

# **POLK COUNTY CRISIS AND ADVOCACY SERVICES**

## **Volunteer Position Description Manual**



**2309 Euclid Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50310  
(515) 286-3600**



**Table of Contents**

**Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services Mission and Vision** Page 3-6

**Prelude: 6 Great Reasons to be a volunteer with us** Page 7-8

**Volunteer Position Descriptions**

**Public Outreach Volunteer** Page 9

**Special Events Volunteer** Page 10

**Newsletter Editor and Contributor** Page 11

**Social Media and Public Relations Specialist** Page 12

**Impact Speaker** Page 13

**Regional Child Protection Center (CPC) Volunteer Advocate** Page 14

**Volunteer Advocate** Page 15

**Volunteer Liaison** Page 16

**Internship Program**

**Program and Position Description** Page 17-20

## **Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services**

### **Agency Commitment to Volunteers/Interns**

- Orient the volunteer/intern to the programs and mission of the agency
- Respect and nurture your time and talents
- Provide the appropriate training needed to perform the desired service
- Furnish supervision and support
- Treat the volunteer/intern as a co-worker and important member of the team
- Provide periodic review of volunteer progress
- Supply opportunities for personal growth and development

### **Volunteers/Interns Commitment to Agency**

- Perform all duties with dedication and responsibility
- Respect and maintain the confidentiality of all information pertaining to clients
- Take advantage of orientation and training programs offered by the agency
- Let the agency know if detained so plans can be made for absence
- Take directions from the staff supervisor to whom assigned
- Bring suggestions, questions, concerns, or problems to immediate supervisor for discussion
- Be willing to learn and grow on the job
- Keep records of your activities

## Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services Volunteer/Intern Program Statement and Purpose

**The** purpose of the Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services (PCCAS) volunteer/intern program is to utilize the talents and skills of volunteers/interns to provide services to victims and to foster an understanding of the work of Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services.

**The** talents of the volunteer/intern are utilized in both direct and indirect services to the clients of this agency. Direct service involves the volunteer/intern who is trained to work directly with clients in various capacities as needed and encouraged by the agency. Indirect service involves the volunteer/intern providing supportive services to the agency.

**The** volunteer/intern is considered an extension of Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services staff. In order to assure a high standard of volunteer/intern quality, an extensive application and screening process has been established. Reference checks are performed and other background checks may be made in the case of direct client service. Each volunteer/intern is also provided with an orientation to our mission, history, and programs. The importance of confidentiality is emphasized. Task training, supervision, support and review opportunities are furnished. Volunteers/interns are expected to perform their duties with dedication and responsibility and with respect to the rights of the agency's clients.

**The** goal of the volunteer/intern program is to match the talents and skills of the volunteer with the needs of the clients and the agency in order to provide maximum satisfaction for all.

## Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services Guidelines for Volunteers/Interns

Accidents/Incidents: If you should have an accident and/or incident while you are at Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services, or when serving clients in the field, any resulting injuries should be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator within 24 hours.

Appropriate Dress: You are requested to dress appropriately for the activities in which you are engaged. If you have questions about the appropriateness of your dress, check with your staff supervisor. Jeans are not appropriate for court attendance. Please check with the Volunteer Coordinator for other court dress guidelines.

Attendance: When you accept an assignment, the agency is relying upon you to carry it out. It is important that you be prompt and dependable. If you are unable to come as scheduled, please the volunteer coordinator know as soon as possible.

Cell Phones and Pagers: If you are attending court turn off your cell phone and adjust your beeper to vibrate. On assignment, please limit personal calls to emergency only.

Chemical Dependency and Use: Volunteers/interns are prohibited from using any chemicals or alcohol while on call, on assignment, or assisting in the office.

Confidentiality: As a volunteer/intern for Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services, you are bound by the rules of confidentiality regarding our clients. Please use discretion when talking about the clients within the agency and never discuss clients outside the agency. You will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement as part of your introduction to our agency.

Grievances and Sexual Harassment: If you have any questions, suggestions, concerns or problems, including human rights and sexual harassment issues while performing your assignment, this should be brought to the attention of a staff member or your supervisor for review or response.

Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services Representation: Volunteers/interns at Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services may identify themselves as Crisis and Advocacy Services advocates ONLY on cases that have been directly assigned to them. Misrepresentation will result in immediate dismissal.

