

Role of Veteran Mentors

Veteran mentors are volunteers responsible for serving as supporter, guide and confidant to veteran participants. Mentors should provide support as participants' progress through the Veterans' Docket and should feel comfortable working collaboratively to assist participants, and, where appropriate, their families in successfully completing the directives of the Court.

Duties of Volunteer Mentors:

1. Attend court sessions with veteran participants
2. Meet with participants after court to help them resolve any issues they may be experiencing
3. Each meeting should build on the participants' previous conversations
4. Meetings should be conducted in person when possible
5. Help refer participants to appropriate services where possible
6. Facilitate an understanding of courtroom procedures
7. Work collaboratively with the other mentors and the mentor coordinator through ongoing communications
8. Motivate participants utilizing a strengths-based approach by:
 - a) providing encouragement to participants by highlighting their strengths, talents, skills and knowledge
 - b) focusing on what they have done that has been successful, building on those successes
 - c) believing that participants have the potential to learn, grow and change
 - d) affording respect, support and understanding
9. Maintain federal confidentiality standards
10. Attend clinical and legal training programs supported or provided by the Veterans' Court; Mentors should attend an initial training session where topics may include Veterans' Court's policies and procedures, psychopharmacology, mental illness, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury.

11. Communicate with the mentor coordinator to resolve any issues regarding time commitments, resistant participants or unmanageable challenges. If a mentor fears for the safety of a participant or is concerned about a participant's behavior, the mentor should report any concerns to the mentor coordinator.
12. Maintain appropriate boundaries with participants
13. Confine your role as Veteran Mentor to the limits of your training and experience



While meeting with participants, mentors should not:

- make clinical recommendations
- give legal advice
- push your personal values, lifestyle or beliefs on your veteran mentee
- provide psychotherapy
- utilize a stern or harsh approach
- inappropriately extend the boundaries of their relationship