



Dear Prospective Volunteer,

Thank you for your recent inquiry and interest in SafePlace. As our mission statement declares, SafePlace exists to “stop sexual and domestic violence.” We support equality in relationships and believe it is our basic human right to be free from fear and violence. By applying to volunteer with our organization, you are declaring your interest in becoming a participant in the fight against domestic and sexual violence.

Before completing the volunteer application, please seriously consider the commitment.

One-year commitment to volunteer: For the one year following your training, we ask that you become an active participant at SafePlace. Your volunteer service does not have to be concurrent. The training demands a lot of your time and energy as well as that of the agency. How you choose to expend your valuable volunteer time has some flexibility and we will work closely with you to ensure that your talents are appropriately utilized.

Training fees: If you commit to a one-year volunteer contract, there is no charge for your training. The fee is \$350 if you are taking the SafePlace training as a 1) requirement for another community based organization, or 2) will not complete the one-year commitment.

Completion of volunteer training session: We typically hold 2-3 trainings per year. If you are interested in working with clients (direct service), attendance at the entire training is mandatory. If you are interested in support services, you need only complete the first week of training.

When your application is received, you will be contacted to schedule an interview. During the interview we will explain in greater detail how the agency works and provide you with a list of volunteer job descriptions. During the interview, we will also discuss your interests as a volunteer to make sure you are a match for the agency.

SafePlace has a strong, stable and committed volunteer membership. We hope that you will join us to help end violence and oppression in our community. We are very pleased to hear of your interest in volunteering. Our hope is that your enthusiasm will match our need and program goals. Thank you again for your interest and please call or e-mail us if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Sierra Ditmar

Volunteer Program Coordinator
360-786-8754, Ext 209
sierrad@safeplyceolympia.org

SafePlace Volunteer Program Information

How can I get involved?

Read this information carefully and fill out the application, background check and reference forms. Return them to the Volunteer Program Coordinator. Once your application packet has been received and processed, you will be called for an interview. Interviews occur approximately two to four weeks before the advocate core training. Because the training classes usually fill up quickly, it is to your benefit to return materials as early in the process as possible.

What kind of training does SafePlace provide?

SafePlace provides an initial intensive volunteer and advocate core training three times per year. The training includes an orientation to the agency, an overview of the cycles and continuums involved in domestic violence and sexual assault, information and practicum on advocacy-based counseling, active listening and communications skills, crisis intervention, legal issues, children's issues, community resources, anti-oppression training, the role of an advocate, and healthy boundaries and self-care. Our training is state certified by the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs.

In addition to the initial training, SafePlace provides in-service trainings for all direct service volunteers, and disseminates information about related trainings offered by other groups or agencies.

What specific trainings are required of me?

After one year of volunteering, direct service volunteers are required to begin continuing education trainings. Volunteers working in our sexual assault program as SARP (Sexual Assault Response Team) volunteers or facilitating a sexual assault support group will be required to complete 12 hours of sexual assault training per year. Direct service volunteers doing domestic violence work, which includes working at the shelter, are required to complete 30 hours of on-going training each year after the first year. These trainings are provided by SafePlace at no charge.

Support service volunteers do not have ongoing training requirements but are certainly welcome to attend Safeplace trainings of interest.

What qualities does SafePlace look for in a volunteer?

All volunteers must be willing to work with persons of diverse ages, races, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual preferences, and lifestyles. Volunteers must also have strong skills enabling them to work both independently and as part of a group. It is not necessary that you have experience or education in counseling or domestic and sexual violence to be a volunteer.

A **direct service volunteer** must demonstrate the ability to actively listen, understand and establish a warm, trusting, non-judgmental relationship with a client. It is important to be able to make a quick decision and demonstrate an ability to respond effectively in a crisis situation. The volunteer must also possess the ability to respect a client's decisions and allow the clients to take responsibility for their decisions.

A **support services volunteer** does not work directly with clients, but rather in a capacity that supports the overall efforts of the agency. Examples of support service work include fundraising, community education, office assistance, volunteer program assistance, yard and building maintenance.

What is required of me as a volunteer?

Volunteers are required to complete the appropriate agency forms and trainings throughout the year, follow agency procedures, and submit all paperwork to the Volunteer Program Coordinator in a timely manner. The number of hours you volunteer may vary, depending upon our needs and your availability. You are asked to make a minimum one year commitment to SafePlace upon completion of training.

