



Volunteer Application Steps

There are several important steps to becoming a volunteer at the Essex Community Justice Center. It is a wonderful and fulfilling volunteer opportunity, but it can also be challenging and takes a certain amount of consistency, dedication and education.

The process includes **all** of the following steps:

1. Complete the Essex CJC Volunteer Application which includes reviewing volunteer position descriptions and reading the “Little Book of Restorative Justice” by Howard Zehr. After reading this short book you may feel like you have found the perfect volunteer fit, or you may feel like restorative justice is not for you. Either way, you may move forward with the process or opt out.
2. Based on volunteer position availability and application screening, CJC staff will contact you to schedule an interview. This interview is to determine both if you are a good fit for the CJC team and if the team is a good fit for you. During this interview you will learn about the programs, mission, vision and values of the Essex CJC and will be asked to talk about what led you to learn more about us. It may be that after this interview you feel the program is not the best fit – or you may find that you are more excited than ever to learn more. The CJC has the right and obligation to its current members and to the community to interview any potential volunteer and to turn away potential volunteers if:
 - 1) The group currently has enough members.
 - 2) The COSA program has currently full volunteer teams.
 - 3) There are past situations or current situations that may prove to be a conflict of interest.
 - 4) If the CJC just feels the fit or timing is not appropriate.
3. If you want to continue to move forward, you will fill out and return the:
 - Application for Department of Corrections (DOC) volunteers
 - Background Check form
 - DOC Work Rules form
 - Essex CJC Confidentiality Agreement
4. Once we have completed clearances from DOC for your file, volunteers interested in restorative justice panels will schedule an observation of the Essex RJ Panel or other relevant offering. This will be an opportunity for you to see the work in action and will be a way for you to tie the work required to the training you will be doing in preparation for your service.
5. Once your Essex observation is successfully completed, you will be asked to contact our DOC Volunteer Coordinator to schedule a DOC Volunteer orientation and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Training.

6. After completion of the Required DOC trainings you will be scheduled to complete ONE of the following:
 - Restorative Justice Panel Training (12 Hours)
 - 6-hour Panel Training (3 2-hour training days)
 - 3 observations of a panel process with a 2-month period, with 1 occurring in a neighboring community
 - Statewide COSA Training (12 hours)
7. If serving as a Restorative Justice Panel Volunteer, you will also be connected to a volunteer or staff “mentor.” The mentor will help you to understand more about what it is like to be a volunteer and how the team works together. They will share stories, support and insight about the benefits and drawbacks of volunteer service. They will continue to be a resource for you throughout your volunteer time with Essex and especially as you get to know your role.
8. Following the completion of these steps, you may be asked to start your volunteer work. If at any time the staff, along with the Citizens Advisory Panel (CAB) decide that you are not working within the mission or the vision of the Essex CJC, you may be asked to:
 - Engage in a restorative process
 - Engage in more training
 - Take a leave of absence
 - Step down in your service to the Essex CJC
9. As a volunteer of the Essex Community Justice Center, you will be expected to engage in ongoing, regular trainings in the form of **quarterly business meetings**. RJ Panel volunteers will be required to complete an annual refresher course and COSA volunteers will be required to complete trainings specific to a CORE member’s area of need and risk.
10. Volunteer Service is a privilege and is considered to be beneficial to victims, offenders, affected parties, communities, municipalities, schools and the volunteers themselves. By signing below, you agree to adhere to the expectations of the program and understand the above policies regarding service.

Printed Name

Signature

Date