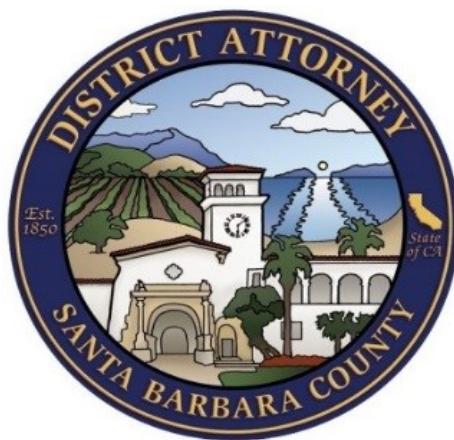


# Santa Barbara County Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program

## Panelist Packet



In partnership with:





## **About Neighborhood Restorative Justice**

Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program is a program initiated by the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's office in cooperation with the Goleta Valley and Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office. Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program seeks to address low-level crimes through community-based solutions to swiftly redress the harm caused by these offenses outside of the traditional criminal justice system. The purpose of this program is to address criminal violations that impact the quality of life of our neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program utilizes restorative justice concepts, identifying crime as acts that cause harm done to people and communities. Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program emphasizes the offender is repairing that harm done to the individual and the community. Another goal of the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program is for all parties to understand the root cause of the crime so that the victim, community, and offender can move forward in a positive direction. Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program strengthens neighborhoods impacted by criminal activity in four ways:

### **Restore Victim**

Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program is victim-centered by placing emphasis on the victim's needs. It is focused on offenders making things right to the greatest extent possible with their victims. Offenders pay restitution to victims who have suffered monetary losses or property damage.

### **Restore Community**

Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program creates an atmosphere of inclusion and responsibility by providing a direct role for residents to oversee the resolution of offenses in their city.

### **Restore Offender**

Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program offers offenders a second chance by avoiding a criminal conviction on their record upon successfully completing the program. Offenders can also be restored by helping them understand the consequence of their actions and giving them the opportunity to pay back the community they harmed.

### **Educate Offender**

Offenders can be educated in alcohol use, anger management, being considerate to their community, and other topics designed to change or modify their behavior with referrals to agencies.

# **Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program**

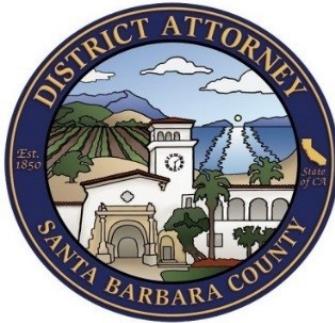
## **Volunteers**

Each Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program conference includes the person who committed an offense, the victim (when applicable), 1 Facilitator, and 2-3 Panelists.

**Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program** Facilitators play an important leadership role in the program. Their duties include leading pre-conference meetings with victims (when participating), offenders, and community panelists to prepare all parties for restorative dialogue during the joint conference. During the conference, the Facilitator guides offenders through a restorative 3-Step Process in which victims, offenders, and community panelists 1) name the harms created by the crimes in question; 2) determine how to make things as right as possible, and; 3) develop a specific agreement that clearly states how things will be made right and declare future intentions to assure that the actions will not be repeated.

**Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program** Panelists play a very important supportive role within the program. Panelists represent the community's needs, interests, and perspectives concerning the crime(s) committed. Panelists agree to meet with the offender in a face-to-face conference facilitated by a trained, neutral mediator (the Facilitator). During the conference, Panelists 1) name the harms the community experiences as a result of the crime, 2) ask questions seeking to understand the circumstances around the crime, and 3) decide, together with the offender, the steps that are necessary to make things right (as much as possible). This face to-face dialogue is designed to encourage accountability on the part of the offender and to arrive at the steps necessary to remedy the situation as fully as possible.

**Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program** strives to maintain a diverse pool of representatives from the Goleta Valley (e.g., business, residential neighborhoods, students, etc.). Applicants need only the ability to work with others to solve problems, a willingness to learn how to apply restorative justice concepts to solve problems, and familiarity with the community and culture of their neighborhoods. Both positions receive in-depth training on the principles of restorative justice and the specific roles and duties of each position. All applicants undergo a Live-scan criminal history background review and complete a code of conduct agreement designed to protect the integrity of the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program hearing, offenders, and process. Applicants cannot have any felony convictions or recent misdemeanor convictions.



# Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program

## Volunteers: Frequently Asked Questions

### Q: What is Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program?

**A:** Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program is a Restorative Justice Program initiated by the Santa Barbara County District Attorney in cooperation with local city governments and Law enforcement. Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program addresses nonviolent and low-level crimes through community-based solutions. This program aims to address criminal violations that impact the quality of life in our communities. The Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program, volunteer Facilitators and Panelists, trained in the principles of Restorative Justice, participate in conferences with criminal offenders and victims (when participating) to address the harms caused by criminal violations. Together, they seek to reach an agreement on how to make things right in a restorative setting that allows the harm caused by these offenses to be swiftly resolved outside of the traditional criminal justice system.

### Q: How are the principles of Restorative Justice utilized?

**A:** Restorative Justice defines crime as acts that cause harm to people and communities. Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program emphasizes the offender's reparation of the harm done to the individual and/or the community. Another goal of the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program is for all parties to understand the root cause of the crime so that the victim, community, and offender can move forward in a positive direction. Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program strengthens neighborhoods impacted by criminal activity in four ways:

**Restore Victim:** Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program is victim-centered and emphasizes the victim's needs. It is focused on offenders making things right to the greatest extent possible with their victims. Offenders pay restitution to victims who have suffered monetary losses or property damage.

**Restore Community:** Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program creates an atmosphere of inclusion and responsibility by providing a direct role for residents to oversee the resolution of offenses in their city.

**Restore Offender:** Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program offers offenders an opportunity to change by avoiding a criminal conviction on their record upon successful completion of the program. Offenders are also restored by helping them understand the consequence of their actions and giving them the opportunity to pay back the community they harmed.

**Educate Offender:** Offenders can be educated in alcohol use, anger management, and how to be considerate to their community, as well as other topics designed to change or modify their behavior.

### Q: What is the role of a Panelist?

**A:** Panelists play an important supportive role within the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program. They represent the community's needs, interests, and perspectives concerning the crime(s) committed. Panelists agree to meet with the offender in a face-to-face conference facilitated by a trained, neutral mediator. During the conference, panelists 1) name the harms the community experiences as a result of the crime, 2) ask questions seeking to understand the circumstances around the crime, and 3) decide, together with the offender, the steps that are necessary to make

things right (as much as possible). This face-to-face dialogue is designed to encourage accountability on the offender's part and to arrive at the steps necessary to remedy the situation as fully as possible.

**Q: What is the role of a Facilitator?**

**A:** Facilitators play an important leadership role in the program. Their duties include leading pre-conference meetings with victims (when participating), offenders, and community panelists to prepare all parties for restorative dialogue during the joint conference. During the conference, the Facilitator guides offenders through a restorative 3-Step Process in which victims, offenders, and community Panelists: 1) name the harms created by the crimes in question; 2) determine how to make things as right as possible, and; 3) develop a specific agreement that clearly states how things will be made right and declare future intentions to assure that the actions are not repeated.

**Q: What qualifications do I need?**

**A:** We ask that volunteers meet a few requirements to ensure that they are familiar with the community and appropriate for this program:

§ Reside or work in the community for a minimum of three years and be familiar with different neighborhoods.

§ Ability to work with others to solve problems.

§ Complete a Live-Scan prior to participation and must have no felony convictions or recent misdemeanor convictions.

§ Ability to commit to participation in the program for two years (students one year).

