

History

On Your Feet is modeled after the largely successful MnCoSA Project developed through the MN DOC.

Originally developed in 1994, Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) was created in Canada to help high-risk offenders successfully reintegrate into society.

- An evaluation of CoSA in Canada revealed that it significantly reduces offender recidivism.
- CoSA offenders had a 57 % reduction in violent crime recidivism when compared to a control group.
- CoSA offenders had a 35 % reduction in recidivism for any type of crime.

**You can make a difference
in the life of a Veteran**

For more information or to volunteer, contact:



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On Your Feet!

...and back into the community.



Veterans making a positive impact on the lives of Veterans



A Project of the
[Minnesota Department of Corrections](#) and the
[Veterans Justice Corps](#)

VETERAN JUSTICE CORPS



Mission

When military veterans with criminal records return to their communities after completing their sentence, they may receive limited social support. Having a lack of support may increase their risk of substance abuse, self-harm, and/or re-offense.

The mission of *On Your Feet* (OYF) is to see that our veterans make a smooth integration into the community from the corrections system. It is our goal that no military service member falls through the cracks of our country which they have served.

What To Expect

On Your Feet consists of small groups of volunteers (four to seven in each group) who provide intensive support and accountability to the Veteran following their release from prison. The Veteran is called a "Core Member" in the veteran circle.

Each veteran circle lasts approximately 1 year with weekly 1-2 hour meetings attended by all OYF members, including the military veteran with the criminal record (Core Member). An OYF volunteer can anticipate meeting no more than 4 hours per week.

Volunteer involvement in the Veteran circle is most intense during the first 60-90 days following the Veteran's release from prison. Involvement gradually diminishes over time as the Veteran successfully reintegrates society and becomes less dependent on the circle.

What is *On Your Feet*?

On Your Feet provides a healing approach to justice by supporting the building and maintaining of healthy patterns of living for the Veteran as they reenter and reintegrate a community. Circles work to:

Walk with the Veteran through the often difficult transition back into the community.

Encourage the Veteran to live healthier lives while providing the network and support necessary to do so.

Celebrate milestones in the journey to healthy integration.

Collaborate with various systems. Circles work in cooperation with police, supervision agents, treatment professionals, social service workers, etc.



GROUP MENTORING AND THE CIRCLE PROCESS

Group mentoring in a circle setting provides the opportunity to share knowledge and build on the life experiences of others. All volunteers are welcome, however prior military service is especially favorable.

The circle represents a bond of mutual respect, understanding and ownership in the process.

Training

Volunteers receive 30 hours of extensive, free training and continuous support. Training is based on a restorative justice model.

Topics include:

- ◆ Circle Processes and Guidelines
- ◆ Criminal Justice System Overview
- ◆ Police Concerns
- ◆ PTSD Overview
- ◆ TBI Overview
- ◆ Chemical Dependency Overview
- ◆ Boundaries and Self-Care
- ◆ Re-Offense Prevention
- ◆ Covenant Creation (part of the Circle process)
- ◆ Institution Orientation

