

# **Volunteer Program Development**

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**Final Report**

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# **Volunteer Program Development**

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## **Abstract**

Victim Services seeks to maintain high quality services to crime victims by maintaining officer awareness of victims' concerns while also liaising with other networks and resources in the community. Victim Services are responsible for implementing and maintaining a comprehensive program to address the broad needs of victims. The Victim Services team has long considered the potential positive impact that a volunteer program could have towards helping victims of crime in the City of Peterborough. I administered a survey responsible for addressing questions regarding the recruitment and training process, as well as the job description of volunteers. The survey was conducted with seven Victim Services units across Ontario that have volunteer programs. These areas include: Windsor, Guelph, Toronto, Durham, Hamilton, Ottawa and Waterloo. From the survey, it can be concluded that all volunteer programs with Victim Services Units operate in their own unique way depending on the needs of their corresponding geographical area. Using the information gathered from the survey, I developed recommendations pertaining to how a volunteer program should be implemented in Peterborough. The main recommendations are further outlined in the report and include: approximately six to eight volunteers, with a minimum age of 21. In addition, I recommended that volunteers must commit to a minimum of one year of volunteering with Victim Services while completing a minimum of four shifts a month. Lastly, I suggested that the training for the volunteers should be conducted with online modules and in-class sessions.

## Key words

*PPS* → Peterborough Police Service

*Victim Services* → provide post incident and long term information and referral needs to victims of crime

*Crime* → refers to an action or omission that constitutes an offense that may be prosecuted and punishable by law

*Victim* → anyone who has been personally targeted directly, or affected by the aftermath of the crime indirectly

*Volunteer* → a person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task.

*Volunteer program* → a program in which individuals participate to assist an organization without monetary compensation

*Logistics* → the detailed coordination of a complex operation involving many people, facilities, or supplies.

*Feasibility* → the state or degree of being easily or conveniently done.

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## **Introduction**

From April 2011 to March 2012, Victim Services units assisted almost 460,000 victims across Canada (2). Police-based Victim Services were responsible for providing assistance for 36% of these cases, while non-police based Victim Services provided for 64% (2).

Police-based Victim Services units are hired by the municipality and funded through taxes. Since Police-based Victim Services units work with the police directly, they have access to all incident reports and the status of investigation through the investigating officers. An incident report are detailed notes outlining the incident that occurred resulting in the need for police services. Victim Services units that are non-police based are non-profit organizations and do not have access to the same information as Police-based Victim Services units unless the victim gives consent.

Having access to the incident report and investigation status allows Victim Services units to further understand the situation and allows the staff to better assess the situation victim's needs because they have much more details pertaining to the case. The Victim Services unit at the Peterborough Police Station is a Police-based service. The two staff members within this unit strive to provide post-incident and long-term information, as well as referral needs to victims of crime (1). Victim Services seek to maintain high quality services to crime victims by maintaining officer awareness of victims' concerns, while also maintaining liaison with other networks and resources in the community. Victim Services units are responsible for implementing and maintaining a comprehensive program to address the broad needs of victims. The Victim Services unit at the Peterborough Police Service has long considered the positive impact that a volunteer program could have towards helping victims in the City of Peterborough. Since there are only two employees of the Peterborough Victim Services unit, the unit would benefit with

additional help from volunteers to reduce their workload ensuring the employees are not overworked. However, to be effective, a volunteer program must be well thought out in terms of recruitment, qualifications, training, tasks, logistics and feasibility.

The Victim Services unit provide advice, referrals and information surrounding the court and justice system to victims of crime. Victim Services units work with a variety of victims whether it be sexual assault, homicide, families of suicide, robbery etc. Utilizing volunteers can be very beneficial to ensure that all the demands of the victims are met. Alice Czitrom and Christie Lee are the only employees of Victim Services at the Peterborough Police Service and will be in charge of hosting the volunteer program development project for the Peterborough Victim Services unit (1). They have not yet had the time to research and determine the logistics behind implementing a volunteer program.

