

County of Monterey
Template for Boards, Committees and Commissions (BCC) Annual Report
to the Board of Supervisors

The purposes of an Annual Report are to:

1) Bridge the gaps between the organizations who are doing work on behalf of the residents of our County and the Board of Supervisors (BoS) who are responsible for making the policy decisions. These reports will serve as an annual opportunity for organizations to advise and inform the BoS, and a chance for the BoS to provide direction to the organizations.

2) Increase the transparency and accountability of County Government. These reports will provide organizations with an annual opportunity for self reflection, celebration of accomplishments, and planning for the future. Sharing this annual self-report with the public will increase awareness and understanding about the different functions of County Government.

This form is intended to be used as a template to help provide the priority categories of information to be reviewed by the Board of Supervisors. The annual report is considered a collective overview through the Boards, Committees and Commissions (BCC) group consensus prior to identifying goals and accomplishments achieved. This annual report template serves as a guide to assist with synthesizing the annual update within five to ten (5-10) pages maximum. Please indicate whether another format and/or supplemental supporting documents are necessary.

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Name of Organization (and any AKA): Community Restorative Justice Commission

Mailing address: C/O County of Monterey Probation Department

Officers (Name and Title): _____

Type of Organization:

Board

Commission

Council

Collaborative

Subject to Maddy Act

Subject to Brown Act

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Department: Probation Department

2012 Annual Report



Monterey County

Community Restorative Justice Commission

2012 Annual Report

to the Board of Supervisors

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CRJC'S HISTORY, PURPOSE and MISSION:

The Community Restorative Justice Commission (CRJC) was established by the Monterey County Board of Supervisors by resolution 00-364 at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 26, 2000.

The Community Restorative Justice Commission strives to balance the legitimate needs of the victims, community and offenders. The commission sets policy and makes recommendations for restorative justice programs. These successful programs enhance community protection and develop empathy and competency in the offender. They also direct accountability of the offender to the victim and victimized community moving toward restoration and healing.

The Community Restorative Justice Commission oversees community education on restorative justice issues and reviews and evaluates restorative justice needs, services, facilities and special concerns. In addition, the commission oversees the partnerships between probation, law enforcement, the judiciary and Restorative Justice Partners, Inc. (RJP), the community based non-profit corporation established to implement restorative justice in Monterey County.

The Commission meets on the third Monday of every month at 12:00 PM in the Monterey Room at the Government Building.

The Commission consists of 19 members representing Monterey County:

5 Victim Representatives (one for each Supervisorial district)

Probation Department

District Attorney's Office

Public Defender

Board of Supervisors

School District Superintendent

Business Community

Faith Community

Non-Profit

Student

Chief of Police

State Corrections

Local Corrections

Person w/personal experience in Criminal Justice system

Mayor

Problems, needs or issues that the Commission addresses and how the work addresses the underlying or root causes of the problem:

Restorative justice recognizes the need to keep the community safe from violence and harm through strategies that build relationships and empower the community to take responsibility for the well-being of its members. Restorative justice seeks to build the pro-social skills of those who have harmed others, addressing the underlying factors that lead a young person to engage in delinquent behavior, and building on their strengths. Restorative justice strategies provide opportunities for victims to be heard, and for offenders to be held accountable and enable them to repair the harm they have caused.



Current Programs and Activities:

Restorative Justice Partners, Inc. (RJP) is a 501(c) 3 operating in Monterey County since 1987 to promote the use of restorative justice principles and practices throughout the community. The following programs are currently run by RJP:

1) Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) is a mediation process that provides victims the opportunity to meet the offender in a safe and structured setting, with the goal of holding the offender directly accountable for their behavior and giving the victim an opportunity to be heard. Last year, RJP served 120 juvenile offenders and their victims. An independent evaluation of VORP over the past two years has shown a reduction in recidivism of 84% and 89% respectively for participants one year after program entry. These percentages are consistent to the evaluation results of VORP in the previous six years.

2) The Merchant Accountability Panel (MAP) is an innovative application of the VORP process which focuses directly on the crime of juvenile shoplifting. Young shoplifters are held accountable in a highly successful mediation process that brings groups of 4-6 youth together to face the merchant representatives in a restorative, non-threatening venue. MAP serves approximately 144 offenders and their parents or guardians annually.



The Merchant Accountability Panel meeting at Northridge Mall.

3) Restorative Justice in the Schools is a systemic discipline reform program that uses restorative justice principles to replace zero-tolerance policies used by many schools. Zero-tolerance policies have criminalized minor infractions of school rules leading to a troubling national trend wherein children are funneled out of public schools into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. The program provides administration, faculty, and students the tools to effectively solve problems and resolve conflicts; factors that have been shown to reduce criminality and the escalation of violence. The program is a collaborative effort between the administration, teachers, peer mentors, and student body. RJP began the schools program in 2009. Since that time, approximately 6,118 students, teachers, and administrators have been touched by the program. During

academic year 2011-12, 69 principals and teachers from 11 local schools attended the 30 hour training program.



