**What if I have a criminal record?**

Previous convictions will not automatically bar you from becoming a panel member. As being a volunteer panel member involves working with young people you would however be required to complete a DBS check. If you have concerns about whether your conviction may prevent you from becoming a volunteer please call us to discuss this further.

**Will I be paid?**

No; panel members are volunteers. However, we will reimburse any travel costs.

**For further information refer to the following: -**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-offenders-referral-orders>

For an application form please contact youthjusticeservice@sheffield.gov.uk

**Will I be trained?**

Yes! We do not expect you to have all the skills to be a Panel Member from the start and therefore we provide all training. Once you become a panel member you will receive regular training and supervision to support you in your role.



**How much of my time will it take?**

We would expect you to be able to sit on 2 panels per month which will last from 30minutes to 1 hour each. These are likely to take place in the early evenings on weekdays however this can vary.

**Who else might be on the panel?**

Sometimes the victim of the offence may also attend panel. Alternatively they may be represented by someone else. If they choose to they can ask for their views to be taken into account when deciding on the contract.



**What do I need to be a Volunteer Panel Member?**

We need Community Panel Members who can represent their local community. This includes men and women over the age of 18 from all ethnic and social backgrounds. We need people who are good at listening and talking to young people. Volunteer Panel Members should want to support young people in their community to make amends after committing an offence.

**Contract requirements may include the following:**

* Victim awareness work including writing a letter of apology to their victim.
* Reparation (Unpaid Work)
* Help around Education, Training and Employment.
* Access to Mental Health services.
* Access to Drug and Alcohol services.
* Work in groups or 1:1 looking at offending behaviours and exploring consequences.

**Panels aim to:**

* Agree a contract of activities and requirements which young person must complete whilst on their Court Order.
* Help put things right for their victim.
* Make sure the young people take responsibility for their behaviour.
* Help to prevent the young person from reoffending.



**Information for prospective Volunteer Panel Members**

**What is a Referral Order?**

When a young person commits a crime and has to go to court for the first time they might be given a Referral Order if they plead guilty. This can last from 3 to 12 months.

**How does it work?**

After court, the young person and their parent/carer have to attend a Referral Order Panel. Sitting on the panel will be 2 volunteer panel members from the young person’s local community and their worker from the Youth Justice Service. Panel members will agree with the young person a plan to make amends and to stop further offending

**What happens in a panel and more about the contract?**

Volunteer Panel Members will be given brief details about the young person, their offence and what their Youth Justice Worker thinks might help them.

Together the Volunteers, Youth Justice Worker, young person and their parent/carer will negotiate and agree on a contract of activities and requirements, tailored to the needs of the young person. These activities and requirements will include both help for the young person and work to help them make amends for the harm caused by their behaviour.