The goal of the present project is to conduct research to provide information for the Victim Services unit in Peterborough pertaining to other volunteer programs. This information can then be used to implement a volunteer program should Victim Services so choose. Some of the factors that will be addressed during the research will be:

- Minimum age of volunteers
- Minimum commitment
- Volunteer selection
- Number of shifts required of the volunteer per month
- Length of training process
- Financial maintenance of the volunteer program



The present research will explain how Victim Services units in other geographical areas operate their volunteer programs, as well as provide suggestions regarding the structure of a potential volunteer program in the city of Peterborough. The research questions pertaining to the present project will address details surrounding the recruitment, training and job description of volunteers with other Victim Services units in Ontario. Using this information and the opinion of the project hosts, recommendations on how a volunteer program could be implemented in Peterborough will be addressed. These research questions will be answered by surveying a variety of Victim Services units in Ontario. Upon successful completion of the project, Alice Czitrom and Christie Lee will be provided with the necessary tools to implement a volunteer program.

## **Methods**

To determine the logistics of a volunteer program with the Victim Services unit in Peterborough, multiple steps were taken. The first step was to analyze other Victim Services units within Ontario to determine how they operate. In order to accomplish this, a survey was developed, which can be found in Appendix A. The questions addressed multiple areas pertaining to the volunteer program, such as the recruitment and training process. The Victim Services units to be researched were in London, Windsor, Hamilton, Ottawa, Toronto, Waterloo, Guelph and Durham. These areas were selected because their geographical location they serve were all across Ontario. The purpose of this was to try and reduce biased towards a specific geographical area. Also, these units have volunteer programs. Once the survey was developed, it was peer reviewed by Sharon Beaucage-Johnson from Trent University and John Marris from the Trent Community Research Centre who were also supervising the project, as well as both hosts from the Peterborough Victim Services unit. Revisions were made, and the final survey was complete on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

Once the survey was developed, the next step was to research each Victim Services unit to answer the questions in the survey. This was done by analyzing each unit's website (3-9). I was specifically looking for information pertaining to the recruitment and training process, such as the requirements of volunteers (i.e. "minimum age" or "minimum commitment to the program."). Although some information was provided online, most of the questions could not be answered.

Next, I contacted each Victim Services unit via telephone to address the remaining questions. When contacting the units, I requested to speak to the volunteer program director if the unit had one. The purpose of this was to ensure that they could answer all of the questions in

the survey. The survey was successfully conducted over the phone with the directors of both Hamilton and Windsor Victim Services. The initial introduction of the project given when contacting these two units can be found in Appendix B. Hamilton also provided me with their volunteer manual outlining the job description of their volunteers. This was beneficial because it provided extensive detail of how their volunteer program operates.

The information collected from the other geographical areas (Durham, London, Ottawa, Toronto, Waterloo, and Guelph) was found online, since I was unable to reach them by phone. I had initially contacted all units, leaving a voicemail stating I was a Trent University student looking to conduct a survey for research purposes. I still did not hear back from the five units mentioned above. I then called back again a week later leaving another message just stating my name and contact information. I still did not hear back from any of the five units. Since I was only successful at contacting Hamilton and Winsor, the data collected for the other five units was limited.

Once all of the surveys were completed, a document was produced containing all of the information. I began contacting the Victim Services units on October 7<sup>th</sup>, and continued to try until October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014. I then research the units online that I was unsuccessful at contacting by phone and therefore, finished answering all surveys by Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

An excel chart was created to organize the information into an easily accessible document for the hosts based on the results received from the survey. This chart can be found in Appendix C. The purpose of this was to provide the project hosts with the option to access the information in a format that if they were just looking for a specific piece of information, they could do so without having to read the entire document. Following the chart is a document which explains the information provided in more detail which can be found in Appendix D. All of this

information was provided in a binder to the hosts at the Peterborough Victim Services unit on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015.

A meeting was then set up with both hosts on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 to discuss the information collected. The purpose of this meeting was to explain how other Victim Services volunteer programs are operating, and to give possible suggestions on how a volunteer program in Peterborough could operate.

