



News Release

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County seeks volunteers for award-winning court-notification calling program *Citizens invited to contribute to 'most innovative' volunteer program in the nation*

Littleton, Colo. — Arapahoe County is seeking volunteers for its nationally-recognized court-notification calling program, which recently was deemed the “2010 Innovative Volunteer Program” in the nation by the National Association of Volunteers in Local Government.

The court notification calling program involves making courtesy telephone calls to remind defendants of an upcoming date in court. Volunteers are needed to commit to three to five hours per week, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekdays, at Arapahoe County Altura Plaza (15400 E. 14th Place, Aurora).

The court notification calling program has proven to be an innovative solution to reducing failure-to-appear warrants, which place an extra burden on court, law enforcement and jail resources. When defendants fail to appear for scheduled court appearances, the courts must issue a warrant for their arrest; municipal law enforcement must arrest or ticket the offenders; and the county jail must house them for five to seven days, on average.

In 2009, court notification volunteers made 10,915 calls to defendants, and the failure to appear rate was cut in half for County Court and by two-thirds for District Court when a defendant was contacted by a volunteer caller. By decreasing the number of inmates arrested for failure-to-appear, the county jail has seen a decrease of 6,839 jail bed days at an approximate cost of \$68 a day, which translates into a savings of \$465,052 of taxpayer dollars.

“At a time when governments are closely considering their budgets, this program shows how volunteers can make a tremendous difference in reducing expenses and creating efficiencies for their community,” said Arapahoe County Commissioner Jim Dyer. “If you’re looking for a way to contribute and help others, please join us in volunteering for this award-winning program.”

The program was initiated in 2006 as a partnership between Arapahoe County’s Sheriff’s Office, Judicial Services Division and Volunteer Connections, and was recognized in June 2010 by the National Association of Volunteers in Local Government for its innovative approach and accomplishments in addressing a community need with volunteers.

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“When I started as a court notification volunteer, I was nervous for the first few calls, and then I realized how appreciative people are when they get a call,” said volunteer Stephanie Zelenak. “Many times, they have forgotten their court date and are grateful to receive a reminder, directions to court and support from a friendly voice at the County.”

To apply as a volunteer with the court notification calling program, or to learn about the wide variety of volunteer opportunities with Arapahoe County, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Val Purser at 303-738-7938 or visit www.co.arapahoe.co.us.

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To download photos, please click on the following link:

<ftp://www.co.arapahoe.co.us/Pub/CM/Photos/Volunteer>

CourtNotificationTeam: Arapahoe County’s court notification calling program was recognized as “2010 Innovative Volunteer Program” by the National Association of Volunteers in Local Government.

Volunteer.jpg: Arapahoe County volunteer Stephanie Zelenak makes a courtesy phone call to remind a citizen of their upcoming date in court.