What is anti-oppression training?

Anti-oppression training is an opportunity for potential volunteers to learn about the many ways in which oppressions (such as racism, sexism, classism, etc.) are intermingled with issues of domestic violence and sexual assault. This is a challenging and rewarding class in which students will examine their value system, and how it could impact their work with SafePlace. This class is required for anyone interested in volunteering at SafePlace.

What can I expect from working with SafePlace?

You can expect a challenging and rewarding volunteer experience. Volunteers are a valued and integral part of SafePlace. You can expect to be well trained and prepared to offer quality services to clients. You will be supervised by the program coordinator of your chosen job area, and will receive on-going support from both your supervisor and other staff. You will become familiar with community resources and develop many valuable transferable skills. All volunteers are evaluated on an annual basis. Finally, you can expect lots of gratitude, as we are all thankful that you have chosen to give your time to us.

How can I, as a volunteer, contribute to ending violence?

Battering is the single major cause of injury to women – more frequent than auto accidents, muggings, and sexual assault combined. Witnessing family violence emotionally traumatizes children, and sexual assault is often utilized by batterers to further traumatize their intimate partner. Abusive incidents can adversely affect the work environment. SafePlace helps survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault to restore their sense of self-worth. We work to empower our clients to gain independence and to live free of violence. Volunteering at SafePlace is your opportunity to help end domestic and sexual violence.

Volunteer Application

This application is for people interested in volunteering at SafePlace. The application is not a test but an opportunity for you and the Volunteer Program Coordinator to assess whether your skills and goals match the needs of volunteer positions available at SafePlace. Please answer each question as completely and as candidly as possible. Feel free to use additional paper as necessary. The information you provide will be kept confidential. If you decide to apply, we ask that you take our one-year minimum requirement of service very seriously.

Upon completion you may submit this application to the attention of the Volunteer Program Coordinator at SafePlace, 521 Legion Way SE, Olympia, WA 98501

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____ Email _____

Best time and number to call between 9am and 5pm _____

How do you know about SafePlace? What motivated you to contact us?

What are your expectations about working at SafePlace?

What skills, talents and abilities can you offer our agency?

Do you have fluency in any language other than English?

Do you have any anxieties about working directly with survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault?

SafePlace serves diverse communities. How do you *recognize* and *handle* your own belief systems in a way that will allow you to work effectively with persons of differing abilities, races, languages, sexualities, genders, ages, classes, etc?

Who is impacted by domestic and sexual violence?

In your opinion, why do people batter?

In your opinion, what are some of the root causes of sexual violence in our community? Does culture contribute? How?

In your opinion, what barriers do survivors face when attempting to escape a violent relationship?

Talk about your experience with or knowledge of domestic violence/sexual assault.

You will be asked to authorize SafePlace to conduct a Washington State criminal background check. Information that is found by this background check may or may not preclude your participation. Please disclose any information you believe that might be helpful in determining your volunteering for SafePlace.

SafePlace Volunteer Reference Form

To the Potential Volunteer: Two recommendation forms must be submitted to the Volunteer Program Coordinator before you will be called in for an interview. Please give these forms to two different people who are not related to you and who know you well enough to evaluate your abilities.

To the Person Making the Recommendation: Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. Using the address provided at the end of the form, please return your recommendation to SafePlace upon completion.

I, _____ (please print name) am making a recommendation on behalf of _____ (please print name of person you are recommending) to become a volunteer with SafePlace. If you have further questions, I can be reached at:

Best Phone #: _____ Best time to call: _____

How long have you known applicant? _____

In what capacity do you know this person?

Please describe the applicant's personality with regard to:

Ability to get along with people:

Ability to make a commitment & follow through:

Ability to serve diverse populations:

Areas of strength:

SafePlace Volunteer Reference Form (continued)

What are your thoughts about recommending the applicant for a position working with or near children?

What are your thoughts about recommending the applicant for a position working with survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault?

What would make this person a good volunteer?

Do you have any other comments you would like to share?

8/12 JDS

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ATTN: Volunteer Program Coordinator
521 Legion Way SE
Olympia, WA 98501

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