

COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR HANDBOOK

AUGUST 2025

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WELCOME NOTE

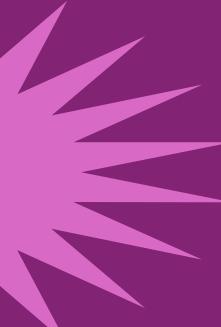
Dear Community Ambassador,

Welcome to Convène's Community Ambassador Program! We're excited to partner with you in building a more connected and responsive approach to substance use support in Travis County. Your voice and experience are essential to ensuring that this work reflects the real needs of our community.

Thank you for joining us on this journey.

**Warmly,
The Convène Team**

CONVENE INTRO



Convene is a community-driven initiative focused on improving how Travis County addresses substance use. We bring together people with lived experience, service providers, advocates, and community members to co-design more responsive and reflective systems of support.

Why Ambassadors?

Community Ambassadors are trusted community members who help connect voices on the ground with decision-making spaces. They share resources, gather stories, and make sure lived experience is at the center of change.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Community Ambassador Program ensures that community voices guide the work of Convene. Ambassadors bridge the gap between systems and people, making sure services reflect real needs.

Key Goals

1. **Elevate community voices and lived experience.**
2. **Improve how substance use support is designed and delivered.**
3. **Build stronger connections between providers, advocates, and the community.**
4. **Share resources, reduce stigma, and promote understanding.**

Timeline

July-Aug 2025	• Ambassador Recruitment and Selection
Aug 2025	• Ambassador Orientation
Sept 2025	• Ambassador Training
Sept 2025-Sept 2026	• Active ambassador work and monthly support

AMBASSADOR ROLE

WHAT AMBASSADORS DO

- Share information and resources with your community.
- Listen and gather stories or feedback.
- Help recruit participants for community conversations.
- Represent community voices in Convene spaces.

Benefits

- Training and educational opportunities
- Spotlight in Convene's newsletter and socials
- Networking opportunities
- Monthly stipend
- Newsletter with updates & resources
- Opportunities to co-lead or present at events

Commitment

- Attendance at orientation and trainings
- Monthly check-ins
- Ongoing outreach
- 3-hours per month on average

YOUR CONVENE CONNECTION

Use this information to help guide your conversations with community members. This outline keeps things simple, consistent, and approachable.

1

Introduction

Start by sharing who you are and your connection to the person you're speaking with (neighbor, friend, coworker, fellow parent, etc.).

Example: “Hi, I’m [your name]. We’re both part of this community, and I’m here today to talk about something important to all of us.”

2

Purpose

Share what Convene is and why you're having the conversation.

Example: “Convene is a community-driven effort to address substance use in our area. We’re building a plan together, and your voice is a key part of shaping that plan. Substance use affects many people differently, and we want to make sure all perspectives are included.”

Invite them in with a question:

“Is substance use something that feels important to you?”

“Would you like me to share more about what we’re doing?”

3

Opportunities

Share the different ways people can participate—both big and small:

- **Small community conversations.**
- **Larger community conversations.**
- **Digital communication through the website, social media, and email updates.**
- **Anonymous and online feedback forms are available for those who prefer not to share their feedback in person.**

Tip: Let people know their participation can be flexible!

Example: “Whether you want to come to a meeting, just follow along online, or share feedback anonymously—you still have an important role in this work.”

In general, keep it conversational.

Your goal is to connect, listen, learn, and invite. You do not have to have all the answers!

If you don't know the answer...

- **Refer to the FAQ sheet or any supporting materials provided.**
- **Share Convene's contact information so they can follow up directly.**
- ***Example: “That’s a great question. I don’t have the full answer right now, but I can point you to our FAQ sheet and connect you with the Convene team.”***

10 OUTREACH ACTIVITY EXAMPLES

Part of your role is to help spread awareness, build connections, and invite others into this work. Below are examples of outreach activities you can take part in or lead. These are not requirements, but ideas to guide your involvement.

Community Presence

Example: Represent Convene at neighborhood gatherings or town halls.

Considerations:

- Do you need to get on the agenda or schedule?
- Do you need to bring printed materials, flyers, or resource cards?
- Do you want another ambassador or Convene staff member to join you for support?

Relationship-Building

Example: Introduce Convene to your existing networks (faith groups, schools, clubs).

Considerations:

- Do you need to set up a formal meeting or can it be an informal conversation?
- Would it help to prepare a short Convene Connect Speech ahead of time?
- Do you need printed or digital materials or you can share?
- Do you want support from another ambassador or a Convene staff member?

OUTREACH ACTIVITY EXAMPLES

Collaboration

Example: Connect Convene staff to groups in your network who may want to get involved.

Considerations:

- Do you need to make a warm introduction by email, phone, or in person?
- Would it help to share Convene's one-pager or Connect Speech with the group first?
- Are there upcoming events, programs, or projects where a collaboration could fit naturally?

Creative Engagement

Example: Share photos, reflections, or short videos about Convene on social media.

Considerations:

- Do you have clear permission to post photos if other people are included?
- Do you want to use your personal account, or have Convene share it from the main page?
- Is your post accessible and inclusive (e.g., adding captions or alt text)?

Resource Sharing

Example: Distribute Convene flyers, newsletters, or event invitations at places you already go—work, school, or community spaces.

Considerations:

- Is there a bulletin board, email list, or social media group where you can share?
- Do you want help tailoring materials to your audience?

OUTREACH TEMPLATES

Text Template

Hi [Name]! I'm helping with a community project called Convene. We bring people together to share ideas and build solutions around substance use and community wellbeing. I'd love for you to check it out. Would you be interested in coming to an event or getting more info?

Email Template

Subject: Invitation to Connect with Convene

Hi [Name],

I wanted to share something I'm part of that I think you'd be interested in. It's called Convene, and it's about bringing community voices together to strengthen how we respond to substance use and support wellbeing.

We'd love for you to get involved! Whether that's joining an event, sharing your perspective, or just learning more. Let me know if you'd like me to connect you with the Convene team or send along upcoming opportunities!

PROGRAM VALUES

As ambassadors, you're the heart of this project. These values are here to guide how we show up together in community.

Showing Up

Ambassadors represent Convene in the community. That means showing up with reliability and positivity at events, trainings, or outreach. If something comes up and you can't make it, just let the team know as soon as you can.

Community First

Convene is people-driven. Every voice matters, and every story adds value. Ambassadors help carry that spirit by listening, including others, and making space for voices that might not always be heard.

Reducing Stigma

Substance use and recovery are deeply personal. We don't push people or pry, but we meet them where they are. We use positive, empowering language and lift up people who want to be lifted.

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Privacy & Trust

Community members may share personal or sensitive experiences. We hold those stories with respect and protect people's privacy.

Active Engagement

Your voice matters! Ambassadors participate, share ideas, and help shape what Convene becomes.

Positive Energy

Enthusiasm is contagious. Even when the topics we discuss are heavy, we bring an attitude of hope, encouragement, and possibility, without dismissing the real challenges people face.



**WELCOME TO
THE CONVO!**

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