

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice often times works alongside the legal system and complements, but does not replace, criminal justice. In some cases it acts as an alternative to the traditional court system.

Restorative Justice believes that crime is a violation of people and relationships, such as the victim and the community. These violations create obligations, and the central obligation is to put right the wrongs. Because of this belief, Restorative Justice is able to focus on fulfilling victim and community needs, and the offender's responsibility for repairing harm. Offenders are given the opportunity to fully restore themselves in the community.

Restorative Justice is not primarily about forgiveness or reconciliation, and it does not minimize or discount victim needs. Although victims and offenders are both involved in Restorative Justice, it is unlike mediation in that victim needs are the priority. Finally, Restorative Justice is not a particular program or blueprint. Differing circumstances and victim needs will be met on a case by case basis.

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Information for Volunteer Restorative Panel Members