

**OHIO ADVOCATE NETWORK
FOR TRAINING AND REGISTRATION**
c/o Victim/Witness Division
Greene County Prosecutor's Office
61 Greene Street, Lower Level
Xenia, OH 45385

Dear Ohio Advocate:

The Ohio Advocate Network for Training and Registration is pleased to provide you with the attached registration information. This package contains two separate applications - one for individuals to become a Registered Advocate (RA) and one for an organization to become a Registered Training Program (RTP) which should be filed by a Program Director. You may submit one or both applications. However, each application has a \$25.00 fee.

Please read the instructions carefully before completing the application(s) and provide all required information. APPLICATIONS ARE ONLY ACCEPTED IN JUNE (DEADLINE: JUNE 30) AND DECEMBER (DEADLINE: DECEMBER 31) EACH YEAR. The Review Committee will then meet within 4-6 weeks of that deadline to review and approve applications. The Review Committee may consist of as many as two members from each statewide victim assistance organization (e.g. OVWA, ODVN, MADD, POMC, OCASA, and ACTION, Ohio) that endorse the registration process.

This application package contains the following materials:

- A history of the development of the registration process in Ohio;
- An explanation of pre-service and on-going education;
- A TAG (Training Area Guideline) List;
- An application for (RA) Registered Advocate status;
- A Memorandum of Confirmation of employment/volunteer service;
- An application for (RTP) Registered Training Program status;
- The NOVA (National Organization for Victim Assistance) Code of Ethics; and
- A sample advocate training record.

Your input regarding the program is welcome. Please send all correspondence to the OAN Registration Review Committee at the address listed on the letterhead.

Thank you for your interest in Advocate and Training Program Registration and for joining other Ohio advocates in the continued professionalization of our field.

THE OHIO ADVOCATE NETWORK PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Registered Advocate and Registered Training Program application process was developed and implemented for Ohio's advocates by a coalition of advocates representing statewide victim service organizations.

WHAT IS REGISTRATION ALL ABOUT?

BACKGROUND

Development of victim advocacy services began in the 1970's and has grown to include a network of victim service providers on a national and international level. The National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) and the National Center for Victims of Crime (formerly The National Victim Center) appreciate the need for updated information, professional standards for the field of advocacy and continued training and education about issues pertinent to those working with victims of crime.

A coalition of service providers in Ohio, upon identifying the need for recognition and advanced specialized training of those working in the field of victim advocacy, began developing a Victim Advocacy registration program in 1990 for the Victim Advocates in the state.

Individual registration attests that Victim Advocates have achieved defined levels of knowledge, skill and experience in the field and offers recognition to Victim Advocates, particularly those who do not hold other credentials.

PURPOSE

For individuals: To publicly affirm the field of Advocacy and recognize the knowledge and skills of Advocates working with those victimized by crime, and to encourage ongoing education. Individuals may participate by becoming a REGISTERED ADVOCATE (RA).

For programs: To ensure that programs provided quality advocacy and supportive services to those victimized by crime through the establishment of uniform minimum standards for pre-service training and continued education. Programs may participate by becoming a REGISTERED TRAINING PROGRAM (RTP).

PROCEDURE

All current victim advocates meeting the minimum specifications as defined under ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS may apply for registration at one of the three levels based upon the criteria established. A **\$25.00 application fee** will be required and must accompany the application. Subsequently, all registered advocates will be required to obtain a **minimum of twenty (20) hours of continuing education every two years**. Documentation of such training must be submitted with the renewal application no later than the two-year anniversary date of the previous registration.

Registered advocates are encouraged to attend training in recommended areas of the Training Area Guidelines (TAG) List at, for example, the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) annual conference; NOVA's Institutes, The National Center for Victims of Crime training sessions; and/or the Annual State of Ohio Attorney General's "Two Days In May" Victim Assistance Conference. Registered Advocates are further encouraged to contact their Statewide Associations to inquire about affordable training in pre-approved areas.

The RA renewal fee will be \$10.00 to be paid at the time of the renewal application. If an upgrade in individual status is being sought at the same time as renewal, the fee will be \$25.00.

(Funds collected are restricted for the use of costs associated with registration and training process).

DEFINITIONS

ADVOCACY is defined as providing supportive services specific to the distinct circumstances and needs individuals face in the aftermath of criminal victimization. In advocacy, empowerment of the individual is a primary goal.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES are defined as, but not limited to, crisis intervention, assistance to and empowerment of the individual; advocacy/intervention with other systems the individual may encounter; and ensuring the rights of those victimized by crime.

An **ADVOCATE** is one who recognizes the distinct circumstances and needs of those victimized by crime and offers assistance while having a working knowledge of the common issues of crime victimization.

TYPES OF REGISTRATION

REGISTERED ADVOCATE (RA): An individual advocate may apply for RA status by submitting an application which documents that the applicant has training and experience in providing and/or coordinating direct services to those victimized by crime. This experience should include advocacy with those victimized by crimes such as domestic violence, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, and/or homicide, as well as other criminal offenses. Experience and corresponding training determines which of the three levels of individual registration should be sought. All applicants receive, in this packet, a Training Area Guideline (TAG) sheet which details recommended training for each level.

