

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 child advocacy board 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.

“*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*” or “*advocate*” means a person who has volunteered and 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 232.2(22) “b” shall include the following:

1. Conducting in-person interviews with the child, 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. Conducting interviews with the child, if the child’s age is appropriate for the interview, prior to any court-ordered hearing.
3. 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.
4. Interviewing any person providing medical, mental health, social, educational, or other services to the child, before any hearing referred to in paragraph “2” of this definition.
5. Obtaining firsthand knowledge, if possible, of the facts, circumstances, and parties involved in the matter in which the person is appointed.
6. Attending any hearings in the matter in which the person is appointed.
7. If the child is required to have a transition plan developed in accordance with the child’s case permanency plan and subject to review and approval of a transition committee under Iowa Code section 235.7, assisting the transition committee in development of the transition plan.

4.1(2) Program mission. The court appointed special advocate (CASA) program certifies and guides trained community volunteers to serve as an effective voice in court for abused and neglected children, strengthening efforts to ensure that each child is living in a safe, permanent and nurturing home.

4.1(3) Program goal. The CASA program will provide certified advocates for every abused and neglected child for whom an advocate is authorized by an Iowa court.

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