

Volunteer Position Description: Court Navigator

Title: Court Navigator

Purpose/Objective: Support survivors of domestic and sexual violence by accompanying them to court for civil and/or criminal hearings that relate to domestic violence protective orders and associated criminal charges, sexual assault cases, no-contact orders, and any other related court cases.

Description: Court Navigators (CNs) assist survivors as they attend court hearings in both civil and criminal court. CNs provide emotional support and advocacy, as well as information on the legal system and survivor's options. They also provide support to the survivor's family, as applicable, during court hearings. CNs *do not* provide legal advice at any time. CNs *do not* provide transportation for the client. Through this crucial support and advocacy, CNs help InterAct fulfill its mission of saving lives, rebuilding lives, and securing safer futures.

Skills/Qualifications:

- Must be at least 21-years-old.
- Must have reliable transportation.
- Must be able to use active listening skills to gain an understanding of clients' needs.
- Must be able to communicate clearly, compassionately, and in a nonjudgmental manner with clients.
- Must have a grasp on the complexities of domestic and sexual violence and be able to refrain from any victim-blaming or shaming to which survivors are already vulnerable.
- Must be able to understand and address the specific needs of marginalized communities – that is, be able to understand how various identities and intersections affect a survivor's experience, and respond appropriately.

Key Responsibilities:

- Commit to the role for at least 12 months.
- Be available at least 1-2 days a month during regular business hours.
- Keep your availability updated with the Court Navigation Coordinator.
- When you have been paired with a client based on your availability, contact that client to introduce yourself and coordinate your meeting place and time.
- Report to the Wake County Courthouse or the Wake County Justice Center to meet with your client, offer support, and share information about their options as a survivor.

- Take notes for each court navigation, and send those notes to your coordinator in a timely manner.
- Comply with all confidentiality protocols.
- Provide empowerment-centered counseling and advocacy.
- Collaborate with staff to provide appropriate support to all clients.
- Handle crises calmly and maturely.
- Be a team player with staff, interns, and fellow volunteers.
- Alert your supervisors when assistance or additional training is needed.

Training & Support:

- Twenty-hour core training covering many in-depth topics: Domestic Violence 101, Sexual Violence 101, Legal Topics, Crisis Counseling, and more.
- Eight-hour topic training on the specifics of the CN role.
- Shadowing shifts of existing CNs in the courtroom.
- Regular volunteer meetings to discuss best practices, legislative updates, case scenarios, etc.
- Per a mandate from the NC Council for Women, CNs proactively engage in 20 hours of continuing education each fiscal year (July 1-June 30).
- Ongoing supervision from staff, as needed or desired.

Location and Hours: Typically, volunteer shifts occur on-site at Wake County's civil and criminal courtrooms during business hours and last from 1 - 4 hours.