

Time Management Tips for Volunteers

This timeline is to help manage all the requirements of CASA volunteers throughout the month. This timeline may be adjusted to include attending court hearings, preparing court reports, and attending FTMs.

Week 1:

- Contact foster family to schedule a visit with the foster family this week. Initiating this step at the beginning of the month will leave time for rescheduling should the need arise.
- Check-in with your supervisor to find out if there are any upcoming meetings or court hearings coming up that you should be aware of (Court hearings are also listed in the Hearings tab of OPTIMA along with the date your court report will be due). It may also be helpful to begin looking at what kind of recommendations may need to be made for any pending court hearings.
- Read your monthly newsletter and record it in the training tab of OPTIMA.
- Be sure to update OPTIMA with any contacts made during the week.

Week 2:

- Try contacting the DCFS worker for any new updates. This would be a good opportunity to get updates on phone numbers and addresses of the parents. If they don't return your call or email, this is a good starting point in reaching them for the month.
- If there are more recommendations you have found that you want to make for the coming court hearing, what information do you need to support those recommendations? Begin assessing who you may need to contact to gain fact-based information on the progress of the parents (i.e. parenting facilitators, substance abuse clinics, mental health clinics, etc.).
- If a visit has not yet been set with the caregivers to see your CASA child, contact them again to schedule a visit. Try to schedule a visit for the second week if one has not already been set. This will also assist in ensuring that you are able to see your CASA child(ren) for the month.
- Be sure to update OPTIMA with any contacts made during the week.

Week 3:

- If a visit still has not been set with your CASA child by the third week after several attempts, contact your CASA supervisor to discuss other methods of visiting the child(ren) for the month. Options may include visiting the child at school or during a family visit.
- Contact the DCFS worker if you have not already talked to them for the month to see if they may be aware of any difficulties on their end in setting up a visit with the child. You may also be able to schedule a time with the DCFS worker in

seeing the child and find out if there is an upcoming family visit you may be able to attend.

- Contact the parents of the children involved to find out what progress they have made toward completing their case plan. Speaking directly with the parents is a very important part of being able to provide first-hand information to the Court regarding the parents' view of what is happening in their case and whether or not it is in the child's best interest to return home. If the parents don't return your call or respond in any way, we can inform the court that attempts were made.
- If you have been able to see your CASA child by this point, begin to assess what recommendations you would like to make for that child. Once you determine the things you feel the child may need, determine what additional information you may need to make a recommendation (i.e. talk to the counselor, the child's doctor, school officials, etc.).
- Be sure to update OPTIMA with any contacts made during the week.

Week 4:

- By this week, a visit with your CASA child should have either already occurred or will happen this week. Be sure to update OPTIMA with any new contact information (if applicable). It never hurts to get an early start in setting next month's visit. If you saw your CASA child early this month, you can contact the caregiver to set up the visit for the next month.
- If a court report is due for the next month, begin putting together the facts gathered to create the base of your report. Make follow-up phone calls if needed to find out information needed to support your recommendations.
- Contact your CASA supervisor to notify them of any changes in the case. If a placement change has occurred, be sure to notify your supervisor as soon as you are made aware of the change.
- Be sure to update OPTIMA with any contacts made during the week.
- Finalizing all of your contacts prior to the last week of the month and entering in contact logs as you go will help you stay organized and prevent last minute documenting of information.