
Cumberland County **COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE** Program

Cumberland County CASA Program
1 Courthouse Square, Suite 301
Carlisle, PA 17013



PRESS RELEASE

Jan. 29, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Advocate for Children: Become a Cumberland County CASA Volunteer

Sign Up for A Virtual Information Session on Wednesday, Jan. 31 to Learn More.

Carlisle, PA – CASA, The Cumberland County Court Appointed Special Advocates Program, needs volunteers to work with abused and/or neglected children whose cases are involved in the child welfare court system.

CASA is hosting two virtual informational sessions on Wednesday, Jan. 31 at Noon - 1 p.m. and 6 - 7 p.m. To attend a virtual session, sign up at <https://pacasa.org/start/>.

“A CASA volunteer is a trained community member appointed by a judge to serve as the ‘eyes and ears’ of the court, said Anita Brewster, Cumberland County CASA Program Director. “CASA volunteers represent the best interest of the child, many of whom are in foster care, by prioritizing their needs so that their ‘voice’ may be heard in court.”

In 2023, 68 Cumberland County CASA volunteers advocated for 111 dependent children. But there is a need for more volunteers, as many children in Cumberland County are eligible and waiting for a CASA volunteer. As the need for volunteers rises, CASA is reaching out into the community to find those people who want to make a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable children in our area.

Volunteers must be 21 years of age or older, complete an interview process, pass background clearances, and undergo 40+ hours of training. The in-depth training for new volunteers educates advocates about the CASA volunteer role, the child welfare system, and effective advocacy techniques. Most volunteers spend 10-20 hours per month in their advocacy role, and most cases last between 18-24 months.

CASA Volunteer roles and responsibilities:

- **Gather Information:** In order to inform the Court of the child's situation, a volunteer must gather in-depth knowledge of the child and his or her family situation.
- **Advocate:** Provide the facts to the court through written reports and speaking on the child's behalf for the child's best interest.
- **Facilitate:** Communicate between the parties for services to support the child's needs.
- **Monitor:** Stay informed of the child's situation until a safe, permanent home has been achieved.

These four key actions help ensure the court has all information needed to make the best-informed decisions regarding the best interest of the child.

CASA is a national program, and there are over 950 programs across the nation. It is the only program of its kind, and it is built around assigning one caring adult advocate to the case of one abused and/or neglected child or sibling group.

To learn more about becoming a CASA volunteer, visit cumberlandcountypa.gov/casa, email casa@cumberlandcountypa.gov, or call at 717.240.6159.

Training for new CASA volunteers is scheduled to begin in early March 2024. Additional training sessions will be held in the fall of 2024.

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