



Volunteer Development Program for Victim Services



Background

The Victim Services unit at the Peterborough Police Station strives to provide post-incident and long-term information, as well as referral needs to victims of crime. 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.

Methodology

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, and distributed to London, Windsor, Hamilton, Ottawa, Toronto, Waterloo, Guelph and Durham Victim Services units. A meeting was then established with the project hosts to explain how other Victim Services volunteer programs are operating, and possible suggestions on how a volunteer program in Peterborough should operate.

Research Question

1. How do other Victim Services volunteer programs operate in Ontario?
2. How could a volunteer program operate in Peterborough with Victim Services?

Survey Results

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

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

Results collected from various operating volunteer programs for Victim Services across Ontario.

Purpose

The Victim Services team has long considered the positive impact that a volunteer program could have towards helping victims in the City of Peterborough and Village of Lakefield. However, to be effective, a volunteer program must be well thought out in terms of recruitment, qualifications, training, tasks, logistics and feasibility.

Recommendations

Using the website www.learntohelp.com, organizations can develop a profile to recruit volunteers in their area. This website can also be used to train volunteers through modules that have been previously created by the learn to help company. This recruitment and training method is used by a variety of Victim Services units across Ontario. Although costly, at \$5000 per 100 volunteers, this method would be very beneficial and therefore, the next step would be to research potential funding options.

