

# Rural Red Deer Restorative Justice

## Restorative Justice Referrals – Information for RCMP

### What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice is a **voluntary, non-adversarial approach** to addressing crime and conflict. It brings together the person who caused harm, the person harmed, and members of the community to:

- Acknowledge what happened
- Understand the impacts
- Determine how to repair the harm and move forward

This process is led by trained, neutral facilitators and results in a written agreement based on accountability, healing, and prevention.

### Why Refer to Restorative Justice?

- **Supports victims** by giving them voice, choice and meaningful outcomes
- **Holds individuals accountable** in a constructive, non-punitive way
- **Reduces reoffending** by addressing root causes
- **Reduces court burden** through diversion or alternative measures
- **Addresses the unique needs of rural youth**
- **Supports police discretion** and **aligns with the YCJA Section 6 & 10** for youth referrals
- **Backed by Alberta Justice** under the Restorative Justice Policy Framework

### How to Refer

1. Complete the referral form (included in this package, or available on our website)
2. Email it securely to: **ed@rrdrestorativejustice.ca**
3. Our team will follow up within 1 business day

## Referral Criteria

- **Eligible offences** may include theft under \$5,000, mischief, minor assault, uttering threats, property damage, first-time offences, etc.

- **Ages 12 to 25** for youth referral
- **Participants must:**
  - Take responsibility for their actions
  - Agree to participate voluntarily
  - Not pose a risk to others (e.g., no ongoing domestic violence)
- **We do not currently accept** domestic violence or sexual assault referrals

*Note: Each referral is screened for suitability and safety.*

Choose **Restorative Justice** when:

- A **victim or person harmed** is involved and open to dialogue
- There's a **need to repair relationships or community trust**
- The youth is **willing to take meaningful responsibility**
- The situation calls for **personalized accountability and healing**
- **A youth needs to be heard**

## When to Prioritize a Restorative Justice Referral (vs. Youth Justice Committee)

### 1. Victim-Centered Needs Are Present

- RJ provides a **structured, facilitated dialogue** between the youth and the victim (if willing).
- Prioritize RJ when the **victim wants a voice**, seeks **answers or apology**, or has **unresolved emotional impacts**.
- RJ supports **healing and repair** more directly than a typical YJC process.
- *Example: A youth damaged a neighbor's property and the neighbor wants to express the impact and ask questions directly.*

### 2. The Offence Caused Personal Harm or Relationship Damage

- RJ is better suited when there's been **harm to a person** or a **community relationship** that needs restoration.
- Use RJ when the incident has **relational complexity**—such as harm within schools, families, or peer groups.
- *Example: A fight between classmates that fractured trust.*

### 3. Youth Readiness for Meaningful Accountability

- RJ goes beyond apology letters and community service—it asks youth to **understand their impact** and **participate in a dialogue**.
- Refer to RJ when the youth is **motivated to take responsibility** and could **benefit from deeper reflection**.
- *Example: A youth shows remorse and is open to discussing what led to the offence and what they can do to make things right.*

#### 4. Community Impact Is Significant

- If the offence impacted **a school, club, team, or rural community**, RJ allows for the **community voice** to be included.
- RJ processes can engage schools or community reps as part of healing
- *Example: Vandalism of a local rec centre or school facility.*

#### 5. Complex Needs or Preventative Opportunities

- RJ allows for a more **individualized plan** of support and accountability.
- Refer when the youth's behaviour may be linked to **trauma, unmet needs, or peer pressure**, and a conversation could open doors to prevention.
- *Example: A youth caught shoplifting who has no support system and is struggling with belonging.*