



*Providing Restorative Responses
to Crime*

Victim / Offender Mediation

Restorative Justice Services

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About the Service

Restorative Justice Services is a restorative justice initiative managed by a partnership of stakeholders in the criminal justice system. The Probation Service, An Garda Síochana, Crime Victims Helpline and Community advocates.

We provide voluntary, safe, non-threatening, facilitated restorative justice programmes for people who have been affected by crime.

Our work is mainly referred to us from the Courts before a formal sanction is imposed.

We have also worked on cases that have already been dealt with by the Courts in a *post sanction* context.

If you have been affected by crime and believe we may be able to assist in some way, please contact our offices. Your call will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Restorative Justice Services

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... Working in partnership...

The Courts

The Probation Service

Crime Victims Helpline

The Community

An Garda Síochana

**The Criminal Justice
(Victims of Crime) Act 2017**

**confirms the right of a victim of crime to
receive information on
Restorative Justice**

What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice is a way of responding to crime, which allows the people directly affected have a say in deciding how the harm caused might be repaired.

Restorative Justice believes that

- Crime hurts victims and their families
- Crime also affects the offender, their family and the wider community
- The victim's voice needs to be heard
- The offender should accept responsibility and make an effort to repair the harm caused

Victim / Offender Mediation

Victim / Offender Mediation provides a safe, non-threatening forum for victims to directly or indirectly communicate with an offender.

This model is particularly designed to meet the needs or concerns of the victim, while also increasing the offender's awareness of the impact of their behaviour on the victim.

Key Elements of Victim / Offender Mediation

The Court refers the case to RJS before final sanction is decided. The offender must have entered a plea of guilt or is accepting a finding of guilt by the court.

Victim and offender are contacted and separate contacts and meetings are held to discuss their interest, concerns, rationale and motivation.

If the appropriate conditions exist and both parties are agreeable, a mediated communication can take place. This can take place using verbal or written communications carried by our service **or** a meeting can be arranged between the victim and offender, facilitated by RJS Case Workers.

An offender may also be referred to a Reparation Panel to address issues of personal responsibility, affects of offending behaviour, and pro social choices into the future.

At the next Court date a report is provided by **RJS**, outlining the main points of any contacts, discussions, meetings, or agreed outcome with the Victim and / or any agreed actions arising from a meeting with a Reparation Panel.

The Court retains the final decision on sanction.

How can it help?

Victims ...

can tell their story, talk about the impact of the crime

seek apology and reparation from the offender

seek further information or raise issues of concern directly related to the offence and the offending behaviour

express their feelings and voice their anger and / or frustration

seek commitments from the offender on future behaviour or contact

Offenders ...

May be challenged about their behaviour by their victims and / or victim advocate

can provide victims with further information on issues relating to the offence

offer apology, pay compensation and / or undertake acts of reparation as agreed by the victim

give assurances and commitments to the victim with regard to future behaviour

demonstrate to their victim, the Court, their family and community their desire to make amends, desist from further offending.

are encouraged to make choices that will assist them make more informed decisions in the future.

may be asked to meet a Reparation Panel