

Carbon County Veterans Treatment Court Mentor Application

I. Personal Information

Name: First _____ M.I. _____ Last _____
(Please Print)

Home Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Gender: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

II. Military

Branch of Service: _____ Years Served: _____

Type of Discharge: _____

Served in Hostile Fire/Imminent Danger Area (Combat Zone): ___Yes___ No

If yes, where: _____, when: _____

Do you currently possess a DD-214 Form? ___Yes___ No (If yes, please provide a copy)

**If no, please see the Carbon County Veterans Affairs Director to learn how you can obtain a copy (570)325-3460*

III. Education

Name of School:

Degree Earned:

IV. Medical Issues

Are you currently receiving or ever received mental health services or treatment?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please describe: _____

Are you currently or ever been treated for any physical disabilities?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please describe: _____

V. Drug and Alcohol Issues

Do you currently or have you ever used drugs or alcohol where it has caused legal, personal, or employment problems? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please describe: _____

VI. Employment

Are you currently employed? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, where: _____

Position: _____

Work Hours: _____

Are you able to attend Court on Wednesdays @9:00am at least once per month?

_____ Yes _____ No

VII. Criminal History

Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor? _____ Yes _____ No

What State or County? _____

If yes, please describe the type of charge(s): _____

Do you have criminal charges pending? _____Yes _____No

Do you have an attorney? _____Yes _____No

Are you presently on probation or parole? _____Yes _____No

If yes, what county or state: _____

VIII. Reason for Application

What does being a "mentor" mean to you?

Why do you want to become a Mentor?

What makes you the best candidate to become a Mentor?

What do you plan to take away from volunteering with the VTC Mentoring Program?

Any type of volunteer work: _____Yes _____No

If yes, explain: _____

Are you a member of any veteran's organization (e.g. VFW, DAV, American Legion, etc.)? _____Yes _____No Which Posts? _____

List any Hobbies you may have:

Please List 3 References along with their phone numbers:

DATE

SIGNATURE

For more information or to submit an application, please contact:

Henry Desrosiers
Carbon County Veterans Affairs Director/
Carbon County Veterans Treatment Court Mentor Coordinator
Carbon County Courthouse Annex
Jim Thorpe, PA 18229
(570)325-3986
Fax: (570)325-5097
Email:

Confidentiality:

The information contained in this document is only for the use of the Veteran's Court staff to evaluate, interview and select mentors for its program. All information contained herein is confidential. If the mentor applicant withdraws his or her application in writing or the mentor applicant is not accepted into the Veteran's Court Mentor Program, this application will be immediately destroyed.

Carbon County Veterans Treatment Court
Veteran Mentor Policy/Procedures Manual

Mentoring Contacts

It is the policy of the Carbon County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) program that each contact between mentor and participant be tracked by the mentor making contact. Information concerning the contact between mentor and participant will be recorded in the contact log, without the inclusion of any information that should be kept confidential, as there is no confidentiality linked to these contact logs. After the participant has completed his/her time in the court system and is no longer seeing the mentor, this log will be added to the individual's electronic case file.

Confidentiality Policy

Mentors must sign a confidentiality waiver form prior to working with a participant (Attachment 26). Information obtained by a mentor as a result of interacting with the participant during individual meetings or as a result of their participation in the Veterans Treatment Court shall remain confidential. Any violation of the confidentiality policy will result in immediate removal from the Veterans Mentor program. Items that should remain confidential will be reviewed during the Volunteer Veteran Mentor training.

Unacceptable Behavior Policy

Behaviors that do not match with mission, vision, goals, or values of the VTC will be considered unacceptable and are prohibited during court proceedings and mentoring sessions.

These behaviors include:

- Unwelcomed physical contact including inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, punching or physical assault
- Unwelcomed physical, verbal, visual, or behaviors that degrade, shows hostility, or aversion toward an individual
- Any actions or behaviors that would be considered beyond the role of the mentor
- Being under the influence of alcohol or any illicit substance while attending court proceedings and/or mentoring sessions

Any unacceptable behavior, as specified but not limited to the above stated behaviors, will result in the possibility of suspension or termination from the program.

