

STAFF & VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Educating staff and volunteers about the dynamics and impact of sexual violence and equipping them with the skills to provide appropriate, survivor-centered, empathic advocacy and support services to survivors and co-survivors of sexual violence based on standardized best practices · 40 hours of initial sexual violence training for new staff and volunteers; 30 hours of continuing education every 2 years thereafter
Goal	<p>To equip staff and volunteers with the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective advocates for survivors/co-survivors of sexual violence</p>
Minimum Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · All newly hired staff members and newly recruited volunteers must complete at least 40 hours of sexual violence advocacy training that addresses, at a minimum, the Core Service Standards and Service Administration Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Qualified Advocates should then complete 30 hours of continuing education every 2 years thereafter ◦ Training for newly recruited volunteers should be completed before the volunteers have direct contact with survivors and co-survivors ◦ Training for newly hired staff members, or staff members who are transferring positions within the Program, should also include training related to standard(s) specific to their position (for example, prevention services, support groups, professional counseling/therapy) ◦ Basic training topics include but aren't limited to: types of sexual violence; crisis intervention; law enforcement and legal system overview; sexual assault exam information; meeting the needs of diverse populations; and supporting survivors with varying abilities ◦ Existing program staff members must be able to demonstrate that they have previously completed an equivalent of 40 hours of rape crisis advocacy training ◦ Volunteers should complete an application, be interviewed by staff using a standardized list of questions, pass a background check, and possess the necessary auto insurance coverage, as well as other program-specific requirements (e.g., TB test)

**Minimum
Qualifications,
Continued**

- The Program must have written guidelines, policies, and procedures for staff and volunteers, including:
 - Protocols for documentation of contacts with survivors
 - Protocols for when and how volunteers should contact a staff member/supervisor
 - Protocols for when and how to connect survivors to appropriate resources in the community
 - Protocol for maintaining professional boundaries between staff/volunteers and the people being served
- The Program should establish record-keeping protocols, including:
 - How to track the number of contacts (phone and in-person) and how to dispose of confidential information
 - Maintaining a roster of all volunteer names and contact information on file
 - Tracking the number of volunteer hours and types of assistance provided per volunteer
- Neither paid staff members nor volunteers need to be licensed mental health providers to serve in an advocacy capacity; if a staff member or volunteer is a licensed mental health provider, they do not serve in their licensed professional capacity when acting as an advocate
- All staff and volunteers must sign a confidentiality statement upon hire/the beginning of volunteer service, and the Program must keep it on file

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Program Checklist

1. Training Requirements

- All paid staff members and volunteers providing services to survivors will complete a minimum of 40 hours of rape crisis advocacy training, verification of which will be placed in their personnel/volunteer file
 - Newly-hired staff members must complete a minimum of 40 hours of training within six months of hire
 - Existing staff members must be able to demonstrate that they have previously completed an equivalent of 40 hours of rape crisis advocacy training (i.e. documentation/certificates of completion)
 - Newly recruited volunteers must complete a minimum of 40 hours of training prior to having direct contact with survivors and co-survivors
 - Even if an individual staff member or volunteer will not be providing all core direct services as part of their specific position, they must still complete the 40 hours of training, as concepts are interrelated and knowledge of all topics may be necessary or beneficial when assisting a survivor in any capacity
- The 40-hour training must include (but does not need to be limited to) the topics listed below; training may exceed 40 hours if the Program desires
- The required 40 hours of training for newly hired staff and newly recruited volunteers may be provided by the organization itself or by another organization, provided that all Core Standards and Service Administration Standards are addressed and the Program itself provides training regarding the local community characteristics, needs, resources, and Program policies and procedures
- All staff members, both newly hired and existing, must complete a minimum of thirty (30) hours of continuing education/training every two years
 - Continuing education must be relevant to rape crisis advocacy, and ideally should provide more in-depth knowledge/skills that will assist the staff member in being more effective in their role as a Qualified Advocate
 - Advocacy trainings provided by OAESV (including the Annual Conference, regional trainings, Statewide Advocacy Training, and webinars/online training) may count toward continuing education hours
 - Trainings/workshops/seminars that award CEUs for counselors or social workers may count toward this requirement, provided that the training is relevant to rape crisis advocacy
 - Academic coursework may count toward this requirement, provided

that the course is current/active (i.e. not a past course taken) and relevant to rape crisis advocacy

- In-service trainings provided by the Program may count toward this requirement, provided that the training is new and relevant to advocacy
- Staff meetings do not count toward this requirement, unless the meeting contains a clearly-defined training component
- The 40-hour baseline rape crisis advocacy training does not count toward this requirement
- Documentation of continuing education hours is kept in personnel files (i.e. certificates of completion)
- While existing volunteers are not required to complete 30 hours of continuing education every 2 years, the Program must provide ongoing education to volunteers to ensure that advocacy services are provided effectively; to every extent possible, volunteers should be included in in-house or local training opportunities that are afforded to paid staff

