

OHIO ADVOCATE NETWORK

FOR TRAINING AND REGISTRATION

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Dedicated to professionalizing the field of victim advocacy and maintaining a best-practice approach for credentialing, the Ohio Advocate Network Review Committee has enacted several updates to OAN registration policy and procedure. These updates were crafted with a continuing commitment to offer a credentialing process in Ohio which is achievable, affordable, and meaningful. As of June 2017, ALL updates will be in effect. All OAN Applications have been revised to reflect the updates. Beginning with the June 2017 application cycle, the OAN Review Committee will only accept the revised Applications. Any outdated Application submitted for review will be returned.

Applicants seeking to UPGRADE & RENEW their Registered Advocate Status:

Recognizing the need to publicly affirm the field of Victim Advocacy, establish professional standards, and encourage continuing education and specialized training, a coalition of victim service providers representing numerous statewide advocacy organizations formed the Ohio Advocate Network in 1994 and developed this registration protocol for Victim Advocates and Allied Professionals working to assist crime victims in the state of Ohio. Acquiring and maintaining valid OAN Registered Advocate status attests that an individual has achieved a defined level of experience and knowledge in the victim assistance profession.

Please thoroughly review the following information and carefully read both the **Instructions** and the **Application to UPGRADE & RENEW Registered Advocate Status** before completing the required documents. All OAN Application forms and supporting documents may be downloaded from the Ohio Victim Witness Association website. Please visit www.ovwa.org and click on the OAN link. Questions about the registration renewal process may be submitted by email to OhioAdvocateNetwork@gmail.org, or you may call 937-562-5087. Thank you for your continuing commitment as a Registered Advocate with the Ohio Advocate Network for Training and Registration, and for partnering with the many Victim Advocates and Allied Professionals in Ohio who seek increased professionalization of our field.

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 UPGRADE & RENEW ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All OAN Registered Advocates **must** apply to RENEW their registration status every two years. When Renewing, Registered Advocates (RA) and Registered Advocates with Advanced Standing (RAAS) may also apply to UPGRADE their registration status to a higher level. This is accomplished by submitting the Application to UPGRADE & RENEW Registered Advocate Status, all required supporting documents, and the application fee. The UPGRADE & RENEW Application documents the applicant has accrued the requisite hours of professional experience providing direct services to crime victims AND has completed the required hours of continuing education training. If OAN registration status has lapsed by more than four years since the last approval date, the applicant must request REACTIVATION of their RA status and pay an additional fee. For any Registered Advocate who is reactivating their RA status, the 24 hours of required continuing education training must be completed within the four year period prior to submission of the Renewal Application. If the applicant is also a Credentialed Advocate, in good standing, with the National Advocate Credential Program (NACP), the fee to Upgrade & Renew will be waived. Reactivation fees will not be waived.

REGISTERED ADVOCATE UPGRADE LEVELS

REGISTERED ADVOCATE WITH ADVANCED STANDING (RAAS): An Applicant at the RAAS Level must have accumulated a minimum of 7800 hours of professional work experience (equivalent to four years of full-time employment), in a paid and/or volunteer capacity, providing direct services to crime victims.

REGISTERED ADVOCATE WITH SENIOR STANDING (RASS): An Applicant at the RASS Level must have accumulated a minimum of 11,700 hours of professional work experience (equivalent to six years of full-time employment), in a paid and/or volunteer capacity, providing direct services to crime victims.

CONTINUING EDUCATION TRAINING

As the victim advocacy profession continues to grow and training curricula expands, OAN promotes the idea that all Registered Advocates should receive on-going continuing education training in a variety of general and specialized topics. Training on a broad array of general topics and emerging issues pertaining to the field of victim advocacy results in a keener knowledge base conducive to providing compassionate and comprehensive services to all crime victims. OAN also recognizes that specialized training, designed to address particularized service needs, often provides focused or in-depth information in advanced topics beneficial to advocates and/or allied professionals employed with an agency or organization which primarily assists a specific victim population.

To maintain Registered Advocate status, at any level, a **minimum of 24 hours** of continuing education training must be completed every two years. As detailed in the Training Area Guideline (TAG) List Series B, the approved continuing education training topics are listed in General Topic Categories and Specialized Topic Categories. Some amount of the required training should be completed in approved topics from both categories. It is permissible for some amount of continuing education training to be completed on topics listed in the TAG List Series A. Information available on topics such as Crime Victims Compensation, Cultural Competency, Trauma Informed Care, and Systems Advocacy is routinely being updated and/or expanded. While continuing education training may be completed in a variety of formats, only 6 hours of training (of the required 24 hours) may be completed via an electronic format such as a webinar or on-line module.

Documentation to verify the required continuing education training is noted in Section 4 of the UPGRADE & RENEW Application. It is **not** necessary for a renewing applicant to submit certificates of completion (this is only a requirement for New Applicants). OAN understands that a Registered Advocate may have completed continuing education training well in excess of the minimum requirement, however it is not necessary to list every training event attended. Documentation may be limited to the fewest number of training events necessary to verify the minimum requirement in approved training topics. A CEU Training Verification Form has been developed to assist OAN Registered Advocates, once credentialed, record continuing education training information, and is available for download. Please visit www.ovwa.org and click on the OAN link.