

Alameda County
Family Justice Center



Volunteer Handbook

WELCOME

To the Alameda County Family Justice Center

Dear Volunteer,

As the Executive Director of the Family Justice Center, I want to take a moment to thank you for your willingness to serve and give your time. The Family Justice Center volunteers and interns provide a tremendous support to victims, survivors, their families, and the staff of the Family Justice Center.

In this Volunteer Handbook, you will find essential information that can assist you as a volunteer or intern. The manual is designed to assist you and staff who will be working with the Family Justice Center, either on-site or at an off-site partner location.

We consider this handbook to be a work in progress and welcome your feedback. Many people have contributed to the creation of the FJC and its volunteer program. FJC would like to give a special thanks to the Office of Violence Against Women, who created the funding opportunity for this endeavor, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, who serves as the fiduciary agent for the grant, and all of our community partners who have made FJC possible.

It is my hope that your relationship with the Family Justice Center will be a long and fulfilling one. FJC is committed to providing the training and support necessary to ensure your volunteer experience is a valuable one. Please know that I am available should you have any questions or concerns during your time as an FJC volunteer. You truly are making a difference and changing the world, one family at a time.

For additional information regarding volunteer positions, or any other questions, please contact me at nadia.lockyer@acgov.org, or Armida Dixon at armida.dixon@acgov.org or by phone at (510)267-8800.

Thank you again for joining the FJC team of volunteers!

Sincerely,

Nadia Lockyer
Executive Director, FJCAC

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I. Why Volunteer?

Imagine yourself rushing into a strange building, children in tow. You are scared, hurt, and have no place to rest or find safety. Then, instead of walking into a gray, gloomy building, you open the door of the FJC to find calm, reassuring voice and a safe place to sit and rest. Someone offers you coffee, and a volunteer offers to show your children the playroom. All of a sudden, getting help seems a little less frightening, and there is a glimpse of something you did not believe you would ever find again . . . HOPE.



Domestic Violence is a major issue in our society and there are many people who truly desire to help those affected. But HOW? Many people desire to help but do not know where or how to start.

That is where the FJC comes into the picture. Because FJC offers many services to those affected by domestic violence in one location, there are many ways that community members can become involved. From assisting FJC Staff in the office, to sitting with FJC guests to support them, there are unlimited opportunities for volunteers. Later in this manual, you will find a listing of the types of volunteer activities available.

GOALS

Here at the FJC, the goals of our volunteer program are to match each volunteer with a fulfilling area of service and to provide volunteers with the training and support they need to assist those affected by domestic violence.

OBJECTIVES

Some of the volunteer program objectives are:

- ❑ To provide current and frequent training to volunteers on domestic violence issues.
- ❑ To provide a variety of tasks and opportunities for volunteers to become involved in assisting FJC guests and development.
- ❑ To have volunteers available in the FJC to provide a safe and comfortable atmosphere for guests.
- ❑ To directly assist one of our many partners with legal, counseling, and social services.

II. Volunteer Application Process

The Family Justice Center of Alameda County is currently welcoming applications for volunteers. Our volunteers are vital to the operation of the Center.

Please begin the process of becoming a volunteer by completing the following steps:

❑ **Be at least 18 years of age**

FJC recognizes that there are valuable learning experiences through the center for those who are under 18. If you are under the age of 18, we ask that you meet with our Executive Director before beginning the volunteer process. For your safety, we ask that any volunteer under the age of 18 be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other approved adult.

❑ **Be aware of the time requirement for the specific volunteer position selected**

FJC has many types of volunteer positions. It is our goal to assist you in selecting a volunteer opportunity that meets your time requirement. For most volunteer positions, we request that you be available for at least two, 4-hour shift per month. Volunteers are welcome to set a regular, weekly volunteer schedule as well.

❑ **Agree to a 6-month or one semester commitment to the FJC**

The staff of FJC desire for every volunteer to have a meaningful experience. We ask that you commit to becoming a volunteer for at least six months so that you can receive training and become an expert in your volunteer area.

❑ **Complete a Volunteer Interview**

❑ **Complete the FJC background screening process**

❑ **Complete the required training for the selected volunteer position**

❑ **Follow all policies and procedures of FJC**

III. Description of Duties

The Volunteer Program of the Alameda County Family Justice Center utilizes several positions in its operation. We desire to match each volunteer's interest to their volunteer assignment. After the volunteer interview, each volunteer will work with the Executive Director and Assistant to determine which position will be best suited to their interests. Each volunteer will then be assigned a specific volunteer duty.

