



Restorative Justice Circle Community Volunteer Application

Thank you for your interest in volunteering to be part of the Fairfield County Restorative Justice Circles. Volunteers play a valuable role in this community-based program that is designed by Fairfield County Juvenile Court to offer a restorative pathway to resolution for involved youth, victims, and the community. Restorative Justice Circles utilize dialogue to reinforce accountability, clarify the harm that was caused through negative behaviors, and open opportunities for restoration and skill-building.

To serve on a particular community circle, volunteers must live, work, or worship in that community. All volunteer applications are reviewed by the Restorative Justice Services Specialist (RJSS). Applicants will be notified of their application status. Those selected as potentially appropriate for circle participation will be screened by the RJSS and must complete a criminal background check (both BCI&I and FBI).

After background check results are received, the RJSS will communicate whether the applicant will move forward in the process. For those selected, the RJSS will coordinate a time to conduct an interview and to provide an overview of the Restorative Justice Circle process and Community Volunteer expectations.

Community Volunteers will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to working with youth according to the principles and practices of Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) and Restorative Justice. Additionally, volunteers are expected to serve a minimum of 1 year and attend training annually.

Personal Details:

Name:			
DOB:	SSN:	Phone 1:	Phone 2:
Email:			
Address:			
City:	State:	Zip:	
Driver's License #:			

Are you at least 18 years old? Yes No If no – when will you turn 18?

Are you a student? Yes No If yes – what is the school?

Have you been convicted of a felony within the last seven (7) years? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Do you presently have any criminal charges pending? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Please include the names, contact information, and positions of three personal or professional references along with your completed application.

Employment Details: Please check this box if this information is Not Applicable or You Wish Not to Answer

Employer:	Occupation:	
Work Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Business Phone:	Fax:	

Worship Details: Please check this box if this information is Not Applicable or You Wish Not to Answer

Place of Worship:		
Work Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Business Phone:	Fax:	

Restorative Justice in Fairfield County Juvenile Court

As part of the application process, all applicants are asked to review a short video that explains the journey Fairfield County Juvenile Court has taken to reimagine juvenile justice called, “It’s In Our Hands.” Please watch this [video](#) and initial in the space provided below, indicating you have watched it.

- I have watched the overview video, “It’s In Our Hands.”

The concept of Restorative Justice is ages old and can be found throughout much of the world’s cultures and history. Restorative Justice focuses on three core pillars: addressing harm and needs, accountability and responsibility, and engagement in the process.

- **Addressing Harm and Needs:** Restorative Justice recognizes that harm has been done to people and communities and assumes an approach to ensure the victim’s, community, and involved youth needs are met, along with seeking to repair harm as much as possible.
- **Accountability and Responsibility:** When harm is created, it results in obligations of accountability and responsibility to ensure involved youth understand the impacts of their behavior and responsibility to make things right as much as possible. Alongside this, community members have an opportunity to

participate in responsibility for youth being reintegrated back to their community through competency development and pro-social relationships.

- Engagement in the Process: Restorative Justice empowers all three parties impacted, victim, community, and involved youth to engage in the process of determining resolution to demonstrate accountability and responsibility along with addressing harm and needs of all stakeholders.

Fairfield County Juvenile Court offers a community-based program, outside of the court setting, called Restorative Justice Circles as a strategy to engage youth, victims, and community volunteers. The overall goal of the Restorative Justice Circles is to offer a safe space for youth who have enacted behavior which has negatively impacted relationships with identified victim(s) to engage in dialogue, accountability, and restoration for the victim(s) and community while being supported with competency building. Restorative Justice Circles can be utilized as a diversionary intervention for youth and those involved in cases being adjudicated directly by the court.

- Victims, youth, and community volunteers will have opportunities to speak and be heard through respectful dialogue and engagement.
- Victims will have opportunities to experience restoration through sharing their lived experience(s) and being part of accountability for youth.
- Youth will have opportunities to demonstrate accountability for the impact of their actions to the victim(s) and community through activities to repair harm and competency development.
- Community volunteers will have opportunities to be part of establishing the expectations for accountability and supporting youth in developing skills that will serve them in reintegrating into the community.

What to Expect

Youth and family members, victim(s), and Community Volunteers are valuable members of the Restorative Justice Circle and are expected to engage with one another respectfully and adhere to the basic agreements and those generated by the circle with the end goal of restoration, repair, and accountability for those who have been harmed. Working together, circle members will come to a consensus about how harm can be repaired and accountability demonstrated, given the circumstances of the incident. The action steps identified by the circle will make up the reparative contract.

