

Court Watch Volunteer ***Position Description***

Are you passionate about social justice and interested in how the legal system impacts survivor safety? As a DAIS Court Watch Volunteer, you will play a meaningful role by observing restraining order injunction hearings at the Dane County Courthouse and documenting what you see. The Court Watch program uses these observations to better understand how the court system supports victim safety and promotes accountability in intimate partner violence cases – helping to inform on positive, trauma-informed change for our community.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Court Watch Program Volunteer attends restraining orders injunctions at the Dane County Courthouse and collects data based on observations. Court Watch Program Volunteers are trained in the dynamics of domestic violence, relevant statutes, what to monitor, and how to respectfully observe proceedings while making notes on the data collection tool created for court monitoring.

Court Watch program goals include: Improving the experience of victims of intimate partner violence seeking a restraining order; provide information to stakeholders in the community, including the judges, on trends related to the court systems handling of domestic violence and harassment injunction cases; identify recommendations for improved trauma-informed and victim centric responses to domestic violence and harassment cases; and further inform legal system stakeholders about the role of service representatives in the court process

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Attend and observe injunctions hearings at the Dane County Courthouse on a weekly basis.
- Record accurate observations with legible handwriting and a high degree of accuracy.
- Perform data entry work using a personal computer.
- Communicate effectively with the DAIS Community Advocacy Manager about what you observed, through monitoring questionnaires and debriefings.
- Follow court rules and etiquette.
- Track volunteer hours and report to the Community Advocacy Manager.
- Uphold DAIS confidentiality requirements in every interaction.
- Attend Essentials Program Training.

DAIS' RESPONSIBILITIES TO COURT WATCH VOLUNTEERS:

- Train volunteers in the skills necessary to effectively cover the responsibilities of a Court Watch Volunteer.
- Provide ongoing training and information.
- Be available for consultation and support.
- Provide reference letters and/or documentation of volunteer hours for employment and education purposes. Letters will be written based on the Community Advocacy Manager's knowledge of the volunteers' service and any documentation maintained in their volunteer file.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- Be committed to DAIS mission, vision, values.
- Have a keen awareness of, or curiosity about domestic violence and related legal issues.
- Must be able to sit in a courtroom and maintain focus on proceedings for extended periods of time (up to four hours at a time).
- Must provide their own transportation to and from the Dane County Courthouse and cover fuel, mileage, and parking costs.
- Must be able to maintain strict confidentiality.
- Bilingual applicants are encouraged to apply.

TIME COMMITMENT:

- Court Watch Volunteers must be able to commit to a minimum of one shift per week for a minimum of six months. Shifts are up to 4 hours in length and are available on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. Court Watch Volunteers are located at the Dane County Courthouse.

TRAINING:

- Essential Training.
- Program Specific Training.
- Program Specific Observations.