

# Court Etiquette and Expectations

## Court Etiquette

- Do dress Business Casual
- Do bring a notepad to write down questions
- Do check in with court staff upon arrival.
- Do ask specific questions about the cases in a private setting after the court observation is over (i.e. over the phone or in the CASA office).
- Do not talk during hearings
- Do not display reactions to what is happening in the hearing (i.e. facial expressions and/or verbal reactions).
- Do not talk about particular cases inside the courthouse or in front of the defendants
- Do not leave courtroom during a hearing; wait until cases are changing
- Do not use cell phones at all. Make sure cell phones are powered off or silenced before entering the court room.
- Do not eat or drink while in the court room.
- Do utilize your volunteer ID badge.
- Do stand when addressing the court.
- Do leave the court room if you know a party to another case.
- Do be patient. There is no guarantee what time your case will be heard.

## Testifying In Court

Volunteers are occasionally asked to testify in court. It is the policy of CASA of Atlantic and Cape May Counties, Inc. that every attempt should be made to not have volunteers testify in court. Attorneys asking a CASA volunteer to testify, are required to provide 10 days written notice outlining what CASA is being asked to testify about. If a volunteer is asked to testify they should contact a member of the Program Staff immediately. If a volunteer is not subpoenaed before the court hearing, he/she should let the Court know that CASA was not properly notified and is therefore unprepared. The volunteer should also appeal to the Judge stating that as a friend of the court CASA should not be asked to testify, however CASA will do so if the Judge feels that it is in the best interest of the child. If the Court feels that the CASA volunteer needs to testify, the Program Staff member present will notify the court that before this can happen CASA would like the opportunity for the volunteer to consult our attorney.