Restorative Justice Circle Community Volunteer Expectations

- **Live, Work, Worship in Community:** In Fairfield County, there are five identified community areas and to serve on a particular Restorative Justice Circle, Community Volunteers must live, work, or worship within the youth's identified community.
- **One-Year Commitment:** Community Volunteers are expected to commit to one year and may choose to continue after that one year, if interested.
- **Training Attendance:** Each new Community Volunteer is expected to attend a training and complete all training modules prior to participating in their first circle. Volunteers who decide to continue serving after their initial one-year commitment will participate in a yearly training refresher.
- **Honor Confidentiality:** As a volunteer, you will have access to and hear personal information involving members of your community. It is expected that any information shared, either electronically or in person, will remain confidential, as sharing this information outside the circle will create additional harm for individuals participating.
 - Keep specific discussions held in the Circle confidential, except for mandated reporting requirements.
 - Violating this expectation can result in removal of someone as a Community Volunteer.
- **Maintain Personal Confidentiality for Community Volunteers:** Community Volunteers can live, work, or worship in the communities covered by the circles. Our goal is to focus on dialogue specific to the incident and how repair and accountability can happen, thus information about position, workplace, or place of worship of Community Volunteers will not be shared.
- **Follow Circle Agreements:** There is a basic set of agreements established for Restorative Justice Circles and there may be additional added by the group. All circle members are expected to follow them:
 - **Respectful Engagement:** Do not speak when someone else is speaking and use respectful body language that supports a safe space to share thoughts and feelings.
 - **Listen for Understanding:** When someone is speaking, give them the space to share their thoughts without interruption and focus on listening to understand their perspective.
 - **Confidentiality:** What is said in the circle, stays in the circle so that it does not create additional harm to others by sharing personal thoughts and experiences with others.
 - **Honesty:** The circle process succeeds when each participant is fully truthful, and the process will work best when participants share their feelings about the incident that happened.
 - **All Are Equal:** Each member of the circle is valued, and this group is here to learn and heal as part of the process. Each participant will have an opportunity to contribute to the reparative contract and the goal is to reach a consensus that is fair and appropriate.
- **Address Conflicts of Interest:** Report any previous or current relationships with the youth/family, victim, and/or circle volunteers you feel could create a conflict of interest to the Restorative Justice Services Specialist. Respect any decision made asking you to recuse yourself due to conflicts of interest.
 - **No Financial Gain:** No circle members should gain financially from other volunteers, youth, victim(s), or support individuals.
- **Utilize the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) and Restorative Justice Philosophies:** Both JDAI and Restorative Justice utilize philosophical approaches to working with youth, addressing harm, and needs, accountability and responsibility, and engagement in the process. Community Volunteers are expected to utilize these philosophies when participating in circles.

- **Build Consensus:** When engaging in dialogue and developing action steps and goals, circle volunteers are expected to be part of creating consensus within the circle. This means that participants can support the decisions made but does not require everyone be enthusiastic about the decision.

Restorative Justice Circles Confidentiality Agreement

For a restorative practice to be effective it is necessary and fundamental that confidentiality be protected and preserved throughout the process. The intention of the confidentiality statement is to allow all parties to share freely in a restorative practice, without fear of reprisal or embarrassment.

Circle members participate in a circle with an understanding that the information shared during a circle will remain confidential and not be shared with individuals who were not part of the circle. As a member of the circle, you agree to maintain this confidentiality for any circles in which you participate.

By signing below, I agree that I have the responsibility to maintain confidentiality for any information shared during any circles in which I participate.

Signature of Prospective Community Volunteer

Date

Restorative Justice Circles Volunteer Release Statement

I, the undersigned, hereby state that if accepted as a Restorative Justice Circles Volunteer, I agree to abide by the Volunteer Expectations, as follow. I understand that I am agreeing to a one-year commitment, with a choice to continue for additional years if I so choose, and at the discretion of Fairfield County Juvenile Court. Further, I understand that I will attend and participate in a required, yearly training session.

All information—including the names of youth, situations, offenses, and related personal data—is confidential and protected by Ohio law. I understand and agree to keep all this information confidential. I agree to follow the policies and practices of the Restorative Justice Circle program and the Restorative Justice Circle to which I am assigned. Volunteers agree to serve any youth who is assigned regardless of race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, creed or national origin.

I have not been convicted, within the past 7 years of any felony or misdemeanor classified as an offense against a person or family, of public indecency, or a violation involving a state or federally controlled substance. I am not under current indictment.

Further, I hereby fully release, discharge, and hold harmless the Fairfield County Juvenile Court Restorative Justice Circle program, participating organizations, and all of the foregoing employees, officers, directors, and coordinators from any and all liability, claims, causes of action, costs and expenses which may be or may at any time hereafter become attributable to my participation in the Fairfield County Juvenile Court Restorative Justice Circle program.

I understand that to protect youth and to participate as a Restorative Justice Circle Volunteer, a mandatory criminal background check must be done and that a routine check of my name through law enforcement, license bureaus, agency files, and references will be made. I understand that criminal offense will not automatically exclude me from participating as a volunteer. I understand that information on this volunteer application will be held confidential.

I give permission for the program staff to conduct a criminal background check as part of the screening for approval as a volunteer. This includes verification of personal and employment references as well as criminal check with the local authorities. Program staff has the final right of acceptance of an applicant as a volunteer and reserves the right to ask a volunteer to leave the program at any time. I have read the above Release Statement and agree to the contents. I certify that all statements in this application are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Prospective Community Volunteer

Date