

## CASE STUDY

# CASA of Henderson County

### Organization Background

The National Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association, together with its state and local members, supports and promotes court-appointed volunteer advocacy so that every abused and neglected child in the United States can be safe, have a permanent home, and the opportunity to thrive.

CASA of Henderson County, in Lexington, Tennessee, has been a chartered member of National CASA since 2007. Their trained volunteers provide invaluable support for the youngest and most vulnerable members of the community.

### Background

Tasked with finding, screening and training volunteers for the program – which already had more children in need than trained citizens to fill the positions – CASA of Henderson County faced a number of screening challenges. All volunteers were required to be screened at a fingerprinting facility and searched through online registries. When the nearest fingerprinting facility closed its doors, prospective volunteers had to travel over an hour away to be fingerprinted, sometimes two or three times before legible fingerprint images could be achieved. This was at their own personal cost. What's more, local offenses were not always picked up by the FBI fingerprint database. The organization knew that these challenges had a significant impact on the quantity and quality of their invaluable volunteers – the lifeblood of the program. CASA of Henderson County also had to prove that they were operating efficiently in order to receive funding from the state of Tennessee. They needed a more effective screening program in order to do so.

### Solution

Aware of the program's challenges, the state facilitated a call between Sterling Volunteers and CASA of Henderson County. The organization was impressed with the comprehensive screening Sterling Volunteers provided. Now, volunteers complete the screening process through the online system via a simple email link. They order their background check – all on their own – in four simple steps and just a few minutes. The cost and travel time has been minimized and volunteer onboarding can begin within a day or two – when the background check results appear on the program's volunteer management dashboard.

### Results

The new process is easy and less costly for volunteers. In addition, it was simple for CASA to implement and manage. They have the assurances they need that the highest, most stringent levels of screening are being completed – something that's vital to an organization dealing with the interests of children. CASA was able to retain volunteers who were exasperated by the previous screening process. These volunteers were vetted in just a few days, trained, and assigned to children awaiting representation. CASA was also able to secure ongoing funding by easily proving their good standing to the State of Tennessee with reporting from the volunteer management dashboard.



### Key Highlight

Background screening was time consuming and onerous for prospective volunteers and full of potentially risky screening omissions for management and the children that CASA serves. The Sterling Volunteers platform provided an easy solution for both. Screening was faster, less expensive and more accurate which helps ensure that only the most qualified volunteers are working with the children for which CASA of Henderson County provides critical assistance.



*We were already aware we had been doing our best with an imperfect system. We didn't realize just how imperfect until we started to use the Sterling Volunteers platform. The increased comfort level in the results and the obvious benefits to our volunteers make the service invaluable."*

**- Annie Searock,  
Executive Director of  
CASA of Henderson County**