Next, questions pertaining to the training process needed to be addressed. The Windsor Victim Services unit suggested using the website [www.learn2help.com](http://www.learn2help.com) to recruit and train volunteers (10). This suggestion led to the research of this website. I contacted the CEO of the website, Luc Richard, to request more details about how this website works. He forwarded a sample of the training modules and a list of the Victim Services volunteer programs in Ontario that utilize this website. This information was then forwarded to my hosts at the Peterborough Victim Services Unit. However, this method of training would cost \$5,000 to train up to 100 volunteers. Since this method is very costly, unless grants can be found to cover this expense, another approach to train volunteers will be required.

Upon completion of this project, the Peterborough Victim Services unit will be provided with a word document outlining how other volunteer programs operate in Ontario and potential training methods. Therefore, should the Peterborough Victim Services unit choose to implement a volunteer program, they will have the necessary tools to do so.

## Results

From the results, it can be concluded that all volunteer programs operate in their own unique way. The number of volunteers in each Victim Services unit depends on the need of their geographical area. The size and demand of the community indicates how many volunteers are needed. The survey results collected were organized and displayed in the following excel tables.

Table 1: Survey results collected from seven Victim Services units in Ontario regarding their volunteer program.

Location	Windsor	Hamilton	Ottawa	Toronto	Waterloo	Guelph	Durham
<b>Number of Volunteers</b>	60-80	80	N/A	150	50	N/A	80
<b>Program Coordinator</b>	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Minimum Age of Volunteers</b>	18	21	18	19	19	20	21
<b>Criminal Record Check</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>References</b>	3	2-3	2 letters of reference	2	2	3	2
<b>Access to Vehicle with A Valid Driver's License and Insurance</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Access to Cellphone</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 2: Survey results collected from seven Victim Services units in Ontario regarding their volunteer program

Location	Windsor	Hamilton	Ottawa	Toronto	Waterloo	Guelph	Durham
<b>Minimum Commitment</b>	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	2 year	1 year	1 year
<b>Minimum Shifts per Month</b>	4-6	4	3	2	6	4	2
<b>Length of Training</b>	45	N/A	40	46	70	40	40
<b>Type of Training</b>	Online, In-class	In-class, Telephone	In-class	In-class, In the office	Online, In-class	N/A	N/A
<b>Final Assessment</b>	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A
<b>Probation Period</b>	3 Months	6 Months	3 Months	N/A	1 Year	N/A	N/A

Each Victim Services unit has their own program coordinator that is in charge of hiring, training, scheduling and maintaining the volunteers within the volunteer program. When the program coordinator is recruiting new volunteers, they must look for specific requirements within the application, to ensure the applicant is qualified for the volunteer position.

The minimum age ranges from 18-21 across all volunteer units. This is important because volunteers will be dealing with victims of crime. Volunteers need to ensure they can handle all situations in a mature manner and understand how important confidentiality is.

Once hired, all volunteers must sign a confidentiality wavier. This wavier is an agreement between the volunteer and Victim Services to ensure anything they witness while volunteering will not be spoken about to anyone outside the Victim Services unit.

It is required that volunteers have a clean criminal record because they will be working with vulnerable individuals. Therefore, a criminal record check needs to be provided from the applicant to the Victim Services unit during the application process.

Volunteers must also have access to a cellphone, driver's licence, vehicle and commit to a minimum number of shifts a month. Volunteer's shifts are on-call. Therefore, it is mandatory that volunteers have a cellphone so they can be contacted if they are needed. If the volunteer needs to go to a crime scene to assist a victim, they need to be able to get there as soon as possible. The purpose of having access to a vehicle is to ensure the victim gets the help they need in a reasonable time frame. Depending on the situation of the crime, victims can be very vulnerable and require assistance right away.

Volunteers must also commit to a minimum number of shifts a month. The amount of shifts varies between different Victim Services units. Since the training process is very lengthy, volunteers need to make a commitment of at least one year to Victim Services. Volunteers are placed on a probation period, the length of which varies among the different Victim Services locations. The purpose of this probation period is to ensure that if the program coordinator does not see the volunteer fit the position, they can be let go.

