

What is Restorative Justice (RJ)?

In the face of conflict and crime, RJ offers a non-adversarial, non-retributive approach to justice that emphasizes healing for 'victims', meaningful accountability for those who have caused harm, and the involvement of citizens in creating healthier, safer communities.

What does Restorative Justice offer?

- An alternative to court
- An opportunity for the 'victim' to be heard by the 'offender', have a say in how harm should be repaired, and gain healing and closure
- An opportunity for the 'offender' to face the consequences of their actions, recognize how they have affected others and repair the harm that has been done
- A way for all parties to receive support from family, friends and colleagues
- A coordinated approach between the community, justice system, police, schools, and agencies
- Information, resources and support to address root causes of conflict and crime
- Flexibility and sensitivity to provide services in ways that promote cultural safety for Indigenous participants

"I think the (RJ)PSC is a great tool. The people involved were very supportive and non-judgmental. I very much appreciate the second chance that was given to me."

• **Program Participant**

Our Core Services

Four types of restorative processes are available to all residents, agencies and businesses of the Sunshine Coast. These include:

Community Justice Forums/Circles

A Community Justice Forum is a process in which all parties affected by a criminal offence/incident voluntarily participate in a circle with the guidance of two RCMP-trained facilitators. They discuss the incident, uncover impacts and develop an agreement to repair the harm.

Victim Offender Conferences

The VOC process is in-depth, often taking a longer period of time, and requiring additional training and resources. Facilitators meet with victims and offenders separately when there is not comfort to meet face to face, sharing messages and insights as both parties work towards an agreement to repair the harm.

Community Accountability Panels

A Community Accountability Panel is used in cases where a crime impacts the community at large and the victim is not willing or able to participate directly but supports a restorative approach. Panel members support offenders in repairing the harm caused by their actions.

Peacemaking Dialogue Circles

A Peacemaking Dialogue Circle is a carefully constructed process of communication, designed to create a safe space for all voices. Through structured elements, participant interaction is organized for maximum understanding, empowerment and connection, while maintaining a sense of positive possibilities to resolve differences.

How can I access RJPS Services?

It's easy to make a referral! We accept cases by phone, email, or through our online contact form. Referrals come from:

- RCMP, and other justice agencies
- Partner restorative justice programs
- Schools in SD 46
- Communities and businesses
- Self-referrals
- People who have experienced harm, seeking a restorative approach

Who is eligible for Referral?

- Cases where the 'offender' understands and regrets the harm done, and is willing to take responsibility for their actions
- First-time 'offenders' (youth or adult)
- People with multiple offenses on a case by case basis
- Category 3 and 4 offences - and some Category 2 offences
- 'Victims' with specific issues, questions and commitment to a restorative approach
- Neighbourhood and community disputes: not necessarily criminal, but could escalate without intervention

How We Work

First, a trained team meets with each party to explain the options, answer questions, and determine which RJ Process fits. All our work is confidential and we only convene once all parties voluntarily agree to participate. The team follows up on all cases to ensure resolution agreements are fulfilled.

About RJPSC

The Restorative Justice Program of the Sunshine Coast is dedicated to offering an alternative method of justice to the traditional court system by promoting the use of restorative practices in dealing with minor offences. Our goal is to maximize social justice for victims, offenders and the community and to minimize further harm caused by the offending behaviour. Results show that offenders participating in restorative practices are less likely to re-offend, building stronger, safer communities.

RJPSC - formerly known as the Community Justice Program of the Sunshine Coast - began in 1998 when RCMP Corporal M. Frizzell recruited volunteers from the community and provided training in Community Justice Forum (CJF) facilitation. By 2004 the Restorative Justice Program incorporated as a non-profit society. Today the program is run by a volunteer Board of Directors that includes representatives from the RCMP, School District No. 46 and the wider community. The program serves the entire Sunshine Coast from Port Mellon to Egmont.

"I'm so glad the Restorative Justice option was available for my son. This was much more of a learning experience for him."

• **Sunshine Coast Parent**

How you can get Involved:

- Become a Member
- Use RJ in your own life
- Attend our AGM and public events
- Volunteer with us
- Participate in a training course
- Join our Board of Directors
- Become a Facilitator or Mentor
- Donate
- Share our work with family & friends

Thank you to our local partners:

- District of Sechelt
- Open Door Group – Sechelt and Gibsons
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- School District #46
- shíshálh Nation and SIGD
- Sunshine Coast Credit Union
- Sunshine Coast Regional District
- The Province of British Columbia
- Town of Gibsons



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Restorative Justice Program of the Sunshine Coast



Healing Harms and Restoring Relationships in our Community

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We are honoured to be operating within the shíshálh Homelands and unceded territory of the Squamish Nation