



Court Family Support Volunteer

Overview: Volunteers in this role will attend a Sussex magistrates or crown court on an agreed day either once a week or fortnightly. The purpose of this role is to promote the organisation and our services to Court staff and legal professionals as well as provide vital information and support to families and friends when someone close to them is sentenced or remanded to custody.

The role involves full training and provides a rare opportunity to work in the criminal courts for those interested in pursuing a career in criminal justice.

- We ask that volunteers are available to attend court (In either Crawley, Lewes, Brighton, Worthing, Chichester, Horsham or Hastings) at least one-half day every fortnight for a minimum period of six months.
- Volunteers should be available for at least a morning or afternoon during court hours, which are usually 9.00am – 4.00pm.
- Volunteers will be required to attend an interview and provide two independent references.
- Volunteers must attend all the training sessions

SPF will offer:

- Initial training, guidance and induction to the role
- Ongoing learning, development and support
- Regular information regarding the activities of SPF
- Reimbursement of agreed travel and refreshments expenses in accordance with SPF policy

We welcome applications from those with lived experience of the criminal justice system.

Role Description

- Identify from the court lists and liaising with court staff, such as; list callers, ushers and probation, the court cases where custody is anticipated
- Quietly observe court cases where custody is possible or anticipated and where families are present
- Tactfully approach families where custody has occurred with the offer of information, such as SPF leaflet, information on which prison the defendant has been taken to, how to arrange a visit and information about services they can access from other agencies
- Where families are not present and imprisonment occurs, approach defence council with the offer of information about the organisation for families and their office
- Develop good relations with court staff, such as; ushers, list callers, probation, Witness Service, security, court clerks, and reception and cells staff – promote the organisation and service to them
- Be available to families if they need assistance or information
- Ensure court leaflet racks are stocked up with SPF leaflets

- To provide regular updates and to raise issues regarding volunteer role via individual and group support sessions
- Record details of all information given out to families / defence council /other agencies at court on SPF monitoring forms and send back to office regularly

Person Specification

- To have an interest in the needs of prisoners' families
- To be professional and reliable
- To be friendly and approachable
- To be empathetic
- To have excellent listening and verbal communication skills
- To have the ability to communicate confidently with a wide range of people
- To work well in a team
- To be able to work well independently
- To be respectful of the traditions of the Courts
- To be non-judgemental
- Volunteers must be available to attend court at least one-half day every fortnight for a minimum period of six months.
- To work within boundaries and in accordance with the organisation's policies and procedures
- To have the ability to fill out basic records (monitoring sheets) about information given out at Court and return to the office for our statistics
- To be available to attend training, support and development sessions

For an application form or more information contact:

e) clem@sussexprisonersfamilies.org.uk

t) 07436685736

Or visit our website at www.sussexprisonersfamilies.org.uk (go to the 'Volunteering' page for an application form)

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