In order to train volunteers, in-class training and online modules are utilized. The training periods range from 40-70 hours. All the Victim Services units that were researched conduct in-class training once a week for 2-3 hours at a consistent time and day. The length of this training ranged from 8-12 weeks. Each unit also utilizes online modules or over the phone training as well. Final assessments are also required from volunteers before they are hired to ensure they have learned the necessary information from the training. Although the length of each component of the volunteer program changes from each Victim Services unit, there are similarities in how they operate overall.

The information collected was then organized in a binder. The information was placed in charts which can be found in Figure 1 and 2 of the results section. The purpose of the charts was

so that the information could be addressed quickly if the host wanted to look up one specific component of the research. A word document was also produced explaining the charts in more depth for each Victim Services unit researched. The word document outlined the recruitment process, the required skills of the volunteer's, the training process and the job description of the volunteer position which can be found in Appendix C. This information was presented to both hosts, Alice Czitrom and Christie Lee to explain how other volunteer programs operate in Ontario with Victim Services. From there, Alice and Christie could assess the attributes of other volunteer programs and decide what would work best if they implemented this type of volunteer program in Peterborough.



## **Discussion**

The research conducted for this present project resulted in a foundation for a volunteer program in the city of Peterborough with Victim Services. This gives the hosts a starting point with possible recommendation on how a volunteer program could operate. Before a volunteer program could be implemented, more research needs to be conducted for potential training options. The already established modules associated with the learntohelp website would be a potential training option if a funding method could be found that would cover the \$5000 fee of utilizing this website. Therefore, research needs to be conducted to determine if there are potential funding options available to support a volunteer program. If funding cannot be found, research needs to be done to determine other training options that might be more feasible. The ministry of the Attorney General has recently established training modules across the province of Ontario for non-profit Victim Services units. This method of training might be best to use however, more research would need to be done first to determine what type of training has the best success rate (online, in-class, telephone or a combination).

During the process of researching other Victim Services units, I was very surprised that I did not receive a call back from Ottawa, Toronto, Guelph, Durham and Waterloo. It was very worrisome when I left the voicemail just stating my name and number and still did not receive a phone call back. If the victim was building up the courage to contact Victim Services, and then does not hear back from the support services, this could have a severe negative impact on the victim. Based on my voicemail, the Victim Services units did not know I was calling to conduct a survey and which suggests I may have been a victim looking to utilize their services. Research should be conducted to determine the best methods to contact Victim Services because many victims utilize this service based on self-referrals. Perhaps the units need more staff or volunteers

to accommodate the amount of calls they receive in a day. Another possible solution might be to monitor the voicemails more frequently and ensure all calls are answered in a reasonable time frame. Overall, this research project provides possible suggestions on future research to assist with the implementation of a volunteer program in Peterborough as well as improving the service provided by Victim Services across Ontario.

## **Recommendations**

After discussing how the other volunteer programs operate with Victim Services in Ontario, the host of the project suggested an initial start with 6-8 volunteers. Although this is a lot less than many of the other volunteer programs, the hosts do not want to have the services fully operated by volunteers, rather they just want to have a few extra hands helping them. As discussed with the host, one of the tasks of the volunteers in Peterborough would be attending court proceeding and reporting the verdict of the trial. This information would then get relayed back to the victim to keep them updated with the proceedings. The job description of the volunteers might be altered once the program gets implemented in Peterborough and the hosts determine other tasks they could use assistance. The volunteers could possibly assist staff at crime scenes or attend court. By having volunteers attend court rather than the staff, this allows the staff to spend more time working hands-on with the victims.

Depending on the job description of the volunteers, will depend on how much training is required. If volunteers are attending court, rather than attending crime scenes the amount of training they would require would be much less. Also, if volunteers are only attending court, their shifts would not be on-call. The court times and dates are pre-set and therefore, they would be scheduled for a specific time and day. The details pertaining to the job description of the volunteers will have an impact on not only what kind of training is required, but also how their shift's will be organized.

Although many of the volunteer programs have coordinators to hire, schedule and maintain the volunteers, I do not believe that would be necessary for the volunteer program with Victim Services in Peterborough. Since the number of volunteers is minimal compared to the other Victim Services units, I believe Alice and Christie would be able to maintain the volunteer

program themselves. Should they feel later on a program coordinator would be beneficial, they could then go ahead and hire one.