Evaluation Policy

It is the policy of the VTC that evaluations will be an important aspect of determining the effectiveness of the mentoring program and for making continuous improvements to the program. Evaluations will be completed every six months from both participants and mentors concerning the effectiveness of the services provided to them and the mentors will be evaluating the supports provided for them, including trainings and supervision.

Mentoring Procedures

Role of Mentor

The role of a mentor is to act as a coach, guide, role model, and an advocate for the individuals he/she is working with. A mentor is intended to encourage, guide, and support the participant as he/she progresses through the court process. The will include listening to the concerns of the individual making general suggestions, and assisting the participant to determine what their needs are, and supporting the participant at the time when they feel alone in a way only another veteran can understand.

Mentors are *not* intended to take the role of a parent, professional counselor, social worker, or a doctor. Although a mentor will be expected to use some of the skills used by these professions – listening, supporting, and advising – the level of involvement will be significantly less as the mentors are not trained professionals. It will be the responsibility of the mentor and the coordinator to ensure this boundary through individual and group training and supervision when necessary.

Concerns around suicide or other self-harm, homicide or harm to others, non-compliance with medication, physical or mental health concerns that have not been shared with a health professional, or anything that the mentor is uncomfortable discussing should be seen as outside of the mentoring role.

When concerns are brought up that fall into any of these categories, the mentor should encourage the veteran to share the information with an appropriate health care professional. The mentor can suggest that if the health care professional is present that the mentor will accompany the veteran and support him/her during the conversation. If the health care professional is not present, the information should be shared with the case manager through the court or with another member of the court staff, either by the veteran or by the mentor, prior to the veteran leaving court.

The volunteer must be mindful of the separation of church and state.

Mentoring Sessions

Mentoring sessions consist of one-on-one meetings between a mentor and the participant. Mentoring sessions are typically short, less than 30 minutes, but could be extended depending on the needs of the participant. Mentoring sessions usually consist of questions related to the well-being of the participant, any needs identified by the participant or the courts, and any work that is being done by the participant, the mentor or the court to satisfy the identified need of the veteran.

Mentoring sessions should begin with introductions, if necessary, and then move into questions about how the veteran is progressing, how things are with the family members that are involved, and about the concerns that were brought up in previous sessions. The majority of the mentoring sessions should consist of the mentor supporting the positive changes that the participant has made and empathizing with the difficulties that the participant is experiencing. Sessions should close with asking if the participant needs anything or if the mentor or the court can do anything to be helpful to the individual.

Supervision Procedure

Periodically, the Mentor Coordinator will hold group supervision. This group supervision will serve as an opportunity for all of the mentors to come together to discuss their concerns, their successes, and their ideas. Group supervision will last 60-90 minutes, and follow a general structure created by the Mentor Coordinator. Topics to be addressed during supervision are questions about what to do for program participants, how to address a particular question or situation with a participant, etc. The group meeting will allow all of the mentors to benefit from the discussion as well as increasing the number of ideas and strategies provided around a specific concern or question. The group setting will also allow for mentors to praise and support each other.

Release/Waiver Policy

I have received and reviewed a copy of this CCVTC Veteran Mentor Policy/Procedures Manual and understand that my compliance with that manual is essential to my continued mentoring of the veteran.

Date

Veteran Mentor

Contact 911 or the assigned Probation Officer if the program participant is in immediate danger to others or him/herself. If you have a concern about the health and safety of the participant, please contact 570-325-4226 or 570-325-9111.

Carbon County Veterans Treatment Court

Mentoring Program Overview

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Veterans' Mentoring Program is to provide support, assistance and guidance by veterans to veterans for the successful completion of the CCVTC Program.