Peer mediators offer alternatives to zero tolerance, while restoring relationships and repairing harm.

4) Re-integration Circles (Circles) Program is a re-entry program that brings together family members and offenders who are returning to their families and community after a period of incarceration. The program builds on the strengths of the offender and family, provides opportunities for family reconciliation, and supports the family in developing constructive communication skills and mutual agreements. The offender and stakeholders develop a detailed plan for successful re-entry. This program began operating in 2012 in response to the County of Monterey's AB109 prison realignment plan. Support for offenders reentering the community is expected to prevent and/or reduce recidivism.



2012 Reintegration Circles Training

5) Victim Impact Program (VIP). The VIP program helps juvenile offenders become more aware of the impact that crime has on victims. The program focuses on informing offenders of the long term harm they have caused the victims, their families, and the community. Through this process, offenders take responsibility for their actions and begin to develop empathy, and make important attitudinal changes. Approximately 240 youth are served on an annual basis at the Monterey County Youth Center and Juvenile Hall.

In order to service the RJP programs, RJP has trained over 100 community volunteers during the past year.

Community Restorative Justice Constituents:

Our services are open to all races, ages, economic classes, and geographical sections of Monterey County. However, the demographic characteristics of RJP participants to date have been predominantly youth under 18 years of age (77%), Hispanic (71%), and Salinas and South County residents (79%).

The Commission's constituency also includes local law enforcement agencies that make referrals to RJP's programs as a diversionary step to keep juveniles from detention; city police departments and business owners requesting assistance from RJP in juvenile shoplifting and other criminal activity; school administrators looking to RJP to develop programs in the schools to bring respect and more effective disciplinary alternatives to the classroom and to quell violence there; and parents, churches, civic clubs, and other community leaders, looking to the Commission for answers to the violence in our county.

The Commission's constituents are actively involved and benefit in many ways. After sitting on the Commission, some Commissioners choose to be trained as volunteers; some join the RJP board of directors. The benefits received are deeply personal and life changing. Juvenile offenders have an opportunity to avoid the experience of a Juvenile Hall sentence and of becoming Wards of the Court. Instead, they can self-correct, make things right, pay restitution, and move forward with their lives. Adult victims have the opportunity to be heard and to begin their personal healing from the crime, to have peace of mind, and the confidence in the justice system.



Victim Offender Reconciliation Program trained volunteer's cohort.

CRJC GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

GOALS

- Goals set by CRJC the previous year:

The Commission hosted a retreat jointly with the Restorative Justice Partners in August 2011. At the retreat three goals were identified. Committees were formed to work on each of these specific goals.

- 1) Moving the mediation process from strictly juvenile to include adult offenders.
- 2) Starting programs responsive to the AB 109 Realignment.
- 3) Education and marketing of Restorative Justice to the larger community.

- The long term strategic vision for CRJC:

To strengthen and continue to support the current restorative justice programs throughout the county within the community and the justice system while engaging the community in shaping solutions and policies.

In accordance with our bylaws, the Community Restorative Justice Commission oversees and supports community education on restorative justice issues and reviews and evaluates restorative justice needs, services, facilities and special concerns. In addition, the Commission oversees and supports the partnerships between probation, law enforcement, the judiciary and Restorative Justice Partners, Inc. (RJP), the community based non-profit corporation established to implement restorative justice in Monterey County.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Community Restorative Justice Commission's major accomplishments this past year include:

- 1) Reintegration Circles

Overcrowding in California's prisons led to the recent passage of AB109 in 2011, which reduces prison populations by shifting responsibility for certain people convicted of non-serious, non-sex, non-violent offenses from state prison and parole to county jails and probation. This realignment poses significant challenges to Monterey County. Restorative justice programming was identified in the County of Monterey Public Safety Realignment & Post Release Community Supervision plan prepared in September 2011 as an important strategy to support the successful re-entry of offenders into the community and reduce the number of offenders that return to prison or county jail. In response to AB109, RJP contracted with Lorenn Walker, internationally known leader in the reintegration circles and "solution focused brief therapy" fields, to train 29 local community leaders in Reintegration Circles. The training was held March, 2012, at Hartnell College. Since that time, advanced trainings have been held, and cases have been referred by the Monterey County Probation Department staff.

2) Restorative Justice in the Schools

Approximately 69 administrators, teachers, and support staff were trained in "Discipline That Restores" during the academic year 2011-12. Peer mediation trainings were held at Laurel Wood School, with peer mediation trainings at Natividad School this current academic year. The effectiveness of RJP's restorative justice programs in the schools received recognition by the Salinas City Elementary School District when the District itself adopted a resolution officially launching a Restorative Justice Initiative to be implemented in June 2011. RJP is working with Human Impact Partners to collect data from the schools regarding suspension, truancy, and expulsion rates, providing a base line for future data collection, justifying the program as evidenced based.