Volunteers will work under the supervision of the Executive Director and Assistant, or a Volunteer Supervisor. Each volunteer will be trained and assigned to a least one position and may have a combination.

These positions and their duties are listed below:

Development Coordinator:

The individual will directly assist the Executive Director with foundation and individual private donor research, requests, and communication. They will provide assistant with some grant research and writing in the area of domestic violence.

Special Projects/Events Coordinator:

The individual will directly assist the Executive Director with the organizing of the FJC Annual Healing Day & FJC Gala.

Outreach Coordinator:

The individual will assist the Executive Director and all partner agencies with outreach to schools, community organizations, and press.

Intern:

The individual will assist FJC on-site partners with provision of culturally sensitive service for survivors of domestic violence in the following areas: Law Enforcement, Legal, Counseling, Child Care, Health Clinic, Disabilities, and Mentoring.

Guest Care Volunteer:

Working closely with FJC staff, a Guest Care Volunteer will work directly with clients and may assist with the following duties: Assisting the Receptionist with answering phones, greeting incoming clients, and meeting client needs; Assisting Intake staff; Managing the Family Lounge; Escorting clients through the facility and to appointments when appropriate; General office support

Volunteer Supervisor:

The individual will assist with supervision and coordination of volunteers, as well as conduct outreach and recruitment. The Supervisor is a committed volunteer who works under the direct supervision of the Executive Director. He/she will be directly responsible for the supervision of all volunteers working during their assigned shift. Each volunteer supervisor will be cross trained and proficient in all volunteer positions, with the exception of the Chaplain position.

IV. Volunteer Job Descriptions

A. Direct Care Opportunities -

Guest Care Volunteer

Requirements: Standard FJC Volunteer Orientation, Volunteer Application, Background Screening, Volunteer Interview, and Volunteer Academy. Demonstrated experience or ability to work with people in crisis and ability to show sensitivity to the issue of domestic violence.

Time Commitment: FJC requests a minimum of one, 4-hour shift per month for at least 6-months or one semester. Volunteers are welcome to set a regular, weekly volunteer schedule as well.

Children's Room Volunteer

Youth and childcare volunteers will assist FJC staff and clients by monitoring the Children's play room area and assisting with children's activities.

Tasks may include:

- Monitoring Children's Play Room
- Reading Books
- Age-Appropriate game play
- Supervising educational videos
- Supervising arts and crafts
- Assisting older children with homework assignments

Requirements: Standard FJC Volunteer Orientation, Volunteer Application, Background Screening, Volunteer Interview, and Volunteer Academy. Demonstrated experience or ability to work with people in crisis and ability to show sensitivity to the issue of domestic violence. Prior experience working with children.

Time Commitment: FJC requests a minimum of one, 4-hour shift per month for at least 6-months or one semester. Volunteers are welcome to set a regular, weekly volunteer schedule as well.

Chaplaincy Program

Because spirituality plays an important role in many people's lives, the FJC has created a Chaplain program to provide spiritual support to those clients that wish this service. The role of the FJC Chaplain is not to proselytize, but to provide spiritual support to FJC guests. The level of spiritual support a Chaplain will provide is dependant on their own experience and comfort level, as well as their status as a Chaplain, Associate Chaplin, or Honorary Chaplain. FJC Chaplains are also available to assist FJC staff, when time allows. However, their main focus is on serving FJC guests. Working closely with FJC staff, an FJC Chaplain will work directly with clients and may assist with the following duties:

Tasks may include:

- ❑ Monitoring the Living Room and Kitchen Areas to assure clients are comfortable
- ❑ Remain a soothing presence in the Living Room and Kitchen areas when clients are present.
- ❑ Serve as a link to resources within the religious community of Alameda County that support safety for victims of domestic violence.
- ❑ Provide connections to additional faith-based community resources when requested.
- ❑ Invocations, benedictions, special presentations, etc. for official ceremonies.
- ❑ Visiting sick or injured employees at their request.
- ❑ Providing care during bereavement situations.
- ❑ Providing pre-incident instruction in relation to stress management intervention strategies.
- ❑ Providing coping assistance for FJC and Partner Agency staff and volunteers following stressful or overwhelming FJC experiences.
- ❑ Helping with peer support functions.
- ❑ Providing Chaplaincy support to victims of a work-related crisis.

