

Essential Points of Restorative Justice Practices in Colorado

Written in partnership between the Colorado Coalition for Restorative Justice Practices (CCRJP) and the Colorado Restorative Justice Council

Purpose: This document highlights points that, when applied, lead to successful implementation and strengthened outcomes for Restorative Justice Practices and is offered as a support and guide for individuals, organizations, and other institutions involved in and offering Restorative Justice Practices (RJP) in Colorado to uphold restorative justice principles and best practices in all aspects of their work. While this document may be used to provide guidance for those engaged in restorative work, its purpose is meant to be supportive rather than evaluative.

Restorative Justice Practices include a wide range of practices and processes that are used in a variety of settings to build and sustain healthy relationships and communities, increase social capital, prevent and decrease harmful behavior, restore relationships, and address and repair harm from tension, conflict, offensive behavior, crime, and violations of human rights. Restorative Justice Practices take place in a variety of settings, and the focus may be on prevention, intervention, or repair of harm. Across this spectrum of processes and settings, five principles bind, define, and support Restorative Justice Practices: Respect, Relationship, Responsibility, Repair, and Reintegration (for more information see [5 Rs of Restorative Justice](#)).

Individuals, organizations, and other institutions involved in and offering Restorative Justice Practices in Colorado are encouraged to:

1. Provide high-quality training for practitioners, staff, volunteers, and stakeholders that prepares them to engage in and support Restorative Justice Practices in accordance with the best practices and standards endorsed by the RJ Council and the Colorado Coalition for Restorative Justice Practices (see [Colorado Standards of Practice](#)).
2. Build relationships with and engage stakeholders and participants in ways consistent with restorative justice principles and best practices that are trauma-informed and responsive to culture and needs.
3. Incorporate the 5 Rs of Restorative Justice into organizational structures, workplace environments, and other practice settings through the development and meaningful implementation of restorative policies, procedures, and practices.
4. Ensure to the extent possible that those implementing, administering, facilitating, and participating in Restorative Justice Practices reflect the community served.
5. Facilitate Restorative Justice Practices in ways that support the respect, inclusion, and autonomy of those involved, and in a manner based on the needs of participants rather than the needs, desires, or biases of facilitators.
6. Provide voluntary opportunities for active participation in Restorative Justice Practices to those involved, including but not limited to harmed parties, responsible parties, support people, and members of the community. Provide information and support for all parties to

make an active, informed choice whether or not to participate in the restorative justice process without pressure or coercion.

7. Offer to those harmed the option for a response that provides meaningful opportunities for choice, voice, and engagement, including opportunities to identify harm, state needs, and request repair.
8. Offer to those responsible for harm the option for a response that moves away from punishment and supports meaningful accountability, harm repair, personal development, and reintegration.
9. Ensure that practitioners are aware of how individual and institutional bias, cultural differences, and issues of equity can influence restorative practices and processes. Take steps to identify and address how issues of equity impact referrals, stakeholder engagement, access to services, restorative process design and facilitation, program operations, and outcomes.
10. Offer access to Restorative Justice Practices at multiple entry points, including settings within and beyond traditional systems of accountability, so that processes for preventing and addressing harm are in the hands of those most involved and affected.
11. Conduct ongoing data collection and analysis in order to evaluate and improve restorative outcomes for participants and stakeholders, provide program transparency and accountability, and support the advancement of Restorative Justice Practices in Colorado and elsewhere.