



Volunteering for Victims

VCARS

Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Service

VCARS Direct Service Volunteer Position Description

Position Overview:

Direct Service Volunteers provide immediate, short-term emotional support, practical assistance and community referrals to victims of crime or tragedy. Incidents may include: partner assault, harassment, sexual assault, property crime, sudden death, motor vehicle accidents, personal crisis and multi-casualty occurrences. Support may include: listening, answering questions, providing information and community referrals, assisting with practical needs (such as picking up groceries or making a meal), accompanying to emergency services (such as a shelter or hospital) and transporting. All victim support is screened for safety by police and is requested by the victims. Volunteers always work in pairs for any in-person victim support.

Volunteer Benefits:

- ◆ Be part of a supported and connected community by assisting victims of crime and tragedy
- ◆ Receive training on community support services, reducing the impacts of trauma and enhancing communication skills
- ◆ Enjoy flexible volunteer scheduling adaptable to your personal and work schedules
- ◆ Meet and socialize with other caring volunteers

Responsibilities:

- ◆ Submit scheduling information as per policy requirements
- ◆ Maintain strictest confidentiality at all times
- ◆ Provide compassionate, non-judgmental and empathetic support to victims, adhering at all times to program guidelines and requirements
- ◆ Follow all procedures and protocol related to communications, volunteer safety and reporting
- ◆ Always debrief with volunteer partners following each call
- ◆ Respect, maintain in good condition and update all equipment and materials provided by the agency
- ◆ Attend and participate in monthly meetings, training and social events
- ◆ Understand and adhere to all volunteer policies and procedures

Commitment:

- ◆ Complete 40+ hours of Ministry mandated initial volunteer training
- ◆ Attend 9 out of 12 monthly 2-hour continuing education meetings
- ◆ Commit to three 12-hour (or equivalent) shifts per month to assist VCARS in providing 24/7 service
- ◆ Commit to a minimum of one year of volunteering after initial training
- ◆ Provide time required to drop off call forms, share resources, etc.
- ◆ Attend optional training and social events



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Qualifications:

Thunder Bay and Area Victim Services requires volunteers with the following abilities and/or commitment to learning the necessary skills:

- ◆ Minimum 18 years of age
- ◆ Proof of a valid driver's license and access to an insured vehicle
- ◆ Strong verbal and non-verbal communications skills
- ◆ Ability to provide non-judgmental, sensitive, emotionally safe service related to victims' needs
- ◆ Some knowledge of community resources
- ◆ Must not have been a victim of a traumatic event during the past twelve months, or have issues before the courts
- ◆ Willing and able to work in environments that are not allergen free (may encounter smoke, pets/animals, environmental irritants, etc.)

Screening Process:

- ◆ **Initial Screening includes:** Application form, 3 Reference checks, Interview, Enhanced Criminal Records Search including Sex Offender Registry Check, Proof of a valid driver's license and use of an insured vehicle, Initial 40+ hour volunteer training
- ◆ **Ongoing Screening Includes:** Supervision, Monthly meetings, Evaluation
- ◆ **Annual Recertification Includes:** Annual Enhanced Criminal Records Search including Sex Offender Registry Check, Volunteer review, Participate in Refresher meeting or complete Refresher questionnaire, Proof of a valid driver's license and use of an insured vehicle
- ◆ Contravention of policies leads to disciplinary action

Report To:

- ◆ VCARS Volunteer Coordinator

For More Information:

- ◆ Contact the VCARS Volunteer Coordinator at (807) 684-1374
- ◆ See www.tbayvictimservices.com