

# COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTRE

## General Orientation Information

Thank you for your interest in becoming an active and involved member of our Comox Valley community through restorative justice with the Community Justice Centre.

Through our volunteer programme, you will find numerous opportunities to play an active role in contributing to the quality of justice in the Comox Valley through restorative justice measures, which attempt to repair the harm caused by crime, resolve conflict, and restore balance to relationships.

### Checklist – to help you get started:

You have just received a lot of information. To help refresh your memory, here is an abbreviated list – in order of priority – of the forms and procedures necessary to facilitate your orientation:

#### Forms to be returned to CJC:

- Application Form, with resumé and references;**
- Confidentiality Statement** (If you did not already sign it at the office);
- Permission to Perform Background Check** (if you did not already sign it at the office);

#### Form to the RCMP:

- Criminal Record Check** – complete and deliver to the RCMP (no charge);

#### Procedures:

- Chief administrator interview** – once we receive (from Volunteer Comox Valley) a copy of your approved criminal record check, and have communicated with the references you supplied, we will make an appointment with you to come in and speak with our chief administrator, Bruce Curtis;
- Resolution conference observations** – following your chief administrator interview, we will enter your name into our volunteer database, our email address book, and our observer schedule. We will then begin to call you to observe resolution conferences; and

- Assuming your volunteer position** – once you have completed the requisite number of observations (and on-the-job training, if applicable) you will formally assume the position for which you volunteered. (See also **Time Commitments**, and **Progressive Training Plan**.)

### **Memberships:**

We encourage all volunteers to become members of the Comox Valley Community Justice Centre Society and to attend the annual general meeting where members have voting privileges. Memberships are renewed annually at a cost of \$10:00.

### **Confidentiality:**

- The CJC expects you to keep in confidence all personal information;
- You will be required to sign a confidentiality statement, to be retained in your file; and
- All case file information that you acquire through your volunteer position you will keep confidential and not use outside the CJC resolution conference.

### **The Community Justice Commitment to You:**

To support you through:

- training sessions
- discussions
- open communications
- respect
- appropriate feed back

### **The Team:**

The term “team,” that we frequently use, refers to the resolution conference team, i.e., the facilitator, the two panel members, and the case coordinator. Observers may be present as volunteers–in–training, but they are not part of the active team.

The panel members and facilitator are scheduled for the conferences by the case co-ordinators.

## **Location of Resolution Conferences:**

Resolution conferences are held at the CJC, except when the number of individuals involved cannot be accommodated. In such cases, another location, more suitable for a large number of participants, is used – most commonly the Comox Recreation Centre and the Courtenay Recreation Centre.

## **Time Commitments:**

**Office hours** are from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. When the case load increases, afternoon shifts are added, running from 12 noon – 3 PM.

During July and August, the office hours are generally reduced to three mornings a week. Each volunteer is requested to volunteer for at least one (but preferably two) weeks, rather than the one day per week, for those two months. This allows for holidays and a break.

**Resolution conferences** are scheduled usually within 14 days of receiving the case files. Facilitators and panel members are encouraged to read the case file prior to attending the resolution conference. The briefing of a case file prior to the resolution conference is held at 4:00 p.m. for all the team members; and the resolution conference starts at 4:30 p.m. - or at such time acceptable to the conference team and the other parties. A de-briefing – for everyone to give feedback and discussion – follows immediately after the resolution conference and may last half an hour.

## **Administration Co-ordinator (admin co-ord):**

For continuity of case management and office requirements, this position requires a commitment on a regular basis for one morning or afternoon a week i.e., a minimum of three hours.

Admin co-ords are sometimes asked to attend office staff meetings, generally at a time convenient for the majority. It may involve an evening meeting and it may or may not fall upon your scheduled day.

## **Case Co-ordinator (case co-ord):**

As case co-ords work in partnership with admin co-ords, their commitment is for the same one morning or afternoon a week on a regular basis during office hours, to act as the co-ordinator for that day. New case co-ords may be requested to be on the relief list for a period of time until a regular shift becomes available. When a resolution conference is scheduled for your scheduled day, you are to attend that conference, or to arrange for a replacement.

Case co-ords attend meetings on an irregular basis as requested or agreed upon by the co-ordinator team. These usually take place during in the evenings, but may be scheduled for other times to suit the co-ordinators.

### **Office Administrator:**

The incumbent is currently paid a small honourarium for ten hours per week, on average. The hours involve a variety of time frames because the tasks are varied – some can be done at home, some in the afternoons/evenings, etc. When training and/or supervising administration co-ordinators, attendance is during the regular office hours of the Centre.

### **Facilitators/ Panel Members**

#### **Resolution Conferences:**

The team is expected to arrive 30 minutes prior to brief the file. Expect the conference to last two hours, and then 30 minutes for the debrief. Plan on a **minimum of three hours** when you agree to participate in a resolution conference. Some conferences will be either longer or shorter, depending upon the number of participants involved or the complexity of the case.

#### **Frequency:**

How often you may be requested depends upon the number of cases that are currently active. The CJC strives to assign you at least one case a month. If you would like more – or less – depending upon your work or home schedule, please indicate this preference to the co-ordinators.

Requests for facilitation/ panel member involvement may vary according to a facilitator's style/ panel member's experience, specialized skills and availability. The requests are usually done in a rotation of the facilitator's and panel members lists.

## **PROGRESSIVE TRAINING PLAN**

Training for the various volunteer positions differs according to the experiences and training of each individual and case file availability. The training generally consist of observing conferences, working with other volunteers, attending other workshops given in the community on a particular subject, role-play and general training sessions that are given each year. These usually happen in the spring and fall and – as a volunteer – you are expected to attend, to keep current with discussions and changes. Suggestions and requests for specific training are welcomed. Reading material and support information is available.

## **Training Plan for volunteer positions:**

Beginning in the fall of 2008, there will be a general orientation session for all new volunteers, to be repeated two or three times per year. Each intake of new volunteers will include an orientation to restorative justice, an explanation of how the process works, and other general information. Each volunteer position then has a specific training plan that focuses on the requirements of that role.

**Admin co-ordinators:** Orientation session;  
Work three shifts with an administrative co-ordinator;  
Observe at least one resolution conference; and  
Attend one or more training sessions with the office administrator (as necessary or needed).

**Case Co-ordinators:** Orientation session;  
Work three shifts with other co-ordinators;  
Observe two resolution conferences;  
Co-ordinate the third conference under supervision;  
Observe at least one pre-conference; and  
Meet the other co-ordinator team personnel.  
This position is part of a team that generally works in a consensus manner.

**Facilitators:** Orientation session;  
Observe three resolution conferences;  
Sit as a panel member for at least two conferences;  
(Co-facilitating a couple of cases may be recommended); and a role-play evening may be an option upon request.

**Panel members:** Orientation session;  
Observe three resolution conferences; and  
Start as a panel member.

## **Procedure:**

After your criminal record and reference check, your name will be added to the observer list for a training period. A co-ordinator will call you when a resolution conference is available. Please phone the CJC to arrange observations and training with other staff if one has not been designated for you. And to help us expedite your orientation, please remind Bruce or Lou each time you complete an observation.

### **Observation of Resolution Conferences:**

As part of your training you will be required to observe a resolution conference so that you can understand the process and your role in the process. As the resolution conference belongs to the respondents and the complainants as their process for healing, the facilitator must – prior to starting the conference – obtain their permission for you to observe. It is their right – for any reason – to deny you observation privileges. Please don't feel hurt or alarmed should you be asked to leave. All information that you acquire is – and is to be kept – confidential.