Requirements: Standard FJC Volunteer Orientation, Chaplain Application, Background Screening, Chaplain Interview, Volunteer Academy, and specific Chaplain Training. Demonstrated experience or ability to work with people in crisis and ability to show sensitivity to the issue of domestic violence. Verification of affiliation with a religious organization within the Bay Area. Ordination or certification when appropriate.

Time Commitment: FJC requests a minimum of one, 4-hour shift per month for at least 6-months or one semester. Volunteers are welcome to set a regular, weekly volunteer schedule as well.

B. Non Direct Care Opportunities -

Administrative Volunteer

Working under the supervision of the FJC staff, Administrative Volunteers will provide administrative support to the FJC.

Tasks may include:

- ❑ Answering the FJC business phone line
- ❑ Assisting with distribution of mail
- ❑ Filing support
- ❑ Data Entry
- ❑ Assistance with Mailings and other projects
- ❑ Other administrative support as assigned.

Requirements: Standard FJC Volunteer orientation, Volunteer Application, Background Screening, and Volunteer Interview. Participation in the Volunteer Academy may be optional depending on the specific projects the volunteer will be assigned.

Time Commitment: FJC requests a minimum of one, 4-hour shift per month for at least 6-months or one semester. Volunteers are welcome to set a regular, weekly volunteer schedule as well.

Special Projects Volunteer

Working under the supervision of the FJC staff, Special Project Volunteers will provide support in specific areas of need.

Tasks may include:

- ❑ Assisting with mailings
- ❑ Providing support on special projects
- ❑ Being Volunteer staff for community events and/or trainings

Requirements: Standard FJC Volunteer orientation, Volunteer Application, Background Screening, and Volunteer Interview. Participation in the Volunteer Academy may be optional depending on the specific projects the volunteer will be assigned.

Time Commitment: For a special projects volunteer, hours may be determined based on the project to be completed. Volunteers are welcome to set a regular, weekly volunteer schedule as well.

C. Internship Opportunities

Undergraduate Intern

Supervision of interns is a partnership between the FJC administrative staff and the FJC community based partners. Community partners all specialize in culturally sensitive support service for survivors of domestic violence. FJC has intern positions through community partners, as well as through the FJC staff.

Requirements: Standard FJC Volunteer orientation, Volunteer Application, Background Screening, Volunteer Interview, and Volunteer Academy.

Time Commitment: Time Commitment for an intern is based on the requirements of their school or intern agency.

V. Interview Process

Each volunteer for the FJC will be asked to complete an Interview. This informal interview is a way for FJC staff to meet volunteers and help each volunteer discover which position would best fit their skills and needs.

The process is designed to cover the following areas:

- ❑ Previous work/volunteer experience
- ❑ Review of volunteer's application
- ❑ Volunteer position preference
- ❑ Availability of work days and shifts
- ❑ Suitability for the position
- ❑ Interpersonal skills
- ❑ Ability to work independently with little supervision

VI. Background Investigation Process

For safety, all volunteers for the FJC will be asked to successfully complete the Background Investigation process. The background investigative process is designed to ensure the quality of the individuals selected as volunteers and to preserve the safety of all guests, staff, and volunteers of the program.

Each volunteer will be provided a packet explaining the background investigation policy.

VII. FJC Training Academy

FJC offers extensive training to its staff, volunteers, and other community agencies. As a Volunteer, you will receive the FJC volunteer training.

Training topics may include, but are not limited to:

- ❑ Domestic Violence Laws
- ❑ Domestic Violence (Victims perspective)
- ❑ Family Justice Center Community Partners
- ❑ Volunteer Training
- ❑ History of FJC and Services provided
- ❑ On-site Staff introduction
- ❑ Description of available volunteer positions
- ❑ Expectation of volunteers
- ❑ Site tour

VIII. Volunteer Code of Conduct

Dress

Appropriate professional attire is requested of all volunteers.

Identification Cards

All authorized personnel of the FJC must wear an identification tag at all times. There should never be anyone working inside the FJC without a visible identification card.

Confidentiality

For the safety of all guests, staff, and volunteers, all matters at the FJC are extremely confidential. Volunteers must sign an agreement to keep all information learned at the FJC confidential.

Reliability

We ask that any volunteer, who is unable to meet an FJC commitment due to illness, family emergency, or any other reason, contact the FJC as soon as possible.

Client Contact

It is imperative that all guests of the FJC be treated with courtesy and respect. Volunteers are a HUGE part of ensuring that the FJC is a warm and reassuring environment. It is important that each FJC guest be provided with the same level of care and service.