



VOLUNTEER PARENT ADVOCATE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Position Description

Our Parent Advocates engage with the adults in the case to help remove specific barriers that lead to their lack of engagement with DCF, the Court, or their own case plans. The volunteer works with either parents who have already had their child removed, or those in danger of losing their children. When parents have a better understanding of the system, the number of reunifications and dismissals of cases tends to increase.

These volunteers will provide the following services to educate and guide parents and guardians as they navigate through the child protection process. The advocate will help parents by:

- Understanding and appropriately assessing families to assure that the correct services are provided.
- Working with parents to improve time management skills
- Understanding and meeting the court and/or DCF's expectations
- Engaging fathers who are often left out of the equation

Example Duties

1. Interview parent to get their perspective of their situation
2. Discuss case with DCF and/or the court to understand that perspective
3. Devise plans and goals with the parent
4. Continue contact with the parent regularly (at least monthly)
5. Continue contact with the family, social workers, and others to monitor court orders
6. Bring significant changes and events to the manager's attention
7. Be a positive and consistent influence

Requirements and Expectations of a Youth Sponsor

1. Complete application process and background check
2. Complete 40 hour pre-service training
3. Have regular access to a car
4. Be 21 years or older
5. Have basic computer skills
6. Maintain strict confidentiality
7. Commit to 2 years of service and stay with each assigned case until closed (~6 months to 2 years)
8. Participate in in-service training
9. Update Volunteer Coordinator monthly or as significant events occur