

Serving Jefferson and Gilpin Counties

Volunteer

Handbook

Table of Contents

[What is Porchlight?](#_Toc36022999) 2

Why Volunteer? 3

[Volunteer Application Process](#_Toc36023000) 4

Description of Duties 5

[Interview Process 7](#_Toc36023006)

[Background Investigation Process 7](#_Toc36023007)

[Volunteer Training Academy](#_Toc36023008) 8

[Volunteer Code of Conduct](#_Toc36023010) 9

**What is PorchLight?**

**Mission**

The mission of Porchlight is to bring together essential services for victims, survivors and their children to create a positive pathway forward, and to foster public safety. PorchLight will be the Second family justice center in Colorado, with an expected opening the fall of 2019.

**Vision**

Porchlight is a beacon of light, no matter the darkness. We inspire hope and offer a place for healing, creating a community free from violence, abuse, and exploitation.

**Values**

We Believe…

**Hope.** At Porchlight, we believe in a violence-free future for everyone.

**Respect.** At Porchlight, we believe in respect for all people, regardless of differences.

**Community.** At Porchlight, we believe in the power of a compassionate community and the transformative partnerships that support courage and healing.

**Empowerment.** At Porchlight, we believe that each person deserves the opportunity to direct their own life.

**Freedom.**  At Porchlight, we believe everyone has the right to live in safety and free from fear.

“The Family Justice Center will make it easier for victims to seek help, reduce the number of times a victim has to tell their story, and will improve accessibility of services and resources”

Candace Cooledge

Family Justice Center Coordinator and Prosecutor

Representatives from XXX # government agencies and over XXX # community based agencies will provide a wide range of services to assist victims impacted by domestic violence, elder abuse, human trafficking, child abuse, sex assault, and stalking through the initial crisis stages as well as with on-going needs to heal from the trauma experienced. Services will include assistance in safety planning, counseling and crisis intervention for themselves and their children, filing for protection orders and other legal assistance, access to housing and job referrals, emergency financial help and employment related skill building and resources.

A robust volunteer program will be critical to the success of Porchlight, to support and supplement the services that will be provided and allow us to maximize and streamline the resources of paid staff. Our goal is to have XXX # volunteers in place by the time we open the doors.

**Why Volunteer?**

One of the greatest challenges faced by victims in the aftermath of crime is trying to find a new state of normal. They are often overwhelmed and confused. While many services are currently available for victims in our community, access to those services may require travel to different offices or searching countless websites. Issues with child care and transportation to these appointments may result in victims making a decision not to seek out the help they need. Often victims return to their abusers for financial support, housing, and child care.

Porchlight is the gateway to a network of services designed to reduce family violence in our counties. As we reduce the occurrence of family violence, we also enhance public safety, help reduce violent crime and homicide rates, unite communities in support of crime victims, save tax dollars, and increase effectiveness of timely services.

"Family violence is not just a family issue, it is a community issue. We work hard to provide victims with the resources they need to keep them from returning to a dangerous home environment, but we can do better. Our Family Justice Center will allow us to enhance victim safety while promoting offender accountability and justice."

-Pete Weir, District Attorney

**GOALS**

Here at Porchlight, the goals of our volunteer program are to match each volunteer with a fulfilling area of service and to provide volunteers with the training and support they need to assist those affected by target crimes which include domestic violence, physical abuse, emotional abuse, harassment, threats, stalking, murder, elder or at-risk adult abuse, child abuse, human trafficking, property damage, etc.

**OBJECTIVES**

Some of the volunteer program objectives are:

❑ To provide current and frequent training to volunteers on target crimes.

❑ To provide a variety of tasks and opportunities for volunteers to become involved in assisting Porchlight guests and development.

❑ To have volunteers available at Porchlight to provide a safe and comfortable atmosphere for guests.

**Application Process**

Porchlight, A Family Justice Center is currently welcoming applications for volunteers. Our volunteers are vital to the operation of the Center.

