

Prince Edward Island Restorative Justice Program

HOW CAN IT BENEFIT PARTICIPANTS?

The Restorative Justice Program provides an opportunity for offenders and victims to engage in a safe and effective communication (direct or indirect) to share how they have been impacted by the crime.

- Offenders can accept responsibility for their actions and acknowledge the harm caused;
- Both offenders and victims can find answers to questions or fears they may have had since the incident and be better informed about the crime;
- Victims can share their story and be certain the offender understands the impact of the crime;
- Both parties can help determine what needs to be done to repair the harm in a meaningful way.

WHO ARE THE FACILITATORS?

The Department of Justice and Public Safety trains and contracts community facilitators from across Prince Edward Island and are experienced in working in cases of crime. The facilitators work with the victim and offender separately to prepare them for participation in the program.

HOW TO SUBMIT A REFERRAL

Referrals can be made at multiple entry points of the criminal justice system. This includes referrals at the pre charge, post charge, post-guilty plea finding, post sentence and pre and post release stages of the criminal justice system. Referrals from Victim Services and Probation Services.

For more information, contact the Restorative Justice Coordinator at restorativejustice@gov.pe.ca

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WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Restorative Justice is an approach to justice that focuses on addressing the harm caused by crime by providing an opportunity for those harmed and those who take responsibility for the harm to identify and address their needs in the aftermath of a crime.

The Restorative Justice Program is a Department of Justice and Public Safety program that helps those who have caused harm in Prince Edward Island take responsibility for their actions and communicate with the victims and/or communities they have harmed.



HOW DOES IT WORK?

In general, there are four stages to the Restorative Justice process:

- 1. Intake and assessment:** Once the case is referred to the Restorative Justice Coordinator, it's assessed for appropriateness. This entails the Restorative Justice Coordinator reaching out to the offender, victim, and others (where relevant) to explore the option of restorative justice and determine if it's a good fit. A team of community facilitators are then assigned.
- 2. Preparation:** During this stage, the participants work with the community facilitators to prepare for a dialogue that the offender will attend to formally discuss their offence and the harms they have caused others. The victim is invited to

attend this dialogue but may choose not to, or may decide to participate in another way, for example by letter writing back and forth, video sharing, sending a representative, and other creative options and accommodations that we develop collaboratively with the victim.

- 3. Dialogue:** This is a meeting that the offender participates in, along with others affected by the crime who want to be present, to discuss the offence, the harms caused by it, and what contributed to the offender's behaviour to prevent it from reoccurring. At the end of the dialogue an agreement is developed through consensus regarding how the offender can best address both the harms resulting from and the causes of the offence.
- 4. Agreement follow-through:** During this stage, the offender completes the terms of their agreement, and victims and the referral source are kept updated on their progress.

