



# Volunteer Handbook

Clackamas County Circuit Court  
807 Main St.  
Oregon City, OR 97045

Program Coordinator  
Carrie Summers-Nomura  
[Carrie.E.Summers-Nomura@ojd.state.or.us](mailto:Carrie.E.Summers-Nomura@ojd.state.or.us)  
(971) 332-1130

## **Volunteering with Clackamas County Circuit Court**

You can make a difference by offering support to the court while gaining valuable experience. Through the Clackamas County Circuit Court Volunteer Program, citizens can take advantage of opportunities to enhance their careers and knowledge while providing a valuable service to our community.

All volunteer opportunities are non-paid positions. The number of volunteers accepted depends on the needs of the court at the time of application.

Given the type and size of case filings handled by the court, the volume of work is high and continuous. As a volunteer, you will offer much-needed support to the staff to assist in the completion of time-consuming and necessary tasks, helping ensure that the litigants' journey through the court process is as timely and accurate as possible. This focus parallels the Oregon Judicial Department's mission to provide fair and accessible justice services that protect the rights of individuals, preserves community welfare, and inspires public confidence.

Volunteers are in the unique position to learn about and come to understand court procedures and many of the aspects of how a court operates. As such, you will become a powerful connection between your community and the court that serves it.

We wish to create an environment in which you are challenged and fulfilled. You are encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback to assist with creating the best Volunteer Program possible.

Reasons you might consider volunteering with the Clackamas County Circuit Court:

- on the job training working with customers, judicial staff, and judges,
- experience working within the court system,
- learning how to navigate Odyssey case management system,
- exposure to civil, criminal, probate, family, landlord/tenant, and arbitration cases, and
- networking with staff from the district attorney's office and external community partners.

# Clackamas County Circuit Court Mission and History

## Our Mission

Clackamas County Circuit Court's mission is to provide fair and accessible justice services that protect the rights of individuals, preserve community welfare, and inspire public confidence. Our site exists to provide you with information on court matters and our goal is to help you find the information you need quickly and efficiently.

## History

The Clackamas County Circuit Court, Fifth Judicial District, is one of the 27 judicial districts in the Oregon Judicial Department. The existing courthouse was completed in 1936, and at the time of its dedication, there was only one Circuit Court Judge. Initially, all of the county offices except the Roads Department were housed in the courthouse. Over the years, as the need for judicial space grew, all of the county offices except the District Attorney and the Civil Division of the Sheriff eventually moved out of the courthouse to make room for building renovations that created ten more courtrooms.



## Requirements of Volunteers

- Working towards a law degree or interested in learning about working in the judicial system
- At least 18 years of age
- Able to use a computer to send and receive electronic files
- Experience with Microsoft Office and Outlook
- Can pass a criminal background check
- Has reliable transportation

## Volunteer Onboarding Process

### Applying to be a Volunteer

If you are interested in applying as a court volunteer, please submit your *completed Volunteer Application, Resume and Cover Letter* to the Volunteer Coordinator. Applicants are welcome to email these documents. However, if you prefer to mail them, our address is:

Clackamas County Circuit Court  
Attn: Carrie Summers-Nomura  
807 Main Street, Rm 304A  
Oregon City, OR 97045

Please include in your cover letter what skills and experiences you will bring to our program and what you would like to take away from this experience.

In addition, please include the days and times you would be available to volunteer. After receiving your information, the Volunteer Coordinator will schedule a mutually agreed upon meeting at the courthouse. Our goal is to have a positive experience for the volunteer and the court.

If you are accepted into the program, the court will need to conduct a background check prior to your first day. There is also a Volunteer Agreement that will need to be reviewed and signed.

## **Initial Training**

After the background check comes back and an applicant is cleared for service with the court, they will have the opportunity to come in prior to the start of their service to have their photo ID badge made with the Sheriff's office. This is not a requirement and can be done on the first day. However, having an ID badge on the first day allows for easier navigation in the courthouse.