Please begin the process of becoming a volunteer by completing the following steps:

❑ **Be at least 18 years of age**

❑ **Be aware of the time requirement for the specific volunteer position selected**

Porchlight has many types of volunteer positions. It is our goal to assist you in selecting a volunteer opportunity that meets your time requirement. For most volunteer positions, we request that you be available for at least 8-16 hours per month. Volunteers are welcome to set a regular, weekly volunteer schedule as well.

❑ **Agree to a 6 month or 1 semester commitment to Porchlight**

The staff of Porchlight desire for every volunteer to have a meaningful experience. We ask that you commit to becoming a volunteer for at least 6 months or 1 semester so that you can receive training and become an expert in your volunteer area.

❑ **Complete Application**

Find the application at www.porchlightfjc.org

❑ **Complete a Volunteer Interview**

❑ **Complete the Porchlight background screening process**

❑ **Complete the required training for the selected volunteer position**

Volunteers and interns will need to pass a criminal background check and participate in a 40-hour training program that will familiarize them with the policies and procedures of PorchLight, general dynamics of a variety of victimization types, crisis intervention and communication skills, criminal justice system response and some dedicated time to shadow other staff or interns.

❑ **Follow all policies and procedures of Porchlight**

**Description of Duties**

**Guest Care Volunteer:**

Working closely with Porchlight staff, a Guest Care Volunteer will work directly with guests and may assist with the following duties: Assisting the Receptionist with answering phones, greeting incoming guests, and meeting guest needs; Assisting Intake staff; Managing the Family Lounge; Escorting guests through the facility and to appointments when appropriate; general office support

Requirements: Standard Porchlight Volunteer Orientation, Volunteer Application, Background Screening, Volunteer Interview, and Volunteer Training Academy. Demonstrated experience or ability to work with people in crisis and ability to show sensitivity to the issues of target crimes.

**Children’s Room Volunteer**

Youth and childcare volunteers will assist Porchlight staff and guests by monitoring the children’s play room area and assisting with children’s activities.

**Tasks may include:**

❑ Monitoring Children’s Play Room

❑ Reading Books

❑ Age – appropriate game play

❑ Supervising educational videos

❑ Supervising arts and crafts

❑ Assisting older children with homework assignments

Requirements: Standard Porchlight Volunteer Orientation, Volunteer Application, Background Screening, Volunteer Interview, and Volunteer Training Academy. Demonstrated experience or ability to work with people in crisis and ability to show sensitivity to the issues of target crimes. Prior experience working with children.

**Administrative Volunteer**

Working under the supervision of the Porchlight staff, Administrative Volunteers will provide administrative support to Porchlight.

**Tasks may include:**

❑ Answering the Porchlight business phone line

❑ Assisting with distribution of mail

❑ Filing support

❑ Data entry

❑ Track statistical information

❑ Other administrative support as assigned

Requirements: Standard Porchlight Volunteer Orientation, Volunteer Application, Background Screening, Volunteer Interview, and Volunteer Training Academy.

**Special Projects/Outreach Volunteer**

Working under the supervision of the Porchlight staff, Special Project/Outreach Volunteers will provide support in specific areas of need.

**Tasks may include:**

❑ Assisting with mailings

❑ Providing support on special projects

❑ Being Volunteer staff for community events and/or trainings

Requirements: Standard Porchlight Volunteer Orientation, Volunteer Application, Background Screening, Volunteer Interview, and Volunteer Academy.

**Intake Volunteer**

Working under the supervision of the Porchlight staff, Intake Volunteers will provide support in assessing needs and providing a comfortable atmosphere.