Description and Purpose

The key component of any successful Veterans Treatment Court is a Veterans Mentor Program. In this program, a trained Veteran Mentor is paired with a veteran participant to provide support as he/she navigates through the court and treatment. Ideally, Mentors/participants will be paired by service whenever possible. The Mentor is present as an ally and friend, to assist the veteran through this difficult time. Our belief is that the shared experiences of another veteran will be critical in assisting the participant in regaining control of his/her life and successfully connecting to and maintaining treatment, which will lead to successful completion of the Veterans Treatment Court Program.

The Mentoring Program offers support and encouragement for veterans in the court system by spending one-on-one time with the veteran participant on a regular basis to provide an opportunity to discuss concerns and receive feedback and support from another veteran. The Mentor will have a resource book at his/her disposal to refer veterans to a wide range of available services both within the federal, state and local veteran system and in the community at large. These include, but are not limited to: monetary and healthcare benefits, housing, spiritual needs, social/recreational needs and employment. The Mentor is a resource to the veteran, not a counselor.

Mentor Coordinator Role

Essential to the coordination, maintenance and success of the mentoring program is the Mentor Coordinator. His/her role is to recruit, organize and schedule trainings, supervise, and coordinate Mentors within the Veterans Treatment Court Program.

Mentor Coordinator Duties

- Recruiting potential mentors
 - Screening and selecting candidates
 - Scheduling initial and ongoing training sessions for selected candidates in skills to facilitate a mentoring session and skills specific to the Veterans Treatment Court Program
 - Providing individual and group supervision
 - Scheduling mentors to be present during the Veterans Treatment Court proceedings
 - Liaison with the Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist (VJO) from the VA Medical Center Wilkes-Barre
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Mentor Coordinator Criteria

- Be a veteran of one of the branches of the United States Military i.e., Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard (To include the Reserves or National Guard, only if the applicant was ordered to active duty for a period that exceeded 180 days). The volunteer must have an Honorable Discharge and provide a DD 214 indicating this.
- Go through the Mentoring Application (Attachment 25) and vetting process (background check)
- Adhere to all of the Carbon County Veterans Treatment Court Veteran Mentor Program policies and procedures
- Commit to program participation for a minimum of one year
- Be able to dedicate approximately 10 hours per week to the coordination of the Mentoring Program
- Participate in the initial training necessary to become a Veteran Mentor, which includes the Volunteer Veteran Mentor online training program (www.pacourts.us/T/AOPc/VolVetMentTrgPrg) and any additional trainings required during the program commitment
- Have good organizational and group facilitation skills
- Be a willing listener
- Be encouraging and supportive
- Be tolerant and respectful

Volunteer Veteran Mentor Role

The role of the volunteer Veteran Mentor is to act as a coach, guide, role model, advocate and a support for the individual(s) with whom he/she is working. A Mentor is intended to encourage, guide, and support the participant as he/she progresses through the court process. This will include listening to concerns and making general suggestions, assisting the participant with determining needs, and overall providing support in a way that only another veteran would understand.

Volunteer Veteran Mentor Duties

- Attending court session at least one time per month
 - Participating in and leading mentoring sessions with veterans who are participants in Carbon County's Veterans Treatment Court
 - Being supportive and understanding of the difficulties veterans face
 - Assisting the participants as much as possible to resolve their concerns around the court procedures as well as interactions with the Veterans Affairs system
 - Being supportive and helpful to other Mentors in the program
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Volunteer Mentor Criteria

- Be a veteran of one of the branches of the United States Military, i.e., Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard (to include the Reserves or National Guard, only if the applicant was ordered to active duty for a period that exceeded 180 days). The volunteer must have an Honorable Discharge and provide DD 214 indicating this.
- Go through the Mentoring vetting process (background check)
- Adhere to all of the Carbon County Veterans Treatment Veteran Mentor Program policies and procedures
- Commit to program participation for a minimum of six months
- Participate in the initial training necessary to become a Veteran Mentor, which includes the Volunteer Veteran Mentor online training program (www.pacourts.us/T/AOPc/VolVetMentTrgPrg) and any additional trainings required during the program commitment
- Be able to dedicate 2 hours per month to one Veterans Treatment Court Team and Court session, and at least one hour per week to the participants of Veterans Treatment Court along with additional time spent talking to and being with the veteran participant outside of Court
- Be a willing listener
- Be encouraging and supportive
- Be tolerant and respectful of individual differences