While much of the initial training for new volunteers happens on the job and through shadowing staff, volunteers will also be required to onboard with the Volunteer Coordinator regarding the following:

- Confidentiality Agreement
- Personal appearance
- Cultural sensitivity
- Safety protocols
- Volunteer Service Agreement
- Court tour



## **Policies of Court Volunteers**

### **Confidentiality**

Customers who come to the Clackamas County Circuit Court have both legal and ethical rights to expect that the information obtained during court proceedings will remain confidential. Confidentiality is particularly important at the court because even identifying someone as a litigant reveals sensitive information about the individual and/or their family.

As a volunteer working for the court, we expect you to keep the information you obtain from litigants, court proceedings, paperwork filed, and phone and electronic communication confidential. Maintaining confidentiality includes, but is not limited to the following:

- ensuring that any notes or other materials you take from the facility do not contain identifying information about litigants and/or their families,
- never discussing the identity of litigants with family members, friends or others not affiliated with the court, and
- treating litigants their families with respect, no matter what you may have just learned about them.

### **Complaint Process**

The purpose of this process is to provide Clackamas County Circuit Court volunteers with an accessible and timely means for resolving work-related issues. The court has an effective process by which a volunteer may seek resolution of a work-related problem. We will attempt to promptly resolve all problems.

If a volunteer has a concern, the first step is to report the issue to either the Volunteer Coordinator (Carrie Summers-Nomura) or the Court Manager (Gina Setter). To the extent possible, information relating to a problem will be kept confidential. The court will not allow any volunteer to be subject to intimidation, harassment, or retaliation as a result of reporting a work-related problem.

## Time Commitment/Shifts and Absences

Clackamas County Circuit Court expect volunteers to commit to *a minimum of 16 hours/week for at least one month of services*. However, we do work with college students who may be interested in completing a more condensed volunteer commitment. This can be discussed more thoroughly with the Volunteer Coordinator.

While we understand that work and school obligations as well as illness sometimes prevent volunteers from attending their scheduled shifts, we do encourage volunteers to stay in communication with the Volunteer Coordinator so that we can plan accordingly.

## Dress Code

Clackamas County Circuit Court respects the personal freedom to dress how you feel comfortable and with respect to your culture. With that said, we do ask that volunteers maintain a consistent and professional appearance while volunteering. Since volunteers may spend time in the courtroom, we ask that they adhere to the dress code set for courtroom staff/volunteers. Please see below.

Court Staff (non-courtroom) Daily	Courtroom Staff Daily	What Not to Wear
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examples of Business Casual<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Slacks or business dress pants, khakis, chinos, professional length skirts, jeans in good condition (with no holes or rips)</li><li>• Button-down shirts, sweaters, blouses, henleys or polo shirts</li><li>• Professional length skirts and dresses</li><li>• Cardigans, blazers or sport coats</li><li>• Shoes such as loafers, Oxfords, dress boots, pumps, flats, or sandals</li><li>• Athletic shoes / tennis shoes in good condition</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examples of Business Professional<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Suit, blazer or cardigan <i>preferred</i></li><li>• Tie <i>preferred</i></li><li>• Button down shirts</li><li>• Blouses</li><li>• Dress pants</li><li>• Dress shoes, including dress boots</li><li>• Tennis shoes in good condition/clean - professional looking (neutral colors that look more like regular shoes)</li><li>• Professional length skirts and dresses</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examples<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No hats or sweatshirt hoodies (<i>exception: religious required /medical head dress, see UTCR 3.010</i>)</li><li>• Shorts</li><li>• Sweatpants and sweatshirts</li><li>• Athletic / Yoga Pants</li><li>• Slippers</li><li>• Backless or cut-out back shirts/dresses</li><li>• Bare midriff shirts</li><li>• Work boots / hiking boots</li></ul></li></ul>

**Always wear your Badge**

If you accidentally forget your badge, please check in with the Volunteer Coordinator who can issue you a temporary badge for the day.

**Accommodations**

The Clackamas County Circuit Court is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, employment, and volunteer opportunities for individuals with disabilities. To request disability accommodation in the application process, contact the Volunteer Coordinator directly at [carrie.e.summers-nomura@ojd.state.or.us](mailto:carrie.e.summers-nomura@ojd.state.or.us) or (971) 332-1130 for assistance.