

OHIO ADVOCATE NETWORK

FOR TRAINING AND REGISTRATION

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Dear Ohio Advocate:

The Ohio Advocate Network (OAN) for Training and Registration is pleased to provide you with the attached **registration packet for New Applicants**. Recognizing the need to publicly affirm the field of Victim Advocacy, establish professional standards and encourage on-going continuing education and advanced specialized training, a coalition of service providers representing many statewide victim service organizations developed the original registration protocol in 1990 for the benefit of Victim Advocates working in the state of Ohio. Maintaining valid OAN Registered Advocate (RA) status attests that a Victim Advocate has achieved a defined level of experience, knowledge and skill in a victim assistance profession.

Please thoroughly read the information contained in this registration packet for New Applicants before completing the required documents. The packet contains the following materials:

- An overview of definitions, eligibility requirements and procedures
- An overview of pre-registration training
- A Training Area Guideline (TAG) List
- Instructions for completing the application for New Applicants
- A NEW APPLICANT Application (to become a Registered Advocate)
- A National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) Code of Ethics
- A sample Advocate Training Record

Thank you for your interest in the Ohio Advocate Network for Training and Registration Program and for joining other Ohio Victim Advocates seeking increased professionalization of our field. If you need additional forms, please visit the OAN section of the Ohio Victim Witness Association website at www.OVWA.org.

THE OHIO ADVOCATE NETWORK REVIEW COMMITTEE

DEFINITIONS

ADVOCACY is defined as providing victim-centered supportive services specific to the distinct circumstances and needs individuals face in the aftermath of criminal victimization. In victim advocacy empowerment of the individual to achieve improved circumstances is a primary goal.

SUPPORTIVE DIRECT SERVICES are defined as, but not limited to, crisis intervention; empowerment of the individual through emotional, physical and informational assistance; promoting, protecting and ensuring the constitutional and statutory rights of crime victims; advocacy/intervention with other systems a crime victim may encounter; inter-agency referral for additional or long-term support. Services must be provided directly to an identified crime victim or designated victim representative.

AN ADVOCATE is one who recognizes the distinct circumstances and needs of those victimized by crime, maintains a working knowledge of the common legal, social and psychological issues of crime victimization and offers focused assistance within a victim-oriented professional and ethical framework.

REGISTERED ADVOCATE LEVELS:

REGISTERED ADVOCATE (RA): Must have accumulated a minimum of one year of professional work experience (at least 1950 hours), in a paid and/or volunteer capacity, providing direct services to crime victims - AND - Must have completed at least 20 hours of pre-registration training in the required topics as outlined on the Training Area Guideline (TAG) List, Series "A".

REGISTERED ADVOCATE WITH ADVANCED STANDING (RAAS): Must have accumulated a minimum of three years of professional work experience (at least 5850 hours), in a paid and/or volunteer capacity, providing direct services to crime victims – AND – Must have completed at least 20 hours of pre-registration training in the required topics as outlined on the Training Area Guideline (TAG) List, Series "A".

REGISTERED ADVOCATE WITH SENIOR STANDING (RASS): Must have accumulated a minimum of five years of professional work experience (at least 9750 hours), in a paid and/or volunteer capacity, providing direct services to crime victims – AND – Must have completed at least 20 hours of pre-registration training in the required topics as outlined on the Training Area Guideline (TAG) List, Series "A".

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

An individual may apply for Registered Advocate (RA) status by submitting an application which documents that the applicant has acquired professional work experience and training while providing and/or coordinating supportive advocacy services directly to those victimized by crime. Professional work experience should include advocacy to victims of such crimes as sexual assault, domestic/intimate partner abuse, child abuse, homicide, general felony crime, general misdemeanor crime, and other related offenses. The amount of accumulated professional work experience and required, topic-specific pre-registration training determines which level of Registered Advocate (RA) status should be sought. A New Applicant may apply for registration at any of the three levels detailed above, as long as all eligibility requirements are met for that level. ***Please note that the eligibility requirements as described within REGISTERED ADVOCATE CATEGORIES above are for New Applicants only. A separate packet/application is available for Registered Advocates who want to Upgrade/Renew.***

PRE-REGISTRATION TRAINING

In addition to accrued professional work experience in a paid and/or volunteer capacity, it is important that an individual seeking OAN Registered Advocate status should also have received pre-registration training in a variety of basic and basic/specialized topics providing a general yet focused introduction to the field of victim advocacy and resulting in a foundation conducive to providing knowledgeable, compassionate and comprehensive services to crime victims.

OAN promotes the idea that all new applicants should receive some amount of pre-registration training in a series of core basic topics. OAN also recognizes that some amount of training in a series of core basic/specialized topics is equally necessary as individuals may be employed with an agency and/or organization which assists a specialized victim population, and would benefit from training specifically developed to address particularized service needs.

To obtain Registered Advocate (RA) status, at any level, a new applicant must complete at least 20 hours of pre-registration training as outlined in the Series "A" Training Area Guideline (TAG) List. Approved training topics are listed in 9 Basic Topic Categories and 20 Basic/Specialized Topic Categories. A new applicant must complete at least one hour of pre-registration training in each of the 9 Basic Topic Categories. A new applicant must also complete at least one hour of pre-registration training in each of the 5 Basic/Specialized Topic Categories listed within their specified discipline. The remaining six hours of required pre-registration training may come from any of the 29 approved topics listed in the Series "A" TAG List. New applicants identify a Specified Discipline for their current agency in SECTION 2 of the Application. The Specified Discipline should denote the victim population(s) predominantly served by the agency.

Documentation, such as a certificate of completion and/or workshop agenda, must be submitted by new applicants to verify the 20 hours of required pre-registration training in the approved Series "A" TAG List topics. OAN understands that a new applicant may have completed training well in excess of the minimum number of 20 required hours however, it is not necessary to submit documentation for every training event attended. Please limit submissions to the fewest number of documents necessary to verify the 20-hour minimum requirement, the 9 Basic Topic Categories and the 5 basic/Specialized Topic Categories. A sample Advocate Training Record is included with this application packet and may assist the new applicant to track training hours/topics as they are acquired.