



## **Emergency Order of Protection Hotline** **(Remote Volunteer Opportunity)**

### **Program Summary**

Our Emergency Order of Protection Hotline is an opportunity for volunteers to work directly with survivors of gender-based violence over the phone to help them file for an Emergency Order of Protection. Volunteers interview clients, prepare, and submit the Petition for Order of Protection, which includes the client's Affidavit, and other necessary court forms.

Launched in March 2020 in response to the pandemic, Ascend Justice staff and volunteers have served over 625 clients through our Emergency Order of Protection Hotline. As our services evolve to meet the needs of survivors, our volunteers continue to be our most important asset in helping survivors achieve safety and stability. By relying on the expertise and dedication of our volunteers, Ascend Justice can offer both remote services and in-person services at the Domestic Violence Courthouse in order to help as many clients as possible.

### **Volunteer Requirements**

Volunteers may be attorneys, paralegals, or other legal professionals; however, each shift must have at least one attorney volunteer. Volunteers should be able to work remotely and have the equipment necessary (laptop, internet access, access to a phone etc.) to communicate with clients and attorneys.

Volunteers must also complete the Order of Protection training. Training is available on demand via the Ascend Justice website and is eligible for CLE credit for Illinois attorneys.

Hotline shifts are scheduled 9AM-3PM Monday-Friday, however actual active volunteer time is *approximately 2.5 hours*.

### **How Does a Volunteer Shift Work?**

1. Ascend Justice staff members answer incoming hotline calls and determines if the caller is eligible to receive our services.
2. An Ascend Justice staff attorney contacts the volunteer and sends client contact information
3. Volunteer contacts client and begins brief services (preparation of court forms, writing affidavit).
4. Once a client reviews and signs paperwork, the volunteer submits paperwork to the court.
5. The court will contact the volunteer or Ascend Justice staff when the case will be ready to be heard in front of the judge.
6. Volunteer calls client and provides information on how to log on to Zoom to appear in front of the Judge.
7. Client logs on to Zoom and waits for the case to be heard. This will typically happen after the conclusion of the volunteer's shift.
8. Clerk's office will send the order to the client via email.

### **Steps to Become a Volunteer**

#### **1. Volunteer Application**

Fill out the volunteer application on our website [here](#).

#### **2. Training**

Volunteers will need to view the EOP Training and EOP Hotline Logistics Videos. Please download all of the materials on the training webpage. Volunteers will also need to fill out the bottom form once they've completed the training, and we will then send a volunteer agreement via DocuSign.

Link to Training: View [Here](#)

#### **3. Shift Sign Up**

Once training is completed, volunteers may begin signing up for shifts! Sign Up [Here](#)

## EOP HOTLINE FAQ

- Who can volunteer?  
*Attorneys, Paralegals, Other legal professionals. Paralegals and other legal professionals must be paired with an attorney for their shift.*
- What is the time commitment?  
*Volunteer shifts will be scheduled during the week (Monday-Friday) 9-3. Specific days of the week may vary.*
- Is this considered a full representation opportunity?  
*Volunteers provide brief, same-day legal services for clients seeking an Emergency Order of Protection through the EOP Hotline. However, there may be opportunities to represent clients after the emergency hearing. Interested volunteers can discuss with our Managing Director of Family Law and Protective Orders.*
- Will I receive training?  
*Yes! On demand training on hotline logistics, dynamics of gender-based violence, and orders of protection are available on our website for volunteers to watch at their convenience. Training is eligible for CLE credit for Illinois attorneys. Staff attorneys are also available during the volunteer's shift to answer questions.*
- Do firms or corporations need to have the client complete a conflicts check or have the client sign an engagement letter?  
*Neither a conflict check or engagement letter is required to provide brief services. Individual firm/organization requirements may vary.*
- Are volunteers covered under Ascend Justice malpractice insurance?  
*Volunteers must have their own malpractice insurance or partner with a firm that has malpractice insurance. Volunteers from corporations may volunteer under Ascend Justice malpractice insurance on a case by case basis.*
- Am I E-Filing the forms for the Emergency Order of Protection?  
*No! You are assisting self-represented petitioners with an Order of Protection. They are exempt from E-filing requirements. Court forms are emailed directly to the courthouse.*
- What if the case isn't finished by 3PM or the court hasn't contacted me about my client's Zoom hearing?  
*The court will receive instruction to contact Ascend Justice staff after 3:00 PM. If a case has not been filed by 3PM, Ascend Justice will handle any required follow-up. Volunteers are under no obligation to continue past their shift.*
- What are the technical requirements to volunteer?  
*Volunteers must have their own laptop and access to the internet.*
- What if I have questions during my shift?  
*Volunteers may contact the hotline supervisor at any time during their shift to ask questions. We are here for support!*