The minimum age of volunteers recruited from the regions surveyed ranged from 18-21. Working with Victim Services would expose the volunteers to a number of potentially traumatic events. Since the volunteers will also be working with information that must be kept confidential, I strongly recommend the volunteers need to be at least twenty one years old. This is to ensure that they can handle the context of the cases they are working with. Even if the volunteers are just attending court, depending on the context of the case, they might encounter every detail of what occurred. If it was a high-risk case such as an attempted murder, the volunteer needs to be able to handle situations of that intensity.

It is crucial that volunteers have a valid driver's licence, access to a vehicle and a cellphone. This is due to the fact that crime does not take place only between the hours of 9-5 Monday to Friday. Therefore, if the Peterborough Victim Services do decide to utilize volunteers to attend to crime scenes to work with the victims, the volunteers need to be contacted and attend the scene immediately. Sending volunteers to crime scenes is a common task in other Victim Services locations. Although this was not previously mentioned as a potential task of volunteers in the city of Peterborough by the hosts, this might become part of the job description once the program is implemented.

Another trend found within the Victim Services units researched is a mandatory commitment to the Victim Services unit. Volunteers need to make a minimum of one year commitment to Victim Services. This is due to the fact that the length of training ranges between 40-70 hours with the volunteer programs researched. Since this is so extensive, it's important to ensure all of this training is not done for volunteers who then only provide their assistance for a few shifts.

I think volunteers should only have to volunteer for a minimum of four shifts a month. This would ensure if Alice and Christie have 6-8 volunteers, they are guaranteed at least one volunteer a day to assist them. Most volunteers will have other jobs and therefore, asking them to commit to six shifts a month for example may be too difficult to balance with work. Also, if the volunteer is committing to too many shifts, they might not be as efficient at their duties assigned to them because they are too exhausted. I believe asking volunteers to commit to approximately four shift a month is reasonable.

Lastly, I recommend that the training should be conducted both online and in class. This is due to the fact that I previously mentioned, that volunteers might be otherwise employed. Having volunteers commit to in-class training sessions multiple times a week might not be feasible. Since we have the ability to utilize online training modules, I believe we should use this to ensure volunteers can complete the modules at their convenience. I also think in-class training should be done to ensure the host gets a sense of the potential volunteer's personality. This could not solely be determined online as it is very important that volunteers express specific characteristics such as empathy, due to the vulnerable victims they will be assisting, that can only be assessed face-to-face.

Overall, these suggestions are meant to be used as a guide to assist the Peterborough Police Victim Services unit to begin building and implementing a volunteer program in the city of Peterborough. Although I have gained a lot of information pertaining to how volunteer programs operate with Victim Services in Ontario, there is much more research that is needed to be done. The hosts have a better idea of the demands of the city of Peterborough and therefore, have a better understanding of what their volunteer program needs in order to meet these requirements.

## References

1. <http://www.peterboroughpolice.com/learn/investigative-services/victim-services/>
2. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/140213/dq140213b-eng.htm>
3. <http://www.vswec.ca/>
4. <http://www.hamiltonpolice.on.ca/hps/faq/victimservices/>
5. <http://ovs-svo.com/site/>
6. <http://www.victimservicestoronto.com/>
7. <http://www.victimservicesdurham.ca/>
8. <http://www.vswr.ca/>
9. <http://www.vswguelph.on.ca/>
10. [www.learn2help.com](http://www.learn2help.com)

## **Appendix A**

The following survey was produced and distributed to a variety of Victim Services in Ontario. The Victim Services units include: Windsor, Ottawa, Toronto, Hamilton, Waterloo, Guelph and Durham.



## Victim Services Survey

1 What Geographical area(s) does your Victim Service unit cover?

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2 Do you have volunteers? If so, how many?

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3 Is there a volunteer coordinator? If yes, is the coordinator a volunteer or are they an employee of Victim Services? Would it be possible to have a copy of their job description?

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4 What are the main duties of the volunteer coordinator?

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5 How do you select your volunteers?

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6 Do volunteers need to have a valid driver's licence?

