

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CONFERENCING

INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS

PRE-SENTENCING CONFERENCING



WHAT VICTIMS SHOULD KNOW

Your participation is entirely voluntary.

If you don't want to participate in the conference, you don't have to. You can withdraw from the process at any time, including during the conference.

Your safety is paramount.

The conference convenor will ensure that the conference is conducted in a safe and impartial manner. You will be seated near an exit should you wish to leave at any time. You will arrive after and leave before the offender.

You will be supported throughout the process.

A Victim Support Officer from Victims of Crime NT will support you throughout the process. You are also encouraged to bring along a support person to the conference.

You can choose to send a representative.

Participating in a conference is often a personally beneficial and restorative experience as a victim. However, coming face-to-face with your offender and talking about your experience can be confronting. If you would like to nominate someone you trust to attend the conference on your behalf, you can do this.

VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES

Victims of Crime NT (VoCNT) is committed to supporting victims throughout the process of restorative justice conferencing.

Victim Support Officers can also provide:

- crisis counselling
- referrals to additional services
- applications for financial assistance, where applicable
- assistance with preparation of documentation such as victim impact statements.

For more information about the support available to victims please contact:

Darwin Office
08 8941 0995

Alice Springs Office
08 8952 4466

Tennant Creek Office
0429 065 867

Freecall: 1800 670 242 www.victimsofcrime.org.au



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CONFERENCING PROCESS

Before the Conference

A Victim Support Officer will meet with you, together with the convenor, to help you prepare for the conference. They will help you frame your answers to the questions you will be asked in the conference about the harm that has been done and what you think the young person could do to repair this harm.

The convenor will meet several times with the young person to prepare them to meet you and any other victims of the incident. The convenor will ensure that the young person understands the process, is willing to discuss what happened, accepts responsibility for their actions and admits it was the wrong thing to do.

A significant amount of time and care is taken to prepare for a conference. The convenor will meet with other people directly impacted by the young person's behaviour, such as their family or community members, to understand the impact of behaviour on them and get their thoughts on what can be done to repair the harm caused.

During the Conference

The conference will take place in an informal setting such as a community hall. Where possible, all participants will sit in a circle, next to their support people.

The convenor leads the conference using a script which asks exactly what happened, what harm was caused and how that harm can be repaired. You will have the chance to speak openly, and directly to the young person, about how the crime has affected you and those around you.

You will be asked for input on ways the young person can make amends for their actions. The young person will be given the opportunity to devise a plan that responds to your needs and aims to repair the harm they have done,

You will be asked to sign the outcome plan to show you consider it appropriate.

After the Conference

After the conference, the convenor is required to submit a report to the Court detailing the extent to which the young person engaged in the process, took responsibility for their behaviour and participated in repairing the harm caused. It will also outline the impacts on you and your sentiments toward the young person and their outcome plan.

The report details the agreements made as part of the conference outcome plan and the young person's progress towards achieving those outcomes. The Judge will take the report into account when determining the appropriate sentence for the young person. The Victim Support Officer will continue to be available to support you if needed and will keep you up to date on the court outcome and the young person's progress if you choose.

You will be asked to complete a survey questionnaire about your experience of the conference process. This helps our service improve the experience of victims in the future.