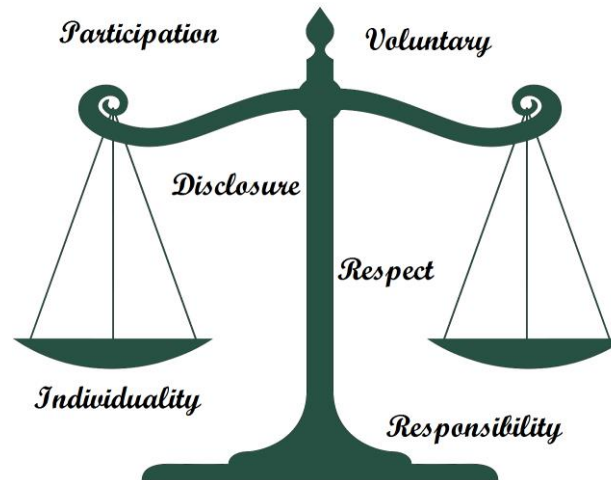


## Delivering Restorative Justice in the Probation Service

Restorative Justice interventions are provided through a number of pathways:

- In response to a request by a sentencing Court
- In working with offenders who are subject to court ordered supervision or who are currently serving a custodial sentence
- In response to victims who wish to engage in a mediated process where the offender is currently known to the Probation Service

Restorative Justice interventions can be delivered in partnership with Probation funded Community Based Organisations.



If you have any queries please contact the Restorative Justice and Victim Services Unit at:

[restorative@probation.ie](mailto:restorative@probation.ie)

01-8176511 01-8173684

01-8173600

Or visit our website at [www.probation.ie](http://www.probation.ie)  
(2018)

Our practice is informed and underpinned by the Victims Charter, Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act 2017 and by the Council of Europe Recommendation concerning RJ (October 2018)

## Restorative Justice and Victim Services Unit

Restorative Justice “means any scheme administered for the time being under which, with the consent of each of them, a victim and an offender or alleged offender engage with each other to resolve, with the assistance of an impartial third party, matters arising from the offence or alleged offence” *Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act 2017*

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## Restorative Justice and Victim Services Unit

Since the late 1990s, the Probation Service has formally recognised Restorative Justice as one distinct approach within an overall strategy of providing an effective response to crime. Reports from the National Commission on Restorative Justice (2009) and the Strategic Review of Penal Policy (2014) have supported the continuing and wider application of Restorative Justice in Probation practice. In 2018, following the enactment of the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act in late 2017, the Department of Justice and Equality approved the establishment of a dedicated Restorative Justice and Victim Services Unit in the Probation Service

This newly established Unit provides:

- Leadership and support for the consistent and integrated provision of a range of Restorative Justice models delivered in accordance with best practice guidelines.
- A central point of contact to ensure an effective response to requests and queries from victims. This may include a request for engagement in a Restorative Justice process

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*In the context of Probation work, Restorative Justice interventions are made post-conviction and as part of Court Assessment and Court Orders, including community and prison based sanctions*

### Principles of Restorative Justice Practice:

- The response to crime should repair, as much as possible, the harm suffered by the victim;
- The offender should take responsibility for the harm that has been caused;
- Restorative Justice can be considered as an appropriate response across a wide range of crimes;
- Information and support should be given to participants to enable them to make an informed and voluntary decision regarding engagement with a Restorative Justice process;
- Restorative Justice should only be used when it is appropriate to the needs of both the victim and the offender;
- Restorative Justice can be used to complement traditional Justice sanctions;
- Quality standards must inform practice;

01-8173600

## Restorative Justice Models:

### 1. Family/Restorative Conference;

A conference is a structured and facilitated meeting of the offender, the victim, their family members and community and statutory representatives. Through discussion and collaboration, the conference aims to agree a plan to enable the offender to make amends for the harm caused.

### 2. Offender Reparation Panel;

The ORP is comprised of representatives from the community and state organisations who undertake face-to-face meetings with adult offenders at the request of the Court. The panel develops a set of proposed actions that seek to repair the harm caused to the victim and reflect the offender's willingness to make amends.

### 3. Victim Offender Mediation;

VOM is a process that provides victims with the opportunity to meet the offender in a safe, controlled setting with a mediator who facilitates a discussion between the parties to address/repair the harm caused.

### 4. Bespoke Restorative Justice;

The bespoke model is a tailored approach that recognises the social context of offending. Through the creative use of relevant community resources, the offender is supported to participate in activities that highlight the impact of the harm caused and can allow for either direct or indirect reparation/closure for the victim.

*Each of these models make provision for direct or indirect dialogue between the offender and the victim. The preparation for and delivery of these models is facilitated by trained staff who will ensure that the process is fully compliant with the principles of neutrality, confidentiality, problem solving and self-determination and is wholly voluntary.*