

What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice (RJ) is a set of principles that gives rise to practices that adhere to the idea that crime hurts relationships. It centers the needs of people directly harmed and addresses root causes of harmful behavior. Restoration refers to repairing the harm done and rebuilding relationships in the community affected by crime.

Through an RJ circle, two neutral facilitators bring those who have harmed and willing victims together to talk about the harms that occurred and discuss how to address those harms.

RJ takes its roots from centuries of indigenous cultural traditions and peace-making practices. The field remains indebted to the Native people of North America and New Zealand for their foundational contributions.

Research

Studies show, in comparison to traditional criminal justice, offenders who participate in RJ programs are highly accountable, fulfilling agreements, and committing fewer future crimes.

Confidentiality

The RJ circle is a confidential conversation, and all participants sign a confidentiality agreement. Nothing said in circle may be shared with the Pima County Attorney's Office, outside of mandatory reporting obligations.

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For more information visit:

www.pcao.pima.gov/restorative-justice

Program Partners



Restorative Justice Program

Pima County Attorney's Office

A victim-centric, offender-focused,
community-led response to crime.

Information for Responsible Party

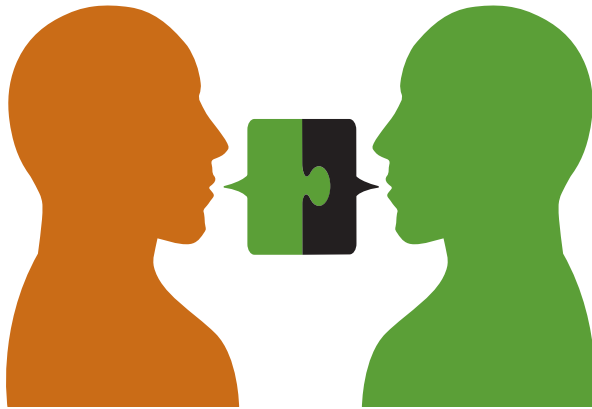
www.pcao.pima.gov/restorative-justice



What's the purpose of RJP?

RJP is an adult diversion program for eligible felony offenses in which both the responsible party and the victim are both willing to take part. The program is for offenders who accept responsibility for their actions.

RJP works as an alternative to prosecution and potential incarceration. If the responsible person completes the program, their charge is dismissed. The process aims to create an accountability plan that is person-centered and provides space for everyone to feel seen and heard.



BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPANTS:

For victims: The program gives a chance to speak directly/indirectly to the person who caused them harm, ask questions, and have a direct say in what is needed to make things right.

For responsible parties: It also offers the responsible person a space to hear the impact of the harm and to take direct accountability for their actions. The process also connects them to needed social services to address root causes of criminal behavior.

How is it different from criminal justice?

The Restorative Justice Program shifts the focus of the system from the offender and how to punish them to the victim and what they need to move forward.

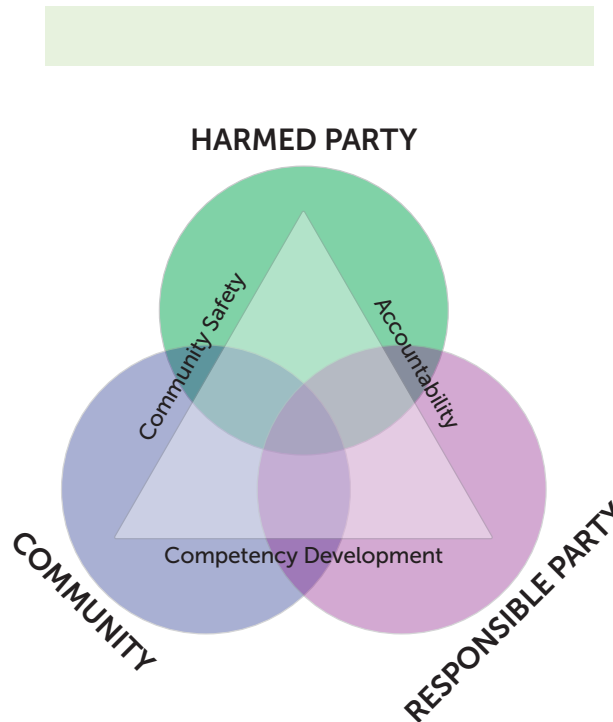
The traditional system asks:

- What laws have been broken?
- Who did it?
- What do we do to that person?

Restorative Justice asks:

- Who has been hurt?
- What are their needs?
- How do we meet those needs?

*Restorative Justice uses the language of harmed party/responsible party to reflect its position as being outside of the traditional justice system.



Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Restorative Justice Project

Program Process

Step 1: An eligible offender accepts responsibility for their actions, and both victim and responsible party voluntarily agree to participate.

Step 2: Both parties meet separately with case facilitators (trained volunteers) for pre-circle preparation.

Step 3: An RJ circle takes place, in which a participating victim, responsible party, support people, and 2 volunteer community members come together with the help of case facilitators. The process is designed to recognize the harm done, honor the needs and interests of those harmed, and develop an agreement outlining steps the responsible person will take to repair the harm.

Step 4: Post-circle monitoring with a series of check-in meetings to ensure the responsible party is on track to complete their plan.

Step 5: Closing circle and potluck to celebrate. Dismissal of the charge.

Who can you bring?

Both the victim and the responsible person can bring anyone they think would provide comfort, such as a trusted family member or friend.