**Q: What is the time commitment for Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program volunteers?**

**A:** Training is the largest time commitment for Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program. Volunteers will be asked to attend a 12 hour (Panelist) or (Facilitator) training course on Restorative Justice Concepts and the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program process, as well as an informational pre-training meeting and mock conference, role-play training. Therefore, the total time commitment during training is approximately 12 hours for both Panelist and Facilitators. Once training is complete, volunteers typically serve two nights or 6hrs per month.

**Q: How do cases get referred to Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program?**

**A:** If a misdemeanor case is appropriate for Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program, the District Attorney's Office will contact the person cited. Suppose the person declines to participate or would like to dispute the incident in question, or there is no contact. In that case, the case will proceed to the criminal Restorative Justice Program system.

**Q: What happens at Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program?**

**A:** A panel of 3 volunteer residents meets with the offender and victim (if applicable) to discuss the case. The panelist and offender address the harms caused by the criminal violation. Together, the panelists and offenders may issue one or more "directives" or actions that repair the harm caused by the incident. Directives can include but are not limited to restitution, a letter of apology, a research project, or an online counseling program.

**Q: How can I find out more or apply to volunteer?**

**A:** To find out more, visit our website [www.countyofsb.org/da](http://www.countyofsb.org/da), email [sbdaneighborhoodRJP@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:sbdaneighborhoodRJP@co.santa-barbara.ca.us), or call 805-403-0448 and speak to the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program Coordinator.



# COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

## JOYCE E. DUDLEY, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

### CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT NEIGHBORHOOD RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM PANELISTS

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#### Introduction

1. Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program is a pre-filing diversion program designed to address lower-level crimes. Residents are trained to serve as Panelists and develop community-based solutions to redress the harm caused by these offenses. Pursuant to Penal Code §14150 – 14156, the District Attorney's Office empowers Panelists with the authority and responsibility to adjudicate certain infractions/misdemeanors offenses. Typically, the offenses are petty theft, disorderly conduct, vandalism, assault/ battery, alcohol control violations, and other quality of life crimes. Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program is a partnership with the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office volunteers from the community and the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office.
2. Serving as a Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program Panelists is an important responsibility. Panelists uphold the integrity of the program and ensure fairness in resolving each case. A Panelist shall personally observe high standards as specified in the Code of Conduct Agreement for Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program Panelist (Code) so that the integrity of the hearing process is preserved. This Code of Conduct Agreement describes the roles and responsibilities required for each offender to serve as a Panelist.

**A. A Panelist Shall Adhere To Appropriate Standards In Performing the Duties.**

In performing the duties prescribed by the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office, the following standards apply:

- 1.** A Panelist shall respect and comply with the law pursuant to the Penal Code of California. A Panelist shall report any violation or attempt to violate this standard of this Code to the District Attorney Representative.
- 2.** A Panelist shall be patient, dignified, respectful, and courteous to all persons with whom the Panelist deals in an official capacity, including the Victim, Offender, Victim Advocates, Panelists, the general public, and other Panelists.
- 3.** A Panelist shall diligently discharge the responsibilities of the position in a prompt, efficient, and professional manner.
- 4.** A Panelist shall not engage in unfair discrimination based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, socioeconomic status, or any basis proscribed by law.
- 5.** A Panelist shall not allow their personal opinion or beliefs to detract from the dignity of the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program, interfere with the performance of official duties, or adversely reflect on the operation and dignity of the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program.
- 6.** A Panelist shall utilize the principles of restorative justice in deciding the best course of action in cases to the best of their ability.
- 7.** A Panelist shall, to the best of their ability, effectively facilitate the restorative justice process by building trust and preparing and empowering Victims, Offenders, and Panelists for restorative dialogue through pre-conferences.
- 8.** A Panelist shall, to the best of their ability, guide and assist Offenders, Victims, and Panelists in face-to-face dialogue in the conference, assisting them in reaching an agreement about how to restore the Offender, the Victim. The community creates a safe space throughout the conference and ensures the agreement is specific, measurable, attainable, reasonable, respectful, timely, and restorative (SMARRT-R).
- 9.** A Panelist shall promote, support, and maintain a safe, respectful, and confidential process.
- 10. CONFIDENTIALITY:** A Panelist shall not disclose any confidential information received in the course of their participation in Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program about any case or any offender to any person or entity, except to District Attorney Representatives, Facilitators, Panelists, and trainers for purposes related to this program.
- 11. CONFIDENTIALITY:** A Panelist shall not use any information obtained in the course of case deliberations for any personal or professional purposes.
- 12. CONFIDENTIALITY:** A Panelist may disclose confidential information for the educational and training purposes of this program; however, Offender and Victim names, or information which would reveal their identity, shall not be disclosed.

**B. A Facilitator Shall Avoid Conflicts Of Interest In The Performance Of The Duties.**

1. A conflict of interest arises when a Facilitator knows that they might be personally or financially affected by a matter such that a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts would question the Facilitator's ability to properly perform duties in an impartial manner.
2. When a Facilitator believes a conflict of interest may be present, the Facilitator shall promptly inform the District Attorney Representative. After determining that a conflict or the appearance of a conflict of interest exists, appropriate steps shall be taken to restrict the Facilitator's involvement in such matter so as to avoid a conflict or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

**C. A Facilitator May Be Removed From Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program For Violation Of Standards As Set Forth In This Code Of Conduct.**

1. A Facilitator shall respect and comply with the standards of this Code. Failure to do so may result in the removal of the Facilitator from their responsibilities.
2. Should a Facilitator believe that there has been an ethical breach of this Code by a Facilitator or Panelist, he or she should attempt to resolve the issue by bringing it to the attention of that Facilitator or Panelist and the District Attorney Representative.
3. The affected Facilitator or Panelist shall have the opportunity to meet with the District Attorney Representative.
4. The District Attorney's Office shall be the final arbiter on the removal of the Facilitator or Panelist.

**The Code of Conduct shall be in effect for two years commencing on the date below and, at the discretion of the District Attorney's Office, is renewable at the end of the current term for a successive two year term.**

## NEIGHBORHOOD RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM

Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office

### VOLUNTEER PANELIST APPLICATION

*Tell us about yourself! Please write clearly and fill out the entire application. Thank you!*

Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home/Alt Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Best way to contact you?  Home/Alt Phone  Cell Phone  Email

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Place of employment/School attended (if retired or unemployed, please list previous employment) \_\_\_\_\_

Position or Title/Year \_\_\_\_\_

Current and/or previous community involvement? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you speak any foreign languages? Please list: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you learn about Neighborhood RJP? \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you like to participate in Neighborhood RJP? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What qualities do you have that would make you a good Neighborhood RJP Panelist? (You may include  
special skill or strengths you believe are applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you hope to gain or learn by being a Neighborhood Courts Panelist?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## NEIGHBORHOOD RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM

Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office

Have you ever had adverse experience or contact with a law enforcement agency or the court system? If so, please explain:

What are your interests and hobbies?

Do you follow sources that focus on the criminal justice system such as novels, blogs, the internet, newspapers, TV, or radio? If so, what sources?

Please describe your experiences with the criminal justice system?

Have you ever had any adverse experiences or contact with a law enforcement agency or the court system?

If so, please explain:

Have you ever been convicted of a crime?  
If yes, please explain:

Yes       No

When are you available to volunteer?

## NEIGHBORHOOD RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM

Santa Barbara District Attorney's Office

Are there any days, hours, or times of the year you are NOT available to volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any special needs requiring accommodation? \_\_\_\_\_

**References** – Please list 2 contacts familiar with your work ethic and capabilities (No relatives please)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to you \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to you \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Emergency Contact***

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to you \_\_\_\_\_

*I hereby certify that the information I provided in this application is true and correct. My signature authorizes the District Attorney's Office to contact my references.*

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed application to sbdaneighborhoodRJP@co.santa-barbara.ca.us or:

ATTN: Joanne Flores NEIGHBORHOOD RJP

Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office

1112 Santa Barbara St. • Santa Barbara, CA 93101 • 805-403-0448