REGISTERED TRAINING PROGRAM (RTP): A program may apply for RTP status by submitting an application which documents that the agency provided a minimum of twenty (20) hours of pre-service training in designated generic ("A" series) areas as outlined on the Training Area Guidelines (TAG) List as well as the minimum training areas in a specific discipline ("B" series). Programs seeking RTP status agree that they will allow advocates to offer advocacy and supportive services to those victimized by crime *only after* completing the minimum pre-service training requirements. Further, the program agrees to make available the minimum ongoing training (twenty hours every two years), as defined by the TAG sheet ("C" series).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

REGISTERED ADVOCATE (RA): **Must** have at least one year (**minimum of 1950 hours**) of experience and the necessary training as designated on the TAG list.

REGISTERED ADVOCATE WITH ADVANCED STANDING (RAAS): **Must** have at least three year (**minimum of 5850 hours**) of experience and the necessary training as designated on the TAG list.

REGISTERED ADVOCATE WITH SENIOR STANDING (RASS): **Must** have at least five years (**minimum of 9750 hours**) of experience and necessary training as designated on the TAG list.

NOTE: *A year of experience, in minimum number of hours required, is based upon the equivalent of a full-time employment calendar year which is equal to 1950 hours; but, those hours need not be completed within a 12-month period.*

Once an application is approved, a Certificate of Registration is provided.

PRE-SERVICE AND ON-GOING TRAINING DEFINED

To obtain Registered Advocate (RA) status at any level, the advocate must complete pre-service training as defined under the “A” Series (GENERIC MINIMUM TRAINING AREAS) and the “B” Series (SPECIALIZATION MINIMUM TRAINING AREAS).

The “A” Series includes 9 topics which are basic to all fields of advocacy. Before offering services, an advocate seeking Registered Advocate status should complete some amount of training in all of the required 9 topics. The “B” Series lists topics specific to particular service areas. If the advocate specialized in a particular victim population (e.g.; domestic violence, sexual assault, homicide, etc.), the advocate must have also received training as defined under the “B” Series of the “TAG” list (e.g.; DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, POMC, etc.). If you provide services to a victim population not specified, refer to the GENERAL CRIME VICTIMS service area.

OAN promotes the idea that each specialization area has basic and minimum subjects that are conducive to providing comprehensive services. For example, if you are an advocate specializing in sexual assault services only, you should complete training in the 9 basic areas listed in the “A” Series as well as all of the topics listed under the “B” Series under SEXUAL ASSAULT. Therefore, as a sexual assault provider, it is expected that the advocate has knowledge of Rape Trauma Syndrome, Rape Evidence Collection, Interviewing Rape Victims, etc. The total number of hours of training in all topics from Series “A” (#1 through 9) and “B” (under the relevant service area) must equal at least 20 hours.

For example, an advocate may have 2.5 hours in Crisis Intervention, 1 hour in Suicide Assessment, 1.5 hours in Case Management, and so on from the “A” Series as well as 2 hours in Rape Trauma Syndrome, 1 hour in Police Investigation of Rape, and so on from the “B” Series.

The total number of training hours from all Series “A” and “B” topics may exceed the minimum 20 hours required.

The “C” Series (RECOMMENDED ON-GOING TRAINING AREAS) is suggested to maintain and/or enhance the Registered Advocate status. It is expected that RA’s seeking renewal will select their on-going training from the topics included, but not limited to, those listed in the “C” Series. In consideration of the fact that the field of advocacy is constantly changing, the advocate may choose to receive and submit training in subjects not listed in the “C” Series. The advocate has two years from the date of approval, which appears on the RA certificate, to obtain a minimum of 20 hours of on-going education for RA status renewal.

Finally, there is nothing to preclude an advocate from also seeking refresher courses in any of the “A” or “B” Series topics or seeking training from the other specialization services areas listed in the “B” series.

NOTARIZED MEMORANDUM OF CONFIRMATION

OHIO ADVOCATE NETWORK

c/o Victim/Witness Div. - Greene Co. Pros. Ofc.
61 Greene Street, Lower Level
Xenia, Ohio 45385

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT INFORMATION

PLEASE NOTE:

1. This form should be filled out by a person authorized * to verify the applicant's employment or volunteer hours with the agency.
2. If the applicant held several positions, or worked as both a volunteer and an employee, or worked in both a full-time and a part-time capacity, you will need to fill out a Memorandum of Confirmation for each position.

