



Early Childhood Specialist Advocate Coordinator

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Merced County is a non-profit organization whose mission is to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children within the court system. Based on the belief that every child is entitled to a safe and supportive home, CASA works through trained volunteers in collaboration with key agencies, legal counsel, and community resources to serve as the child's advocate in the Merced County Juvenile Court System.

BASIC FUNCTION:

Under supervision of the Program Manager the **Early Childhood Specialist/Advocate Coordinator (ECS/AC)** functions as a direct link between children, families and other agencies to provide family strengthening services and expert case supervision to volunteers. The **ECS/AC** will ensure that children served by CASA of Merced County will receive comprehensive advocacy that leads to their safety, well-being and permanency. The ECS/AC will provide direct services to early childhood aged children and their caregivers and supervise Advocates specifically assigned to these young children. This employee will train and educate volunteers, and will manage relationships with CASA partners. The CASA Early Childhood Program will support the efforts of Human Services Agency (HSA) and the Merced County Office of Education (MCOE) by helping to administer follow-up screenings as necessary to ensure that all foster children ages 0-7 receive needed follow-up services.

Position Status: Full time; must be available some evenings and weekends; hourly rate of \$16-\$18

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS:

To successfully perform the essential functions of this position, the ECE Advocate Coordinator must have the following:

- Bachelor's degree in social service or education related field.
- Three or more year's experience working in early childhood education.
- The ability to work collaboratively with partners and stakeholders in Merced County.
- The ability to communicate with, coordinate and empower volunteers to be effective in their roles.
- The ability to remain objective while resolving conflicts.
- The ability to be a team player and empower others.
- Strong time management skills and work ethic.
- The ability to supervise and train others.
- Strong observation, analytical and listening skills.
- The ability to maintain confidentiality with regard to all cases and involved parties.

- The ability to prepare written reports, correspondence and maintain accurate records.
- The ability to work cooperatively with different types of personalities.
- Knowledge and understanding of issues and dynamics within families in crisis relating to child abuse and neglect.
- Work independently under the direction of the Program Manager and make sound decisions based on established procedures.
- Commitment to the program's mission, goals and standards.
- Good knowledge of personal computer operations and software, including word processing, databases and spreadsheets; good typing skills.
- The ability to carry out assigned duties and responsibilities in an ethical manner and follow the organization's policies.
- Possession of a valid California Driver's License.
- The ability to successfully pass a thorough background check.

RESPONSIBLE TO:

Program Manager and Associate Director

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The ECE Advocate Coordinator is responsible for working collaboratively with Human Services Agency, Merced County Office of Education and CASA staff and volunteers to provide essential services and advocacy for young children in foster care.

Early Childhood Responsibilities include:

- Work directly with Human Services Agency and Merced County Office of Education to receive foster children referrals.
- Assist with administering follow-up screening to 0-7 aged foster children, as needed.
- Conduct in-home visits with foster children and their caregivers.
- Work with foster children and caregivers to provide needed services, including home visitations that provide early learning opportunities.
- Attend Early Childhood Education workshops and classes, as requested.
- Assist with the matching of Advocates to children referred to CASA.
- Assist with training Advocates to work with young children.
- Identify community resources for young children.
- Help develop and implement a mechanism to track data and outcomes related to supporting young children.

Supervision of Advocates and Children's Cases:

- Assist volunteers in establishing relationships with children and caregivers and implementation of the child's Advocacy Plan.
- Facilitate relationships between professionals, service providers and volunteers.
- Interpret California CASA, National CASA, and Judicial Council guidelines to Advocates.
- Motivate and lead volunteer Peer Coordinators to fulfill the requirements of their position.

- Prepare Peer Coordinators to succeed by guiding and supporting them as they work with volunteer Advocates.
- Maintain a minimum of one monthly contact with each assigned Advocate.
- Maintain awareness and understanding of details of Advocates' cases.
- Assist with the swearing-in ceremony (invitations, food, oaths, picture IDs, etc.).
- Assist in the screening of volunteer applicants (screening applications, interviewing, fingerprinting, checking references, completing criminal records check, etc.).
- Make monthly contact with each Peer Coordinator and get an update of their Advocates' cases.
- Assist with the organization and maintenance of case files and volunteer files.
- Notify Advocates and Peer Coordinators of hearing dates and attend hearings as needed.
- Distribute court reports in a timely manner.
- Update the child and Advocate database.
- Support Advocates and Peer Coordinators in the development of monthly logs, required data collection, court reports and court appearances.
- Provide a high-level of supervision and training to Peer Coordinators, as needed.
- Monitor the activities of Peer Coordinators and Advocates, redirecting them when necessary.
- Provide Peer Coordinators with report forms and resource information to distribute to Advocates, as needed.
- Review monthly Peer Coordinator Reports and Advocate Reports.
- Provide quality case management and supervision of Peer Coordinators, as required by state and national standards.
- Notify the Associate Director of critical events in any case.
- Provide adequate notice to the Associate Director for planned absences.
- Provide coverage for Peer Coordinators and Advocates, as needed.
- Conduct End of Case Interview with the Advocate at case dismissal.
- Provide office and phone coverage and all other duties as requested by the Associate Director.

Other:

- Complete 35 hours of Court Appointed Special Advocate Training.
- Communicate the mission of CASA of Merced County and the goals of the organization.
- Initiate, gather and report on data for program evaluation and grant reporting as assigned.
- Participate in CASA's community engagement events and children events, as needed.
- Participate in CASA Strategic Planning and Board of Directors meetings as needed, and other duties as assigned.

Physical Requirements:

Employees in this position must have the ability to

- Sit for extended periods of time.
- See and read a computer screen and printed matter with or without vision aids.
- Hear and understand speech at normal levels and on the telephone with or without hearing aids.
- Speak so that others may understand at normal levels and on the telephone.
- Operate a personal computer and standard office equipment.

- Stand, walk, bend over, grasp, reach overhead, stoop, twist, crouch, crawl, kneel, balance, climb, throw, catch, twist, swing, run, jump, hop, skip, push, pull and move, lift and/or carry 0-60 pounds to waist height.
- Work indoors in a standard office, classroom, or home care environment consisting of, but not limited to, low tables, desks, chairs, backless chairs.

Condition of Employment:

The Early Childhood Specialist/Advocate Coordinator position is dependent on continued funding and is an exempt at-will position. Salary is based on a 40 hour work week with flexible hours (some evening and weekend work will be required). The ECE/AC must have a vehicle, a valid driver's license and proof of automobile insurance, as well as pass a thorough background check including DMV, DOJ, FBI, CACI, and social security verification, and receive a TB test through MCOE.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER