

## ON YOUR FEET VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Minnesota Department of Corrections is looking for socially concerned and committed volunteers to make a difference in the lives of incarcerated veterans in their first year of transition from prison to the community.

**Volunteer Title:** Circle Member

On Your Feet! (OYF) is based on COSA, a statistically successful, nationally-recognized restorative justice model. A Circle is made up of Circle Members (volunteers), a Core Member (incarcerated veteran, due for release), and an Outer Circle of support professionals.

**Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSAs)** are used in workplaces, social services, and justice systems to:

- Provide support for individuals
- Create positive relationships
- Address behavior problems
- Resolve conflict
- Build teams and positive work environments
- Successfully reintegrate offenders into the community

### Purpose

Circle Member volunteers work in teams of 4-6 with a Core Member while being supported by professionals. Circles meet weekly to provide support to the Core Member as he/she begins to lead a responsible, productive, and accountable life while working on reintegration into the community. Finding housing, employment, transportation, veteran's benefits, medical assistance, mental/chemical health care, enrollment in the VA health care system, friendship, and acceptance are all goals that core members work towards. The role of volunteers is to honestly share their own experiences and come to circle willing to listen. Volunteers don't need to "fix" the Core Member, but to be a constant in their lives during a time of change and upheaval.

### Volunteer Responsibilities and Qualifications:

- Be at least 18 years old, complete an OYF volunteer application, criminal background check, and complete an interview with OYF staff
- Successfully complete 15 hours of OYF training
- Commit to 1 year of Circle involvement (Circles meet 1-2 hours per week and an average of 4 hours per month. As the circle develops; responsibilities and weekly commitments gradually decrease.)
- Abide by all Minnesota Department of Corrections policies and procedures

**Benefits:** Circle Members receive extensive, FREE training to successfully prepare to serve as a Circle Member. Training is broken down into 5 sessions totaling 15 hours. Topics include:

- Circle Processes and Guidelines
- PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Military culture and history
- Victim Impact and Accountability
- Veterans and the Criminal Justice System
- Crisis Intervention/Suicide Prevention
- Boundaries and Safety
- Chemical Dependency Treatment

Other benefits include reducing crime by preventing recidivism, improving listening skills, meeting people with diverse backgrounds, gaining unique access to knowledge of the criminal justice system, and participating in a service opportunity that clearly helps others.

**Circle Locations:** Circles determine their own meeting sites with the help of the professional support team. Sites are selected for convenience for the core and circle members. Meeting locations will be located within Hennepin or Ramsey County.