Records: Your hours are important to us. We ask that you record the hours you serve and give them to the Volunteer Coordinator. These records are important for several reasons; they reflect the extent of your activity in the agency; they

serve as a basis for recognition; and they provide information for future job references.

Review: After a period of time (when you and your staff supervisor feel it is appropriate) a cooperative self-evaluation will take place with you and your staff supervisor. This ensures that you and your supervisor are communicating and that your experience continues to be a positive one for you and the program. You will be asked to complete periodic evaluations and when your assignment is over, we will ask you to complete an exit evaluation. We are always glad to receive feedback from our volunteers/interns.

Smoking: Smoking is not allowed in the Crisis and Advocacy Services building. You may not smoke on assignment unless the victim is smoking.

Supervision: Volunteers/interns are assigned to a staff supervisor who will assist them in making a smooth adjustment to their work assignment. The staff supervisor is responsible for the support, training and review of the volunteer/intern. Your staff supervisor is there to help you and the agency give the best possible care to our clients.

Telephone: Volunteers/interns with 20-hour victim advocate training may be asked to provide phone coverage at the front desk. The secretary will train you in the proper procedures.

Theft: Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services is not responsible for the loss of property due to theft. Please refrain from bringing valuable items to work. Polk County will not replace the items that are above what is expected to adequately to perform your duties.

Training: As of May 2011, Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services (PCCAS) training which includes, the 20 Hour Training according to Iowa Code 915.2A covering Victim/Counselor Privilege, PCCAS Orientation, Specialized Training for direct services, etc., will be a compilation of online training modules that include quizzes, some pre-test and post-test, face to face training workshops, webinars, training by Skype, and site visits within the field. Thereafter, the volunteers will receive on-going continuing education unit (CEU) opportunities.

Triggers: A person who has been victimized may react strongly to stimuli such as sounds or smells. Please try to reduce this possibility by keeping yourself as free as possible from strong perfumes, after shaves, tobacco or other products while you are in direct contact with clients.

Volunteer Status: Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services understands the obligations and life events of our volunteers. However, volunteers that do not sign up for or report hours for a total of **2 months** will be considered inactive until further notice to the Volunteer Coordinator.

## 6 Great Reasons to be a Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services Volunteer

1. **Volunteers are vital to our agency.** Volunteers with Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services (PCCAS) send a message of community concern and caring to victims of violent crimes who may no longer feel their homes or neighborhoods are safe.
2. **PCCAS volunteers have an opportunity to help people in crisis.** Victims may have experience a period of disorientation and a need to re-establish their sense of trust. A volunteer can help this happen.
3. **The efforts of our volunteers are appreciated.** Outreach calls and advocacy assistance are welcomed and appreciated by victims. PCCAS staff members see volunteers as essential to our agency and volunteers in many ways.



4. **Volunteers are trained.** In addition to an initial training, opportunities are available for on-going training which can develop confidence and allow for personal growth.
5. **Volunteers develop career-related skills.** Volunteer work with PCCAS can be a stepping stone to careers in social work, counseling and the legal system.
6. **Volunteers are advocates supporting victims' rights!**

## **Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services Mission and Vision Statement**

### **Mission Statement**

Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services provides advocacy and support to promote healing and empowerment for victims/survivors of violent crime in our community.

### **Vision Statement**

In Iowa all crime victims are treated with respect and fairness and receive victim-centered, comprehensive, and coordinated services.

### **Guiding Principles**

Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services:

- is client – focused
- accepts and respects the uniqueness and dignity of all crime victims
- is accessible to all persons
- provides safe and confidential services
- supports crime victims throughout their healing process
- offers choices through education and community resources
- is committed to giving survivors a voice

## **Volunteer Position Descriptions**

### **Public Outreach Volunteer**

**Duties include the following:**

- Setting up PCCAS displays at volunteer fairs, malls, churches, and community outreach events
- Increasing community awareness of services available at PCCAS

**Should be:**

- Enthusiastic and committed to the mission and vision of PCCAS
- Able to field questions
- Able to establish a positive rapport with the public
- Able to communicate effectively

**Schedule:** Based on volunteer availability and staff need

**Training:** Orientation meeting with Volunteer Coordinator  
Shadow staff to gain familiarity with PCCAS' services

**Debrief with:** Volunteer Coordinator

**Length of Commitment:** At least 6 months

## **Special Events Volunteer**

### **Duties include the following:**

- Working closely with PCCAS staff responsible for the event
- Setting up and tearing down PCCAS event materials
  - Events include:
    - Girls' Empowerment Workshop: Saturday around Valentine's Day for 6 hours
    - Take Back the Night: weekday in 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April for 4 hours
    - Holiday Dinner: weekday in 1<sup>st</sup> week of December for 3 hours
    - Out of Darkness Walk: 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in September for 4 hours

