



CARE Act

Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment Act

Understanding the Volunteer Supporter Role in the CARE Act Process: Discussion Guide

This discussion guide is designed to accompany the short video, [Understanding the Volunteer Supporter Role in the CARE Act Process](#), and help county behavioral health staff facilitate meaningful conversations with both CARE participants and potential volunteer supporters. The guide provides tailored prompts and reflection questions to deepen understanding of the volunteer supporter role, clarify expectations, and address any questions or concerns.

For more information on the volunteer supports—including expectations of the role, trainings, and resources—see the [Volunteer Supporter Toolkit](#).

Discussion Guide for CARE Participants

This section is intended to facilitate a conversation between county behavioral health staff and CARE participants who are considering whether to select a volunteer supporter. It includes prompts regarding an overview of the volunteer supporter role, highlights the potential benefits of having a supporter, and offers prompts to help participants reflect on their preferences, questions, and any concerns. The aim is to support informed decision-making and ensure that participants feel comfortable and empowered in choosing someone to assist them through the CARE process.

1. Opening Conversation

- What did you notice or learn from the video?
- Was there anything that surprised you about the volunteer supporter role?

2. Understanding the Role

- In your own words, what does a volunteer supporter do?
- How do you think a volunteer supporter could help you during the CARE process?
- How might a volunteer supporter help you with making decisions related to CARE?

3. Exploring Preferences

- What qualities would you look for in a volunteer supporter?
- Are there specific ways you would want your volunteer supporter to help you?
- Are there things you would not want a volunteer supporter to do?

4. Addressing Questions & Concerns

- What questions do you still have about having a volunteer supporter?
- Are there any concerns or worries you have about choosing someone for this role?
- What would help you feel comfortable with your volunteer supporter?

5. Next Steps & Resources

- What information or support do you need to help you choose a volunteer supporter?
- Would you like to review the Volunteer Supporter Toolkit together?

Discussion Guide for Potential Volunteer Supporters

This section is designed to facilitate a conversation between county behavioral health staff and individuals interested in serving as volunteer supporters within the CARE process. It includes prompts regarding the responsibilities and expectations associated with the role, encourages self-reflection on readiness and strengths, and common questions or concerns. The prompts guide potential supporters in considering how they can best assist a CARE participant, establish healthy boundaries, and access resources to prepare for this important responsibility.

1. Opening Conversation

- What stood out to you in the video about the volunteer supporter role?
- What motivated you to consider being a volunteer supporter?

2. Understanding Responsibilities

- How would you describe the main responsibilities of a volunteer supporter?
- What does it mean to use a “supported decisionmaking” approach?
- Why is it important to remain neutral and avoid bias?

3. Self-Reflection

- What strengths or experiences do you bring to this role?
- Are there any parts of the role that you think might be challenging for you?
- How would you handle situations where you disagree with the participant's choices?

4. Addressing Questions & Concerns

- What questions do you still have about the volunteer supporter role?
- Are there any boundaries or limits you would want to set for yourself in this role?
- What support or resources would help you feel prepared?

5. Self-Care & Support

- How can you take care of yourself while supporting someone through the CARE process?
- Where can you go for help or guidance if you need it?

6. Next Steps & Resources

- What additional information or training would be helpful for you?
- Would you like to review the Volunteer Supporter Toolkit together?