

**SPYC Crisis Line
Letter of Recommendation Policy**

Volunteers that have served on the crisis line for a year or more are eligible to receive letters of recommendation from Suicide Prevention of Yolo County by request. **These letters are written and signed by Sandra, our Clinical Supervisor.** When applying for clinical psychology programs, counseling psychology programs, graduate programs, or job positions in the mental health field, having a letter detailing the commitment you have shown to SPYC, the training and experience you gained while working on the crisis line, and your value as a dedicated volunteer can be incredibly valuable.

To be eligible to request a letter of recommendation, you must have:

1. Served on the crisis line for 1 year and/or served at least 250 hours (and planning on finishing at least the 1-year commitment).
 - a. Volunteers who complete the 250 hours of service, get approved for a letter of recommendation, and then leave crisis line service early for an unapproved reason (*SPYC staff reserves the right to determine the validity of early volunteer service termination*) will have a letter sent to all requested schools detailing the interruption in the volunteer's crisis line commitment.
2. A good record of being on time for shifts and few missed calls (we understand extenuating circumstances sometimes force volunteers to cancel at the last minute or not pick up their phone but to be eligible for letters of recommendation, these should not exceed a reasonable and understandable number of incidents)
3. A record of thorough, well-written call reports that were submitted in a timely fashion (within 12 hours after a shift)
4. Attended at least **8-10 meetings** in the last year

Optional

1. Attended most meetings in the last year (10-12 meetings)
2. **Often took extra shifts when they were open**
3. Always gave at least 1-2 weeks of notice when canceling a shift or going on vacation
4. **Helped out with extra projects in the office**

We appreciate your hard work and dedication to the crisis line and would love to write a great letter for you. Therefore, please consider the above factors prior to requesting letters of recommendation (this is good practice for all potential letter writers for you. Ask yourself, do they know enough about me and my performance to write a strong letter?). If you feel that your work with our agency has fulfilled the above eligibility requirements, please email the office (SPYC@sbcglobal.net) with a request for a letter of recommendation and include the program/job position that it is for. Following receipt of this email, we will review your work with the crisis line and decide whether or not your request for a letter will be approved. *This request should come in 2.5 months before the deadline.*

If your request has been denied, we will write you an explanatory email detailing the reasons why we do not feel that we can provide you with an adequate letter of recommendation at the present time. If

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you are still volunteering with us at the time, we will provide you with ways in which you can improve your performance and be eligible for a letter of recommendation in the future.

Once your request has been approved, please submit the following items at least 2 months prior to the deadline that the letter will be due. **If you do not provide us with these materials in a timely fashion, SPYC cannot guarantee that the letters of recommendation will be received by the schools by their due dates:**

1. A sheet with all the due date(s) for the letters of recommendation with addresses to the institutions
2. Addressed and stamped envelopes so that we can send the letter directly to the institution (unless it needs to be in a sealed envelope in a packet with your other admission materials, in that case, please submit an addressed envelope without a stamp and we will return the envelope to you after the letter is complete). **If anything needs to be mailed back to you, please provide us with a large enough envelope to hold the materials that is self-addressed and stamped.**
3. A current curriculum vitae or resume
4. **An unofficial transcript (can be printed or copied online, i.e., you do not have to order transcripts to send to us)**
5. The letter of recommendation form or performance rating form (depending on the institution)
 - a. These should be paper clipped to the envelopes that go with them
 - b. A lot of schools now ask for letters of recommendation to be submitted online. Please put down the SPYC@sbcglobal.net email address for this.**
6. A 1-3 page write-up of your experiences with SPYC and why you are currently pursuing the job position/graduate program as the next step in your professional development

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