### **Should be:**

- Enthusiastic and committed to the mission and vision of PCCAS
- Able to field questions
- Able to establish a positive rapport with the public
- Able to be friendly and use customer service skills effectively

**Schedule:** Based on volunteer availability and staff need

**Training:** Orientation meeting with designated PCCAS staff member  
Shadow staff to gain familiarity with PCCAS' services

**Debrief with:** Volunteer Coordinator

**Length of Commitment:** At least 6 months

## **Newsletter Editor and Contributor**

### **Duties include:**

- Researching articles for PCCAS' quarterly newsletter, *The Connection*
- Editing newsletter content
- Formatting and arranging content to visually appeal to readers

### **Should be:**

- Good with details
- Organized
- Responsible
- Great with deadlines
- Committed to the mission and vision of PCCAS

**Schedule:** Based on volunteers availability

**Training:** On-the-job training

**Debrief with:** Volunteer Coordinator or designated staff member

**Length of Commitment:** At least 6 months

## **Social Media and Public Relations Specialist**

### **Duties include:**

- Contribute current information for social media sites
- Create agency public service announcements via YouTube or other media sites
- Prepare marketing materials to promote agency services and special events
- Implement strategies to increase relationships with the community

### **Should be:**

- Excellent verbal and written skills
- Advanced knowledge of and experience with social media
- Video editing knowledge and design intuition are preferred
- Committed to the mission and vision of PCCAS

**Schedule:** Based on volunteers availability

**Training:** On-the-job training

**Debrief with:** Volunteer Coordinator or designated staff member(s)

**Length of Commitment:** At least 4 months

## **Impact Speaker**

**Purpose:** To increase community awareness on the long term effects that violent crime inflicts on survivors. Impact panels are opportunities for survivors to tell their stories about being victims of crime and share the impact it's had on their lives.

**Benefits for Survivors:**

- Allow the sharing of hope through the survivor's healing process.
- Create a sense of empowerment
- Allow the opportunity to possibly change the future behavior of individuals committing crimes
- Help develop compassion in offenders, and hopefully prevent further victimization

**Schedule:** Arranged with volunteer

**Training:** An interview with Volunteer Coordinator  
Criminal and Child Abuse Registry Check performed  
Completion of impact outline form with Volunteer Coordinator

**Debrief with:** Volunteer Coordinator and/or designated staff member(s)

**Length of Commitment:** Determined by the comfort level of the survivor

## **Regional Child Protection Center (RCPC) Volunteer**

### **Duties include:**

- Serve as an advocate for child victims and their families during forensic examinations and interviews

### **Should be:**

- Able to work with children
- Stable, compassionate, and non-judgmental
- Able to transport self to exam site with proper driver's license and auto insurance
- Committed to the goals of PCCAS

**Schedule:** Based on volunteer availability and staff need

**Training:** 20 hour and PFA Online 6 hour training provided by PCCAS.  
Orientation at the RCPC

**Debrief with:** Volunteer Coordinator or designated staff member(s)

**Length of Commitment:** At least 1 year

## **Volunteer Advocate**

### **Duties include:**

- Work closely with PCCAS staff and Mid-Iowa SART Nurse Examiners
- Serves as an advocate for sexual assault victims during hospital examination and police interview

### **Should be:**

- Able to cope with crisis situations
- Stable, compassionate, and non-judgmental
- Able to transport self to exam site with proper driver's license and auto insurance
- Assertive and able to make decisions
- Committed to the goals of PCCAS

**Schedule:** Weekday evenings and/or weekends

**Training:** 20 hour and PFA Online 6 hour training provided by PCCAS

**Debrief with:** Volunteer Coordinator or designated staff member(s)

**Length of Commitment:** Determined by volunteer

## **Volunteer Liaison**

### **Duties include:**

- Work closely with PCCAS staff involved with non-sexual victim crimes
- Serve as a liaison for homicide victims to learn about PCCAS services (i.e.: judicial/law enforcement/medical advocacy)

