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## DIGEST

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HB 466 Engrossed

2018 Regular Session

Gisclair

**Abstract:** Grants authority to court appointed special advocate program (CASA) volunteers to access a child's home and to attend all administrative review hearings and family team meetings related to the case, and provides for the screening of CASA staff members or members of the board of directors.

Present law (Ch.C. Art. 424.2) allows CASA to review relevant documents and to interview parties and witnesses involved in the proceeding.

Proposed law retains present law and grants authority to CASA volunteers to access the child's home to evaluate the home for safety concerns, unless prohibited by the court.

Present law (Ch.C. Art. 424.4) requires CASA volunteers to be notified of all administrative review hearings related to the case.

Proposed law retains present law and requires that CASA volunteers be allowed to attend all family team meetings as well as administrative review hearings related to the case, unless the parent objects.

Present law (Ch.C. Art. 616) allows a court to screen individuals applying to work as a court appointed special advocate for any justified reports of abuse or neglect.

Proposed law retains present law and adds CASA program staff members and board of director members to those individuals who may be screened by a court for any justifiable reports of abuse or neglect, if any such individuals have contact with children served by CASA.

(Amends Ch.C. Arts. 424.2, 424.4(B), 616(C) and (D); Repeals Ch.C. Arts. 616(C) and (D) as amended and reenacted by Act No. 348 of the 2017 R.S.)

### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Civil Law and Procedure to the original bill:

1. Allow the court to prohibit a CASA volunteer from accessing the home in which the child was placed.
2. Allow the parent to object to the CASA volunteer attending administrative review

hearings and family team meetings.

3. Add a condition that the individual have contact with children in order for the court to search the central registry for CASA volunteers, staff members, and board members.
4. Make changes to present law as it currently reads and as it will read once a delayed effective date is triggered.