**Tasks may include:**

❑ Greet visitors and guests

❑ Conduct preliminary assessment of guest need(s) through an intake interview

❑ Advise guest of services available at Porchlight

❑ Input guest information into database

❑ Match individual needs with services from available on-site partners

❑ Initiate feedback surveys

❑ Participate in follow-up procedure with Porchlight guests

❑ Ensure needs of guest are met according to the standards of Porchlight

❑ Other duties as assigned

**Interview Process**

An interview will be conducted based on applications and qualifications. This interview is a way for Porchlight staff to meet volunteers and help each volunteer discover which position would best fit their skills and needs.

The process is designed to cover the following areas:

❑ Previous work/volunteer experience

❑ Review of volunteer’s application

❑ Suitability for the position

❑ Volunteer position preference

❑ Availability of work days and shifts

❑ Interpersonal skills

❑ Ability to work independently with little supervision

❑ Review the functions and purpose of Porchlight

❑ Commitment to Porchlight

**Background Investigation Process**

For safety, all volunteers for Porchlight will be asked to successfully complete the Background Investigation process. The background investigative process is designed to ensure the quality of the individuals selected as volunteers and to preserve the safety of all guests, staff, and volunteers of the program.

Each volunteer will be provided a packet explaining the background investigation policy.

**Reference Checks**

All volunteers for Porchlight will be asked to successfully complete reference checks. Reference checks are designed to ensure the quality of the individuals selected as volunteers and to preserve the safety of all guests, staff, and volunteers of the program.

**Porchlight Training Academy**

Porchlight offers extensive training to its staff, volunteers, and other community agencies. As a Volunteer, you will receive Porchlight volunteer training.

Training topics may include, but are not limited to:

❑ History of Porchlight and Services provided

❑ On-site Staff introduction

❑ Porchlight Community Partners

❑ Description of available volunteer positions

❑ Expectation of volunteers

❑ Volunteer Training

❑ Site Tour

❑ Domestic Violence Laws

❑ Domestic Violence (Victims perspective)

❑ Trauma Informed Care

❑ Vicarious Trauma

❑ Mental Health First Aid

❑ Sensitivity Training

❑ Human Trafficking

❑ Sexual Assault

❑ Mandatory Reporting

❑ Elder Abuse

❑ At-Risk Adults with IDD

❑ Child Abuse

❑ No Hit Zone

❑ Active Shooter Training

❑ Strangulation Training

❑ Predominant Aggressor Training

❑ CPR/First Aid

**Volunteer Code of Conduct**

**Dress**

Volunteers are permitted freedom in selecting their attire. Therefore, it is very important that employees dress appropriately for their jobs. To promote safety and a professional image of Porchlight, volunteers are expected to adhere to general attire and hygiene requirements. You should dress neatly, appropriately, and practice good grooming and hygiene. Appropriate dress is determined by each area of volunteer. We consider the following points when determining appropriate attire: safety issues and program requirements; amount of contact with guests we support, the public and guests of Porchlight; physical requirements of the position; and other relevant factors including but not limited to, appropriate jewelry for positions involving contact with guests we support, open toed shoes where safety could be compromised, etc.

**Identification Cards**

All authorized personnel of Porchlight must wear an identification tag at all times. There should never be anyone working inside Porchlight without a visible identification card.

**Confidentiality**

For the safety of all guests, staff, and volunteers, all matters at Porchlight are extremely confidential. Volunteers must sign an agreement to keep all information learned at Porchlight confidential to ensure that all information, which is privileged, confidential or nonpublic, is disclosed only appropriately. Avoid discussing confidential matters outside of Porchlight and ensure the exchange of sensitive information regarding guests is done in a respectful manner.

**Reliability**

We ask that any volunteer, who is unable to meet a Porchlight commitment due to illness, family emergency, or any other reason, contact Porchlight as soon as possible.

**Guest Contact**

It is imperative that all guests of Porchlight be treated with courtesy and respect. Volunteers are a HUGE part of ensuring that Porchlight is a warm, welcoming, and reassuring environment. It is important that each Porchlight guest be provided with the same level of care and service.