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7 Do volunteers have to commit to volunteering for a specific period of time? If so, please specify how long.

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8 Do volunteers have to commit to a certain number of shifts or a certain number of hours a month? If so, please specify how many.

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9 Do volunteers have to fill out an application form to apply? If so, would you please be able to email me a copy? Do you require a Resume?

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10 Are volunteers trained in one specific aspect within the Victim Service unit, or are they trained in all areas?

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11 How long is the training process?

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12 How is the training conducted (i.e. online training, in class training etc)?

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13 Who is in charge of running the training sessions if they are conducted in person?

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14 Is the volunteer training divided into modules? If so, what are the modules? If not, what is the training curriculum?

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15. May I have a copy of the volunteer job description?

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16 Are the volunteers assessed to ensure they have passed the training session? If so, please specify how they are assessed.

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17 How is the volunteer program financially maintained?

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18 How do you determine your volunteer program is successful?

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19 Is there any other documentation on your program that you could email or send me?

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## **Appendix B**

The following information was the initial introduction used to introduce the project to the Victim Services units contacted over the phone before the survey was conducted.

Good Afternoon, my name is Danielle Claxton and I'm a fourth year Forensic Science student at Trent University. I am currently conducting research to determine how volunteer programs run for Victim Services in Ontario. I'm conducting this research for Peterborough Victim Services. Once determining how other volunteer programs run, we will use this information to determine the best method to operate a volunteer program here in Peterborough. Therefore, I'm wondering if I could conduct a short survey regarding your volunteer program.

## **Appendix C**

The following information explains the excel tables found in the results section in more detail. This information includes: The recruitment process, skills and requirements, training process and the job description of volunteers in each geographical area researched.



## **Windsor**

### *Recruitment Process*

Their volunteer program is based around using the website [www.learntohelp.com](http://www.learntohelp.com). This website allows the organization to upload a profile based on their volunteer program. They can then attract individuals looking to volunteer in that area. Anyone who is looking to volunteer will set up their own individual profile which will also include their resume. If that applicant is interested in applying for the volunteer position, they can follow the organization. The organization can then screen the individual and decide if they would like to offer them an interview. You can place an application form up as well. This website is linked up with other social media networks such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Therefore, if the organization wants to announce they have a training session coming up or any other message they want to announce to the public, they can do so through this website. Interviews can be set up using this website as well because you can message the applicants. You can also conduct online training through this website. Windsor does 75% of their training online through this website.

### *Skills & Requirements*

Recruiters look for a variety of requirements from an applicant before they are hired. These are, but are not limited to, confident, non-judgemental, empathetic and resourceful. Applicants also need to have strong communication skills as well as empathetic listening. They need to be able to work under stressful situations and respect confidentiality. They need to also be able to work in a team and accept direction from staff and team leaders. Aside from the skills listed above, applicants need to have a valid driver's license, insurance and use of a vehicle. They need to be at least 18 years of age with a clean criminal record check. Applicants must also provide three references.

### *Training Process*

The first step of becoming a volunteer is to fill out an application. This can be found in the appendix. If the applicant meets the requirements, they are then contacted and offered an interview. If the interview is successful, the organization will then contact the references the applicant has provided. From there, the applicant will be contacted and invited to attend the training process. Applicants must attend all the 20 hours of in-class training, as well as complete the 25 hours of E-learning sessions. During the in-class training, resources will be brought in from the community to lecture. Potential volunteers will have specific training in a variety of areas such as sudden death and domestic violence. They will also learn specific communication skills. The E-learning training has quizzes every chapter to ensure the individual has understood each section. Once the 45 hours of training are complete over the 6-8 weeks, the individual can become a volunteer. Volunteers are placed on a three month probation period. If staff do not feel the individual is fit for the volunteer position, they can be let go at any time during this period.

