probation worker, case aides will take circumscribed tasks within cases, such as arranging and monitoring community service placements; doing restitution investigations; contacting schools and other agencies for information regarding clients, and generally handling the more structured aspects of a case. As experience develops, those so inclined may gradually assume some interviewing/counseling activities.
2. Counselor - This is a position involving carrying a caseload with relative autonomy; thus, the applicant would have to have had significant relevant professional experi-

ence in the helping services. Alternatively, those who have worked as a case aide for a significant period of time may, at the discretion of the supervisor in consultation with the supervising counselor, move towards functioning as counselor in probation.

Required Skills and/or Abilities

1. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
2. Ability to relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural and educational).
3. Ability to listen and be empathetic.
4. Ability to deal with hostility, anger, and other emotional attitudes.
5. Ability to keep all client and Court information confidential.
6. An understanding of adolescents and youth culture.

Training

Probation Volunteers are required to attend approximately six hours of orientation training on general Court policies and procedures before receiving on-the-job training for the job responsibilities mentioned above. On-the-job training will be accomplished by accompanying an experienced counselor as they perform their task.

Probation Volunteers will be afforded ongoing training in the form of in-house and other special training offered to other paid staff members.

Time Commitment

Minimum of one day per week or two half days per week for a minimum of one year. (Time commitment may be less for students; however, it should be understood that the amount of time we invest and the extent and depth of their volunteer experience will be directly proportional to the amount of time they are able to devote.)