
Housing & Residential Services
Judicial Affairs

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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative Justice is used when residents who violate University and/or Housing policy admit wrongdoing. We bring together offenders, harmed parties, supporters of offenders, supporters of harmed parties and affected community members to have a discussion (called a "conference" or "circle"). All parties present, including the offender, develop and sign a contract involving specific actions the offender will take to repair the harm done to relationships and to the community by her or his actions.

In general, Restorative Justice gives those affected; including the offender, a voice in the justice process, focuses on repairing the harm, reduces the recidivism rate and builds community.

What is the Restorative Justice process all about?

The Restorative Justice process brings together, in a safe environment, the offender and the people harmed or affected by the offender's actions. Also included in the conference, or "circle," are trained Restorative Justice facilitator and co-facilitator, family and/or friends of the offender and the harmed party or parties.

During the conference, the offender accepts responsibility and talks about what happened; the harmed and affected parties describe how they have been affected; and all parties prepare a "harm-repairing" contract.

Why use Restorative Justice when established judicial systems already exist on campus?

When there are questions about whether University and/or Housing policy has been violated, existing campus judicial processes allow for an investigation to take place. These processes are relatively efficient and, when offenders admit to wrongdoing, require little or no investigation. However, unlike the process used by the Restorative Justice program, existing judicial processes do not bring offenders, harmed parties and affected community members together for a face-to-face conversation. And, rather than focusing solely on the policy violation, the Restorative Justice approach allows participants to focus on understanding the harm that has occurred to relationships and to the community and to decide how to best repair it.

If you are you the offender:

- You can accept responsibility for your actions and, by doing so; restore your reputation in the campus community.
- You can help create a plan to repair the harm you've done to people and/or property.
- You can repair damaged relationships.
- If you comply with all phases of the process, you may be able to clear your judicial record pertaining to the incident.

If you are you a harmed party or an affected community member:

- You have the opportunity to tell the offender, in a safe environment, how his or her actions affected you.
- You can play an active role in deciding how the offender will repair the harm he or she has done, which will help the offender make better choices in the future.

If you are a friend or family member of either the offender or the harmed party:

- You can tell how you were affected and how you saw your loved one affected.
- You can help others see "the whole person", while supporting the offender through what can be an emotionally challenging process.