2. Training Structure & Content

- The 40-hour rape crisis advocacy training must adequately prepare staff members and volunteers with knowledge and skills to provide effective advocacy to survivors and co-survivors of sexual violence
- The exact structure of the training may vary by Program; specific topics requiring greater emphasis may vary according to the Program and the community
- Elements of all of the following Standards must be included in the 40-hour training:
 - 24-Hour Crisis Hotline
 - Hospital/Medical Advocacy
 - Criminal Justice/Legal Advocacy
 - Community Awareness & Outreach (components applicable to staff/volunteer duties)
 - Accessibility
 - Cultural Humility
 - Ethics & Accountability (components applicable to staff/volunteer duties)
 - Community Coordination & Collaboration
- Cultural diversity issues are covered throughout the training as a part of all topics. Time should be spent discussing the impact of racism and other systems of oppression on survivors, cultural humility, and information about the issue of sexual assault within area communities
- Use a variety of training formats (lecture, discussion, activities, etc.)
- Utilize presenters/guest speakers with specific topic expertise when possible

- Role-plays should be utilized throughout the training program to assess understanding of concepts and their application to work with survivors
- The training should incorporate frequent breaks and continual emphasis on monitoring for vicarious trauma and self-care during the training
- Topics to be addressed:
 - History of rape crisis advocacy, including anti-oppression and public health perspectives
 - Definition of rape and sexual assault and types of sexual assault: child, marital or partner, acquaintance/stranger, adult male, etc.
 - Rape stereotypes and realities/statistics
 - Hospital/Medical – emergency department protocol; the forensic exam/rape kit; health issues including STI's, HIV and PEP, drug facilitated sexual assault; etc.
 - The Legal System – reporting, relevant laws and definitions, victim rights, police, role of legal advocacy, court information including the role of the prosecutor and the grand jury, trial, civil suits, victims of crime compensation, university procedures, Ohio Constitutional Victim Rights, and other issues specific to the Program's service area
 - Specific Populations – specific religious and ethnic groups, LGBTQI, elderly, children, developmentally disabled, chronically mentally ill, people with varying abilities, incarcerated individuals, and more
 - Drug and alcohol addiction and the relationship with sexual violence
 - Suicide prevention
 - Rape crisis advocacy skills, including listening and empathy skills
 - Safety skills and protocol for staff and volunteers
 - Overview of local agencies and when/how to connect survivors with resources
 - Program/agency procedures on responding to survivors and record keeping
 - Confidentiality and mandated reporting requirements, including those for outreach and prevention staff who work with young people
 - Working with co-survivors (family and friends)
 - Setting and maintaining appropriate boundaries with survivors
 - Self-care, vicarious trauma, and setting appropriate boundaries
 - Other topics as dictated by Program structure and community need
- A training manual and certificate of completion is provided to all trainees

3. Additional Preparation

- In addition to basic training, all newly-hired staff and volunteers should receive additional supervised training for the specific service(s) they will provide. This may include role playing, shadowing an experienced staff member, and/or providing the service in conjunction with an experienced staff member.

- All staff members and volunteers should receive training on all Program policies and procedures (personnel policies, confidentiality, responding to emergencies, documentation of services provided, documentation of hours served, etc.)

4. Policies

- Position descriptions for paid staff and volunteer positions include initial training and continuing education training requirements
- The Program has a policy stating the qualifications and requirements for volunteer service, which may include minimum age, ability to travel, and minimum expected hours of service per a defined period of time (i.e. specified hours per month, for a minimum number of months)
- The Program provides services in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, as well as requirements of funders, and staff and volunteers are aware of these laws and requirements
- The Program has a policy for documentation of services, volunteer hours served, and training and continuing education completed by staff and volunteers
- The Program has a policy clearly outlining confidentiality and mandated reporting requirements of staff members and volunteers
- The Program has a policy clearly outlining professional conduct and boundaries for staff members and volunteers (i.e. no personal/social relationships with people served, guidelines for social media use, etc.)
- The Program has a policy outlining supervisory requirements for staff members and volunteers working directly with survivors and co-survivors (i.e. when and how to seek supervision, who to contact after-hours and in emergency situations, etc.)
- The Program has a policy regarding self-care of staff members and volunteers who work directly with survivors and co-survivors (i.e. monitoring vicarious trauma, requesting time off, availability of employee assistance programs, etc.)

5. Evaluation

- The Program documents number/hours of training provided
- The Program documents demographics of those trained
- The Program utilizes pre/post-tests, quizzes, role play evaluations, and other formats to assess knowledge and skills of trainees
- The Program conducts surveys and/or interviews of participants and trainers about the effectiveness and success of the training
- The Program conducts surveys and/or interviews of dropouts, if possible, to obtain feedback about training
- The Program uses feedback from evaluation of services and from

supervisors to determine if services are implemented effectively after the training

- The volunteer coordinator/supervisory staff member regularly monitors volunteers for emotional wellness and vicarious trauma, and provides support accordingly