



## Texas Exception Policy for In-Person Child Visits

The CASA/GAL program shall have regular and sufficient in-person contact with the child where they live to ensure in-depth knowledge of the case and make fact-based recommendations to the court.

National and Texas CASA Standards require CASA to meet in-person with the child once every thirty (30) days at a minimum.

Based on geographic distances within the state of Texas, for children placed far from their home jurisdiction requiring excessive travel, an exception to monthly in-person visits may be granted based on distance to placement:

- If the child(ren) are placed further than sixty miles, less than 120 miles away, CASA will meet with the child in-person every other month with a virtual visit or other age appropriate contact in the alternating months.
- If the child(ren) are placed more than 121 miles, less than 300 miles away, CASA will meet in-person with the child(ren) at least once every three months with a virtual visit or other age appropriate contact in all other months.
- If the child(ren) are placed more than 301 miles away, CASA will meet in-person with the child(ren) in their place of residence at least once every six months with a virtual visit or other age appropriate contact in all other months.
- Visits will occur in the child's place of residence at least 50% of the time.
- **Safety Checks:** A Courtesy CASA visit or courtesy collaboration visit from a neighboring CASA program may substitute for the required in-person visit 50% of the time, if the placement is more than 121 miles. The assigned CASA volunteer will join a safety check visit virtually, when possible. The Courtesy CASA report will be kept within the case file.

Documentation of an exception shall be kept within the case file and reference this policy.

Each program will establish a board approved policy to calculate the distance to placement.

This policy is effective for all new cases beginning January 1, 2023.