

Kelly Kempson

HOPE OF EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

Time at Agency: 37 Years

Position: Court Advocacy Program
Coordinator

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Commitment to advocacy on behalf of those affected by DV: *Kelly has advocated on behalf of survivors of domestic abuse for over 37 years. She is often the first line of contact for survivors who are interested in obtaining an Order of Protection and she has an authentic and caring ability to educate and provide safety and support for survivors in crisis and beyond. Since July of 1997, Kelly has served over 3,000 survivors and their children.*

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Personal qualities that reflect in their ongoing commitment to ethical, peaceful and respectful work with others: *Kelly embraced the importance of survivors rights to make their own choice from the day she began providing domestic*

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abuse services. She has fully embraced inclusiveness and kindness towards all and is a champion for LGBTQIA+ survivors and each survivor who receives our services. Kelly has helped to enlighten a generation of survivors and employees about the importance of inclusivity and kindness. She is kind and supportive to each client she serves and to the employees who work beside her.

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Ways in which they instill a spirit of advocacy in others: *Kelly leads by example. She demonstrates her passion to educate others and instills this passion to serve domestic abuse survivors within our newer employees. Her passion for educating providers has inspired newer staff to take the lead in advocating on survivors' behalf. She also inspires professionals she collaborates with on a daily basis.*

Experience that demonstrates a broad commitment to social justice: *Kelly is the “go-to” employee for less experienced employees to gather information on how to handle sensitive cases with increased risk and danger. She helped implement strangulation questions on our first client risk assessment and has been a champion in educating responders on increased risks to survivors. Her commitment to advocating to end violence against women is demonstrated on a daily basis as she educates employees, criminal justice system providers, and social service providers about the generational and systemic oppression of survivors, especially those subject to the criminal justice and child protective systems.*

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Creativity in building the domestic violence movement within a social framework: *Creativity and willingness to move with social change have been a strength of Kelly’s throughout her 37 years of service. She is open to learning from others, adjusts to how we serve survivors, and has been a part of many brainstorming teams on how to best serve survivors who seek Orders of*

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Protections, as well as survivors who access shelter services. Her perseverance and drive to learn more about ways to provide amplified services to survivors is due to her unrelenting passion to serve survivors and those who do not have the same advantages as many of us. She is in tune with the obstacles that survivors face from the moment she meets with them.