RE: _____
(Applicant's Name)

FROM
Name: _____
** (may be a Supervisor, member of Board of Directors, Volunteer Coordinator or similarly defined position and need not be person who was in supervisory role over applicant during the applicant's service period)*

Agency: _____

Phone: (____) _____

I, _____, certify that the applicant,
(Name of person verifying information)*

_____, provided direct services to those victimized by crime
(Name of Agency)

at _____ in the capacity of
(Position Title)

_____ - an employee _____ or volunteer _____
(Check one)

The applicant provided these services from _____ to _____ and worked as
(Start date) (End date)

a full-time _____ / part-time _____ employee at _____ hours per week.
(Check one) (Number)

I affirm the above is accurate information according to our records.

(Signature) (Date)

Sworn to and subscribed before this _____ day of _____, _____.

Notary Public

Code of Professional Ethics for Victim Assistance Providers

Adopted by the NOVA Board of Directors, April 22, 1995

Victims of crime and the criminal justice system expect every Victim Assistance Provider or volunteer, to act with integrity, to treat all victims and survivors of crime – their clients – with dignity and compassion, and to uphold principles of justice for accused and accuser alike. To these ends, this Code will govern the conduct of Victim Assistance Providers:

I. In relationships with every client, the Victim Assistance Provider shall:

1. Recognize the interests of the client as a primary responsibility.
2. Respect and protect the client's civil and legal rights.
3. Respect the client's rights to privacy and confidentiality, subject only to laws or regulations requiring disclosure of information to appropriate other sources.
4. Respond compassionately to each client with personalized services.
5. Accept the client's statement of events as it is told, withholding opinion or judgment, whether or not a suspected offender has been identified, arrested, convicted, or acquitted.
6. Provide services to every client without attributing blame, no matter what the client's conduct was at the time of the victimization or at another stage of the client's life.
7. Foster maximum self-determination on the part of the client.
8. Serve as a victim advocate when requested and, in that capacity, act on behalf of the client's stated needs without regard to personal convictions and within the rules of the advocates host agency.
9. Should one client's needs conflict with another's, act with regard to one client only after promptly referring the other to another qualified Victim Assistance Provider.
10. Observe the ethical imperative to have no sexual relations with clients, current or past, in recognition that to do so risks exploitation of the knowledge and trust derived from the professional relationship.
11. Make client referrals to other resources or services only in the client's best interest, avoiding any conflict of interest in the process.
12. Provide opportunities for colleague Victim Assistance Providers to seek appropriate services when traumatized by a criminal even or a client.

II. In relationships with colleagues, other professionals, and the public, the Victim Assistance Provider shall:

1. Conduct relationships with colleagues in such a way as to promote mutual respect, public respect, and improvement of service.
2. Make statements that are critical of colleagues only if they are verifiable and constructive in purpose.
3. Conduct relationships with allied professionals such that they are given equal respect and dignity as professionals in the victim assistance field.
4. Take steps to quell negative, insubstantial rumors about colleagues and allied professionals.
5. Share knowledge and encourage proficiency and excellence in victim assistance among colleagues and allied professionals, paid and volunteer.
6. Provide professional support, guidance, and assistance to Victim Assistance Providers who are new to the field in order to promote consistent quality and professionalism in victim assistance.
7. Seek to ensure that volunteers in victim assistance have access to the training, supervision, resources, and support required in their efforts to assist clients.
8. Act to promote crime and violence prevention as a public service and an adjunct to victim assistance.
9. Respect laws of one's state and country while working to change those that may be unjust or discriminatory.

III. In her or his professional conduct, the Victim Assistance Provider shall:

1. Maintain high personal and professional standards in the capacity of a service provider and advocate for clients.
2. Seek and maintain proficiency in the delivery of services to clients.
3. Not discriminate against any victim, employee, colleague, allied professional, or member of the public on the basis of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, race, national origin, religious beliefs, or sexual orientation.
4. Not reveal the name or other identifying information about client to the public without clear permission or legal requirements to do so.
5. Clearly distinguish in public statements one's personal views from positions adopted by organizations for which he or she works or is a member.
6. Not use her or his official position to secure gifts, monetary rewards, or special privileges or advantages.
7. Report to competent authorities the conduct of any colleague or allied professional that constitutes mistreatment of a client or that brings the profession into disrepute.
8. Report to competent authorities any conflict of interest that prevents oneself or a colleague from being able to provide competent services to a client, or to work cooperatively with colleagues or allied professionals, or to be impartial in the treatment of any client.

IV. In his or her responsibility to any other profession, the Victim Assistance Provider will be bound by the ethical standards of the allied profession of which she or he is a member.

OHIO ADVOCATE NETWORK
PROMOTING INDIVIDUAL / PROGRAM REGISTRATION AND ON-GOING EDUCATION

ADVOCATE TRAINING RECORD

Make copies of this form as needed. This form is provided to you for your own tracking purposes and should not be turned in with your application or renewal form.

Training Sponsor: _____

Location: _____

Topic(s): _____

Presenter(s): _____

Number of Training Hours Received: _____

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Training Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Presenter(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of Training Hours Received: \_\_\_\_\_

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Training Sponsor: _____

Location: _____

Topic(s): _____

Presenter(s): _____

Number of Training Hours Received: _____

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