

Volunteer Application for Mutual Ground Inc.
Hospital Volunteer Advocate

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: _____

(home)

(cell)

(work)

Birthday: _____ Occupation: _____

Licensed Driver? Yes ___ No ___ License Expiration Date: _____

Make & model of car: _____

Name of auto insurance: _____

Do you speak a language other than English: Yes ___ No ___

If yes, which language(s)? _____

Do you know American Sign Language? Yes ___ No ___

Have you worked with people with special needs? _____

Have you ever done volunteer work before? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, what have you done? _____

Why do you want to volunteer for Mutual Ground Inc? _____

Please list any special skills you would like us to know about: _____

Can you make a commitment for 2 years? Yes _____ No _____.

If no, why not? _____

PLEASE LIST THREE REFERENCES. Do not include relatives. Please provide a current MAILING ADDRESS for each reference.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. We are not looking for perfect spelling or grammar; we are interested in your perceptions of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Why do you think a person might stay with a batterer?

What feelings do you think children experience when coming to our shelter?

A woman calls Mutual Ground stating that her significant other has beaten her. The significant other has left the house, but she thinks the significant other will return soon. She fears more abuse. How would you respond to her?

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. We are not looking for perfect spelling or grammar; we are interested in your perceptions of domestic violence and sexual assault.

In your opinion, what sort of person is chosen to be a victim of sexual assault or abuse?

What sort of feelings do you think a victim of sexual assault experiences while at the hospital or while talking to the Police?

How would you expect family members or friends to respond to the sexual assault survivor?

ROLE OF THE HOSPITAL ADVOCATE

The medical advocate plays an absolutely crucial role in the potential recovery of survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. Medical advocates are the only people whose *sole purpose* is to support survivors. While the police may well be sympathetic and kind, their ultimate goal is to bring perpetrators to justice no matter what. Despite the fact that doctors and nurses are almost always capable and concerned, they have legal obligations that they must fulfill. Though it is frequently difficult to watch survivors make decisions that may not be in their best interests, medical advocates must give the survivors the power to make their own decisions.

Duties

1. *Medical*: Reassure the survivor and give information—explain what s/he can expect. Explain the nature and purpose of the tests and the rape kit. Though the advocate can and should explain the potential benefits of having the rape kit done, *the advocate should never tell the survivor that s/he “needs” to have the rape kit done*. The survivor has every right to refuse it. Although the advocate can encourage the survivor to share important symptoms/facts/problems with hospital staff, the advocate **cannot** relay anything that the survivor says to the hospital staff. To do so would break confidentiality.
2. *Law Enforcement*: Explain to the survivor why the police are there and why they would like to speak with her/him. Remind survivors that they do not have to speak with law enforcement if they don't want to, but also explain reasons why they might want to. The advocate **cannot** relay information from a survivor to the police, nor can the advocate remain in the room while the police interview a survivor. To do so would break confidentiality. Advise survivors that if they choose to speak to law enforcement, they themselves are not in trouble and have every right to request a break, to ask questions, or to correct the officers if a misunderstanding occurs. Also suggest to survivors that they might want to think about what they want to say in advance.
3. *Support for Survivors*: Stay with survivors as long as they need you. Make it clear that you will not be offended if they want you to leave, but that you will sit with them for as long as they want. The advocate should not leave until the survivor is discharged and has secured a ride home or to the shelter.

4. *Support for Significant Others:* Provide information and support to family and friends—often parents, partners, or friends accompany survivors to the hospital. Though it does not happen frequently, sometimes the person accompanying the survivor is the offender. When possible, tactfully ask the survivor who has accompanied her/him—if it is the abuser; the advocate is under absolutely no obligation to have any contact with him/her. If at any time on any hospital call the advocate should feel as though s/he needs extra help dealing with significant others, the advocate should call the shelter.
5. *Make sure survivors get the treatment they are entitled to:* Under Illinois law, survivors have certain rights. The advocate needs to be aware of those rights and to speak up if they are not being addressed. It is usually more profitable to speak with the nurse than to the doctor.
6. *Materials:* Give survivors brochures, pamphlets, and information about MGI to take home even if they are not interested in speaking with an advocate while at the hospital. Explain that they can call the crisis lines at any time.
7. *Paperwork:* Complete the hospital intake form; make sure that the confidentiality form, the clients' rights form, and the advocacy form are signed (if the survivor wants to sign them). When writing down the details of the incident, the advocate should include as much detail as possible. ***It is vital that all of the paperwork be returned to Mutual Ground within 24 hours.*** If it is not possible for the advocate to physically deliver the papers within that timeframe, s/he may call the front desk to relay the vital details.

Requirements:

- 60 hours of training
- Reliable car
- Must be 18 or older
- Ability to get to hospitals within approximately 30 minutes
- Must attend 3 hours of in-service training at MGI each year.

**Please complete this form and mail to:
Mutual Ground P.O. Box 843 Aurora, IL 60507 ATT: Tina Amaya**

Or, fax to Mutual Ground (630) 897-3536 ATT: Tina Amaya

Email Address: mutualgroundinc@hotmail.com