

Introduction to Family Support:

Family Support workers work within the prison and in the prison visitor centres and the community. The project offers support to families where a family member or loved one is in custody. The project offers support, information and advice to families who may have multiple needs and particularly around making and maintaining contact with the prisoner. The project also supports and works with prisoners who have identified certain family issues that they would like support with. The setting is different in each prison so this outline reflects a general description which will be tailored to suit each context and after discussion with each prospective volunteer.

General overview of role:

Volunteers in this role will offer 1:1 support, information and guidance to families of prisoners, and this may develop to offering support to prisoners. The volunteer will be offering a listening ear and emotional support as well as signposting people to other agencies, and offering some practical support.

Role Description:

Main tasks will include:

- To listen to prisoners and their families either face to face or on the phone
- To provide human support and to ensure that children and families of prisoners are treated with respect, dignity and care
- To offer non judgemental support
- To help families understand the visits process and any other relevant prison processes
- To research information about local support services for families
- To offer practical support in accessing visits
- To assist staff to organise and deliver a range of special visits including parent/child visits, family learning visits, new/first time dad visits, special family visits and adult only family visits.
- To follow any prison protocols, rules and policies
- To ensure that concerns raised about a child's welfare and safety are dealt with in accordance with NEPACS safeguarding policy
- To offer administrative support to the family support worker

Skills required:

- Friendly
- Reliable
- Non judgemental
- Well developed communication skills
- Ability to write up brief but clear case notes
- Empathy with prisoners families serving the 'unseen sentence'
- Ability to listen actively and to empathise
- Calm and positive in their approach
- Approachable on the phone
- Some understanding of the visits process at the prison
- Ability to work individually but also contribute to the team

- Some experience of work (paid or unpaid) in a support role in the community

Location:

In visitors' centres at HMP Durham, HMP&YOI Low Newton in Durham (no current spaces), HMP Holme House in Stockton, HMYOI Deerbolt in Barnard Castle, HMP Kirklevington Grange in Yarm and HMP Northumberland.

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 and prison clearance (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.