

489—4.1(237) Purpose. The child advocacy board is required by Iowa Code section 237.18 to establish procedures and protocols for administering the court appointed special advocate program.

4.1(1) Definitions.

“Administrator” means the person selected by the director to lead, direct and manage the staff and programs established by the board.

“Certified,” when used as a descriptor of a court appointed special advocate, means that an applicant has been determined by the child advocacy board to have the required qualifications to become a court appointed special advocate and has completed the application requirements, background checks, screening and selection process and training established pursuant to the rules in this chapter.

“Coach” or *“CASA coach”* means a duly certified court appointed special advocate volunteer who has received additional training to assist the coordinator by overseeing facets of the court appointed special advocate’s case work.

“Coordinator” means the staff member of the child advocacy board who is responsible for planning and implementation of the court appointed special advocate program in a county or cluster of counties in the state.

“Court appointed special advocate” or *“CASA volunteer”* or *“CASA”* or *“advocate”* means a person who is duly certified by the child advocacy board for participation in the court appointed special advocate program and appointed by the court to represent the interest of a child in any judicial proceeding to which the child is a party or is called as a witness or relating to any dispositional order involving the child resulting from the proceeding. Unless otherwise enlarged or circumscribed by a court or juvenile court having jurisdiction over the child or by operation of law, the duties of a court appointed special advocate with respect to a child pursuant to Iowa Code section 237.24 as enacted by 2022 Iowa Acts, House File 2390, section 15, shall include the following:

1. Conducting in-person interviews with the child every 30 days, if the child’s age is appropriate for the interview, and interviewing each parent, guardian, or other person having custody of the child, if authorized by counsel.
2. Visiting the home, residence, or both home and residence of the child and any prospective home or residence of the child, including each time placement is changed.
3. Interviewing any person providing medical, mental health, social, educational, or other services to the child.
4. Obtaining firsthand knowledge, if possible, of the facts, circumstances, and parties involved in the matter in which the court appointed special advocate is appointed.
5. Attending any depositions, hearings, and trial proceedings in the matter in which the court appointed special advocate is appointed for the purpose of supporting the child and advocating for the child’s protection.
6. Assisting the transition committee in the development of a transition plan if the child’s case permanency plan calls for the development of a transition plan.
7. Submitting a written report to the juvenile court and to each of the parties identified in Iowa Code section 237.21(4) as amended by 2022 Iowa Acts, House File 2390, section 13, prior to each court hearing, unless otherwise ordered by the court. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the identified strengths and concerns of the child and the child’s family, along with recommendations about the child’s placement and best interest.

4.1(2) Program mission. CASA of Iowa trains and supports community volunteers to advocate for a safe and permanent home for children who have experienced abuse and neglect, and works collaboratively to ensure their voice is heard.

4.1(3) Program goal. The CASA program will provide certified advocates for every child who has experienced abuse or neglect and for whom an advocate is authorized by an Iowa court.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 17A.3 and 237.18.

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