§ 257-a. Civil actions against local department volunteers. 1. For the purposes of this section the term "volunteer" means a person authorized by a local probation department's director of the volunteer services program to participate in the local department's volunteer services program.

2. A local probation department may provide an attorney for and pay such attorney fees and expenses necessarily incurred in the defense of a volunteer in any civil action commenced against him by reason of a claim of alleged negligence or other act of such person arising out of and in the course of participating in a local department volunteer services program, and the local probation department may save harmless and indemnify such person from financial loss arising out of any claim, demand, suit of judgment by reason of the alleged negligence or other act by such person provided that, at the time that such claim arose or damages were sustained, such person was acting in the discharge of his duties and within the scope of his authorized duties and that such claim or cause of action or damages sustained did not result from the willful and wrongful act or gross negligence of such person.

3. A local probation department which authorizes indemnification under this section, however, shall not be subject to the obligations imposed by this section unless such volunteer shall, within five days of the time he is served with any summons, complaint, process, notice, demand or pleading, deliver the original or a copy thereof to the local department and unless such person shall cooperate fully with the local probation department in the defense of said claim, demand or suit. Upon such delivery the local probation department may assume control of the representation of such person.

4. This section shall not in any way impair, limit or modify the rights and obligations under any policy of insurance.

5. The benefits of this section shall inure only to volunteers and shall not enlarge or diminish the rights of any other party.