## *Job Description*

Volunteers must commit to a one year of service. They must also work 4-6 12 hour shifts a month. These shifts are either 7 am – 7 pm or 7pm – 7 am. Two shifts a year must also be statutory holidays. During these shifts, volunteers are on-call. They need to provide a number that they could be reached at should they be needed. Each shift has 4-6 volunteers on-call. Staff members work Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm. Team leaders begin their shift at 5 pm until 9 am the next morning. If volunteers are required, the team leader will be contacted and it is their responsibility to contact the volunteer's on-call. Two volunteers are always sent to each call, and the volunteers who live closest to the call who are on-call will be the ones contacted first. There is always a staff member on-call from Friday at 5 pm to Monday at 9 am should they be needed. If the case is a high profile case, a staff member will be called to attend the scene as well as the volunteers. Volunteers are always contacted after they attend a scene by the team leader so they can discuss what the situation was and how they dealt with it. It's very important to ensure confidentiality, so this way volunteers have someone they can talk to without breaking that rule.

## **Hamilton**

### *Recruitment Process*

The recruitment process takes place between August – December however, applications are accepted year around. In order to recruit volunteers, a job description is posted on the city's government careers website which can be found at [www.Hamilton.ca/CityServices/Careers](http://www.Hamilton.ca/CityServices/Careers). At this time an application form can also be found. Once the application form and resume have been reviewed, they will be invited to the orientation night. The individual will then be contacted to schedule an interview if they possess the traits required to fulfill the volunteer position. Potential volunteers are required to provide several references which will be contacted. If the interview is successful, the applicant will be invited to attend the 12 week training session.

### *Skills & Requirements*

In order to qualify as a potential volunteer, the applicant must be a Canadian citizen at least 21 years old who resides in Hamilton. They must possess a valid class G Driver's Licence with no more than 6 demerit points and a clean criminal record check. They must also have access to a vehicle while they are on-call. They have to be able to work under stressful conditions, show compassion and empathy as well as having excellent communication and problem solving skills. Lastly, they have to have a valid email address and internet access in order to schedule shifts, and check their daily mail from staff and team leaders.

### *Training Process*

Starting in January, a 12 week mandatory training session is conducted every Tuesday night from 6:30 – 9:00 pm. During this time, potential volunteers will learn how to handle specific kinds of crimes they will be exposed to such as motor vehicle accidents, sudden deaths and fires. They will participate in role playing activities and group work. They will then participate in a three hour telephone practicum in March to practice communication skills. Following that, applicants will participate in a safeTALK suicide prevention seminar. Potential

volunteers will then be provided the resource manuals which outline all of the rules and procedures associated with the position. It is the duty of the individual to ensure they read the manual and understand the expectations of them. Each year the individual decides to continue to volunteer with Victim Services they will be required to participate in the annual training. Training will also carry on through the year when staff feel it is necessary. At the end of the training session, there is an assessment and evaluation which is mandatory. Once all of the training is complete, the individual will then become a volunteer. They will be placed on a six month probation period. During this time, they can be let go if staff does not believe they are suitable for the position.

#### *Job Description*

Volunteers must commit to a minimum of one year of volunteering with Victim Services. During this time, volunteers must work at least four shifts per month. These shifts range from 4:30 – 12:00 am, 12:00 – 8:30 am on weekdays and 8:30 am – 4:30 pm on weekends. At this time, volunteers are on-call. Volunteers need to ensure they are taking their turn working weekends and statutory holidays as well.

### **Ottawa**

#### *Recruitment Process*

Potential volunteers are required to send in an application (which can be found in the appendix), cover letter, resume and two reference letters. This information can be sent to the Victim Service email provided on the website. From there, the applicant may be contacted to schedule an interview.

#### *Skills & Requirements*

Volunteers must be a minimum age of 18 years old. They must possess a concern for victims who have been impacted by crime. Volunteers need to have communication skills over the phone as well as in person as they could be working on scene or answering phones. Applicants must also have a clean criminal record check.

#### *Training Process*

Potential volunteers will be a part of a 40 hour training session in-class. The purpose of this training is to address the strengths and weaknesses of each individual. The training will provide applicants the opportunity to role play certain scenarios to practice their skills. During the training process applicants will be evaluated by staff. At any time the individual may be let go if they do not seem fit for the position. Once completion of the training, volunteers are placed on a three month probation period where they can be let go at any time if they do not seem qualified. Upon completion of the training as well, applicants are required to write a final exam to ensure they are qualified.

