

Overview of the role

The purpose of the NEPACS Court Project Court Duty Volunteer is to offer information, advice and support to families. Having a visible presence in the court and using telephone support, volunteers support families by listening and offering information and advice when someone close to them is sentenced or remanded in custody. Families of prisoners often say they feel isolated in their community and unable to cope. Volunteers aim to help individuals by offering a listening ear, a helping hand and friendly support to help family make the next steps.

Role Description

Main tasks include:

- To find out and identify from the court lists and by liaising with probation and court staff the court cases where custody is anticipated
- To approach families tactfully when a custodial sentence is imposed with the offer of support and information.
- To develop positive working relationships with court staff
- Be available for families who may be distressed
- Ensure that any leaflet racks are well stocked
- To manage caseload and commit time to an agreed schedule of establishing contact with families
- To offer genuine understanding, empathy and emotional support
- To provide regular reports to Court Project Coordinator on the progress of the relationship, notifying them of any difficulties in the relationship and seeks advice on how this should be resolved.
- To complete case notes information, case studies and monitoring forms

Skills required:

- To have an interest in the needs of prisoner's families
- To be respectful of the traditions of the courts
- To have a professional but empathetic manner
- To be friendly and approachable
- Be punctual and reliable
- To have excellent listening and verbal communication skills; ability to communicate confidently with a wide range of people
- To be able to work well independently
- To be non-judgmental

Location

The role is based at Durham Crown Court, Teeside Crown and Magistrates Court, and Newcastle Crown Court.

Expenses:

Public transport costs or mileage up to 22 mile radius at 40p per mile.

Training and support:

- Initial project induction and training
- Level 1 Safeguarding training available
- Invite to Nepacs Generic induction
- Volunteer meetings are held at regular intervals throughout the year
- NEPACS offer a training day for all volunteers annually
- Volunteers are eligible to attend some prison organised training

Commitment

NEPACS asks volunteers

- To commit to the project and its purpose and give notice of absence as soon as possible
- To undertake an induction programme
- To agree to a DBS check (this will require a form of photo ID)

Volunteers can expect

- Support from staff
- Training opportunities
- Invitation to volunteer meetings
- Recognition of their work

To apply:

Please download an application form from our Volunteer Opportunities page of our website or contact: volunteering@nepacs.co.uk , or ring us on 0191 375 7278.