### **Should be:**

- Able to cope with crisis situations
- Stable, compassionate, and non-judgmental
- Able to transport self to exam site with proper driver's license and auto insurance
- Assertive and able to make decisions
- Committed to the goals of PCCAS

**Schedule:** Weekday evenings and/or weekends

**Training:** 30 hour and PFA Online 6 hour training provided by PCCAS

**Debrief with:** Volunteer Coordinator or designated staff member(s)

**Length of Commitment:** Determined by volunteer

# **POLK COUNTY CRISIS AND ADVOCACY SERVICES**



## **Internship/Practicum Description Handbook**

## FIVE GREAT REASONS TO BE A POLK COUNTY CRISIS AND ADVOCACY SERVICES INTERN

1. **INTERNS DEVELOP CAREER-RELATED SKILLS.** An internship with PCCAS can be a stepping stone to careers in social work, counseling, law, and criminal justice.
2. **INTERNS ARE TRAINED.** In addition to an initial training, opportunities are available for on-going training, which can develop confidence and allow for personal growth.
3. **PCCAS INTERNS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP PEOPLE IN CRISIS.** Victims experience a period of disorientation and a need to re-establish their sense of trust. An intern can help this happen.
4. **THE EFFORTS OF OUR INTERNS ARE APPRECIATED.** Outreach calls and advocacy assistance are welcomed and appreciated by victims. PCCAS staff members see interns as vital to our agency and support interns in many ways.
5. **INTERNS ARE ADVOCATES SUPPORTING VICTIMS' RIGHTS!**

# INTERNSHIP OVERVIEW

## **TRAINING/ORIENTATION**

Interns are provided with a thorough orientation and have access to videos, books, and articles about topics such as: sexual assault, diversity, effective communication, etc. Interns are given the 30 Hour Sexual Assault and Crisis Intervention Training. Additionally, they are required to complete a 6 hour online psychological first aid (PFA) training. Thereafter, interns are trained on answering the crisis line and asked to shadow PCCAS staff counselors for fieldwork learning.

## **COURT ADVOCACY FOR VIOLENT CRIME CASES**

Interns work closely with PCCAS staff counselors in providing advocacy and support for children and adults testifying in or observing court proceedings.

## **REGIONAL CHILD PROTECTION CENTER**

Interns work closely with PCCAS staff counselors in providing support for children going through sexual abuse exams. The intern serves as an advocate and support person for the child victim during clinic examinations and interviews.

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT COUNSELOR TRAINING**

Interns are trained to provide crisis intervention, advocacy, and support for sexual assault victims during hospital exams and police investigations. This training also enables direct service privilege with clients.

## **VICTIM ADVOCATE**

Interns provide one to one support for victims whose cases are being facilitated through the Victim/Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP). The session is an opportunity for the victim to tell the perpetrator how he/she felt about the crime and what impact the crime had on his/her life. The intern is responsible for explaining the process to the victim prior to the session and providing emotional support and advocacy during the session.

## **OTHER OPPORTUNITIES**

- Interns at PCCAS observe counselors giving presentations.
- Interns set up displays and represent PCCAS at conferences, community and church outreach events, and other events as needed.
- Interns are provided with a thorough orientation and have access to videos, books, and articles about topics such as: incest, rape, domestic violence, child sexual abuse, etc.
- Interns are trained to answer phones and may be called upon to do special projects. Special projects may include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Research Trauma Informed Care Approaches
  - Research Public Epidemic of Trauma
  - Assess performance measures of PCCAS

- to create public education tools to inform community of the impact and manifestation of trauma

Internships are not paid positions. We ask for one semester commitment working at least two days a week. If you are interested in a fall, spring or summer internship position at PCCAS, contact Lisa Heldenbrand, MSW, LMSW at 515-286-2031. Lisa and selected staff will set a time to discuss more fully the opportunities listed above and your areas of interest.

### **EVALUATION**

Upon completion of hours, interns are required to complete an exit interview with the student's Staff Supervisor. This time enables the intern to speak openly about their experience and assist PCCAS with improving the program.

### **TERMINATION**

Interns can be terminated if PCCAS staff or partnering community agencies report observing inappropriate conduct from the intern. The Staff Supervisor will meet with the intern along with the Agency Supervisor to address the issues and document the termination process.

Interns can also voluntarily terminate themselves by reporting to the Agency Supervisor and Staff Supervisor. The supervising parties will meet with the intern and document the explanation of departure.