### *Job Description*

Volunteers are required to work three shifts per month. During the year, there are quarterly meetings that volunteers must attend. Volunteers must also commit to a one year service to the agency.

### **Toronto**

#### *Recruitment Process*

Applicants are required to fill out an online application and send in a resume and cover letter. Two references need to be provided in which one is professional and one is a personal reference. Toronto victim services gives you an option to volunteer as a crisis counselor, or apply to be a team leader.

#### *Skills & Requirements*

Applicants must be at least 19 years of age. They need to possess a valid G class Driver's License. A clean criminal record check is also mandatory.

#### *Training Process*

Once an applicant has fulfilled a successful interview, they will be invited to participate in 30 hours of in-class lectures. Once a week, for ten weeks, there will be three hours of training. Then, 16 hours of training with a volunteer mentor in the office is conducted.

#### *Job Description*

Two three or four hour shifts per month are required once hired as a volunteer. The volunteer commitment is a minimum of one year.

### **Waterloo**

#### *Recruitment Process*

In order to volunteer with Waterloo Victim Services an application must be filled out which can be found in the appendix. A resume and cover letter must also be submitted. There are three options you can apply for which are, on-call, a team leader or a board member. A criminal record check will be done for the potential volunteer, as well as immediate family members. Applicants must also provide two personal references whom they have known for a minimum of one year. It is important to note that family does not count as a reference.

#### *Skills & Requirements*

On-call volunteers must have a valid Driver's License, insurance and transportation. They must also be over the age of 19. On-call volunteers need to be able to work in a team, maintain confidentiality and have excellent problem solving skills.

Team leaders must have been an on-call volunteer for a minimum of one year. They also need to possess a valid Driver's License and have insurance and transportation.

Board members must be very organized and punctual. They must have knowledge and skills in the area of board governance such as policy, finance and programs. They must also be over the age of 19.

All volunteers are expected to be dependable, mature, work under stressful situations, have good judgement and take direction for others such as staff and team leaders. Volunteers must also have their own cellphone for contact purposes.

#### *Training Process*

Applicants must complete 70 hours of training before they can be suitable to be a volunteer. Training is conducted every Wednesday night for two hours for six weeks as well as a full Saturday. Applicants must also complete 17 online modules which have small assessments throughout to ensure all the material is understood. Once the training is complete, applicants may become a volunteer. They will be placed on a one year probation period in which they can be let go at any time should staff feel they are not suitable for the position.

#### *Job Description*

They must work a minimum of six shifts per month and be willing to attend any volunteer meetings indicated by staff. Volunteers will also be taken on occasional fieldtrips to enhance their knowledge when it comes to supporting victims of crime. Volunteers must also commit to a two year service.

### **Guelph**

#### *Recruitment*

Applicants are required to fill out an online application and submit a resume and cover letter. A clean criminal record check is also mandatory.

#### *Skills & Requirements*

Potential volunteers must be 20 years or older with a valid Driver's License, insurance and vehicle. Excellent communication, interpersonal and problem solving skills are mandatory.

#### *Training Process*

Forty hours of training must be complete before an applicant will be suitable to volunteer with Victim Services.

#### *Job Description*

Volunteers must commit to at least one year with the service. Shifts are eight hours long, and volunteers need to sign up for 4 each month. The three shifts a volunteer can sign up for is 7 am – 3pm, 3pm-11pm and 11pm-7 am. These shifts are on-call.

## **Durham**

### *Recruitment*

Applications are submitted via email or in person to the Durham Victim Services unit. A resume and cover letter are also required with a list of two references. A criminal record check is also done.

### *Skills & Requirements*

Applicants must be a minimum of 21 years old. They must reside in the Durham Region and have a valid G class Driver's Licence, insurance and vehicle. They must have the ability to work under a stressful work environment and have effective communication skills. They must also ensure confidentiality.

### *Training Process*

The length of training is 40 hours. At this time no information was available to address how the training is conducted.

### *Job Description*

Volunteers must commit to a one year service. They are required to fulfill 2-3 12 hour shifts a month. These shifts are from 7 am – 7 pm or 7 pm – 7 am seven days a week.