Training of volunteers

All mentors must complete the required initial training procedures. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the court. This procedure will include:

- Observe several court sessions
- Shadow three mentoring sessions with three different mentors
- Lead three mentoring sessions while being observed
- Discuss lead mentoring sessions and observation forms
- Complete individual supervision with the Mentor Coordinator

Remuneration

The positions of mentor and mentor coordinator are both strictly volunteer and are unpaid. Expenses related to the Veterans Treatment Court may be paid as authorized by the Judge.

If you have questions about the Veterans Treatment Court Mentoring program, please contact Henry Desrosiers, Veterans Mentor Coordinator, at 570-325-3986 or via email at henrydesrosiers@carboncounty.net.

Volunteer Participant Release and Waiver of Liability

I, the undersigned "Participant" hereby execute this Release and Waiver of Liability ("Release") in favor of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Carbon ("County"), a County of the Sixth Class in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, governed under the County Code, Act of August 9, 1955, P.L. 323, No. 130, as amended, 16 P.S. §101 *et seq.*, having its principal office at the office of the County Commissioners, Courthouse Annex, Jim Thorpe, PA 18229.

The County is committed to conducting its programs, services and activities in a safe manner and holds the safety of County Participants involved in volunteer activities in the highest regard. However, Participants must recognize that there is an inherent risk of injury when choosing to volunteer in, performing and/or otherwise assisting ("Volunteer Activities") the County in providing County services.

I hereby freely and voluntarily, without duress, execute the following Release and Waiver of Liability:

- 1. Warning of Risk.** I hereby understand that Volunteer Activities often challenge and engage the physical, mental, and/or emotional resources of Participants. There may be a risk of serious injury when acting as a Participant. All hazards and dangers cannot be foreseen. Certain risks, dangers, and injuries may exist due to slips and falls, poor skill level or conditioning, carelessness, horseplay, premises defects, inadequate or defective equipment, inadequate supervision or instruction, and other risks inherent to Volunteer Activities.
- 2. Waiver of Release.** I, the Participant, release, forever discharge, and hold harmless the County, its Commissioners, Directors, Officers, employees and agents, from any claim or liability that I, the Participant, may have against the county with respect to any bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result from my participation in Volunteer Activities. I also understand that the county does not assume any responsibility or obligation to provide financial or other assistance, including, but not limited to, medical, health, or disability insurance, in the event of injury, illness, death or property damage.
- 3. Insurance.** I understand that I am encouraged to carry personal liability and health insurance prior to registering for Volunteer Activities with the County. The County expressly disclaims responsibility for providing me with any insurance coverage whatsoever.
- 4. Assumption of Risk.** I understand and expressly assume all the dangers incident to taking part in the Volunteer Activities, and hereby release all its claims, including but not limited to, personal injury, property damage or destruction, and death, whether caused by negligence, breach of contract or otherwise, and whether for bodily injury, property damage or loss otherwise, which I may ever have against the County. Participating in Volunteer Activities of the County is entirely optional and my own free choice. I further understand that it is my responsibility to ensure the safety of any equipment used and to operate it properly, and that the County and its staff and safety of the activities involved in any Participant assignment. I further warrant that my health and physical condition are sufficiently good to allow me to

participate without danger to myself or others. In this regard, I understand that it is impossible for the County to guarantee absolute safety.

5. **Other.** I expressly agree that this Release and Waiver of Liability is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and that this Release and Waiver of Liability shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with such laws. I agree that in the event that any clause or provision of this Release and Waiver of Liability shall be held to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity of such clause or provision shall not otherwise affect the remaining provisions of this Release and Waiver of Liability which shall continue to be enforceable.

By signing below I hereby consent to and authorize Carbon County to conduct a criminal background check if deemed necessary. On behalf of myself, my executors, administrators, heirs, next of kin, successors, assigns, etc.:

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name: _____

Participant's Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____