3) Proclamation by the City of Marina about Restorative Justice.

At the request of Councilmember Frank O'Connell, the City of Marina voted unanimously to proclaim the first week of October, 2012 as Restorative Justice Week. A formal presentation of the resolution was made at both a City Council Meeting and a Community Town Hall meeting.

4) All positions in the commission are represented.

- Three primary goals for the upcoming year:

The Commission/RJP will continue working on the goals that were identified at the August 2011 retreat.

- 1) Moving the mediation process from strictly juvenile to include adult offenders.
- 2) Starting programs responsive to the AB 109 Realignment.
- 3) Education and marketing of restorative justice to the larger community, especially in schools.

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• *"Very grateful for the opportunity to learn a positive outcome from a result of her negative behavior....I'm glad she's able to share about the experience and learn from her mistakes and not do it again."* –Parent of a Merchant Accountability Program (MAP) Participant
•
• *"In the MAP program, I felt very relieved that I had the opportunity to learn from my mistake and make things right. I have realized I was not thinking of others. I welcome the MAP program for the great opportunity."* –MAP Participant
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POLICY ISSUES:

- **Policy issues that the Community Restorative Justice Commission would like the Board of Supervisors to consider and/or be aware of:**

Approach to Treating People with Respect and Humanity – Restorative Justice Resolution

Restorative justice principles can be considered as a standard framework for interactions with and within organization and agencies. The Community Restorative Justice Commission respectfully recommends that the Board of Supervisors consider adopting a resolution in support of restorative justice principles and encourage each County department and employee to consider the ways in which they may be able to implement these principles in their own interactions with colleagues and the public. The Commission will work to bring a sample resolution, similar to the one recently adopted by the City of Marina, for consideration by the Board of Supervisors in the coming year.

Restorative Justice in the Schools - Legislative Advocacy and Local Support

The Board of Supervisors might consider including Restorative Justice as a legislative priority, directing state and federal lobbyists to advocate for funding and other policy to support the implementation of programming, such as Restorative Justice in the Schools.

We respectfully ask the Board of Supervisors to consider opportunities to support the implementation of Restorative Justice in the Schools, possibly in partnership with Behavioral Health grants, participation in the Children’s Council, participation in the Community Alliance for Safety and Peace, or as part of the gang violence prevention strategic plan that is being developed.

Community Corrections Partnership – Implementation of AB 109

The Community Restorative Justice Commission respectfully recommends that the Board of Supervisors support and encourage the Community Corrections Partnership to implement restorative justice programs. Evidence indicates that incorporating restorative justice practices into the justice system has the potential to significantly reduce recidivism, reduce violence in locked facilities, and change the culture of the entire justice system. It is critical that the Board of Supervisors work with local Justice partners to develop performance outcomes based on best practices that can be tracked for measures of success and improvement. Future funding can then be directed towards the most successful and cost effective strategies.

FISCAL SUMMARY:

- **Total annual budget:**

The Restorative Justice Commission does not have any fiscal responsibilities.

The non-profit Restorative Justice Partners, Inc. has an annual budget of \$175,245

INCOME:

Donations	\$4,000
Government Grants (JJCPA)	\$43,745
Foundation Grants	\$102,000
Events	\$500
United Way	\$25,000
Total Income:	\$175,245

EXPENSES:

Salaries, Payroll, and Benefits	\$123,625
General Expenses	\$50,620
Total Expenses:	\$174,245

- **The cost benefits experienced by the County as a result of the work of the Community Restorative Justice Commission:**

In the current criminal justice system, the needs of victims as well as offenders are not always fully met. Some victims and their families feel their need for justice has not been achieved. Some offenders do not get the assistance they need to fully understand and take responsibility for the impact their crimes have on victims and the community. Programs that implement restorative justice practices can bring both victims and offenders closer to a sense that justice has been accomplished.

According to the Pew Center on the States, in 2008, one in 100 American adults was behind bars. A second Pew study conducted in 2009 revealed that one in 31 adults in the United States was either incarcerated or on probation or parole. The total state's spending on corrections is now approximately \$52 billion. This figure has grown in the last two decades by over 370%. The majority of the cost of corrections is spent on prisons.¹

Recidivism is high among offenders. According to the State of California's *Strategic Growth Plan* published in 2009 by the Governor's Office, seven out of ten prisoners (70%) in California return to jail or prison.² California has the highest recidivism rate in

¹ "State of Recidivism of America's Prisons", The Pew Center on the States,, April 2011

http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/Pew_State_of_Recidivism.pdf. Retrieved 2012-02-15.

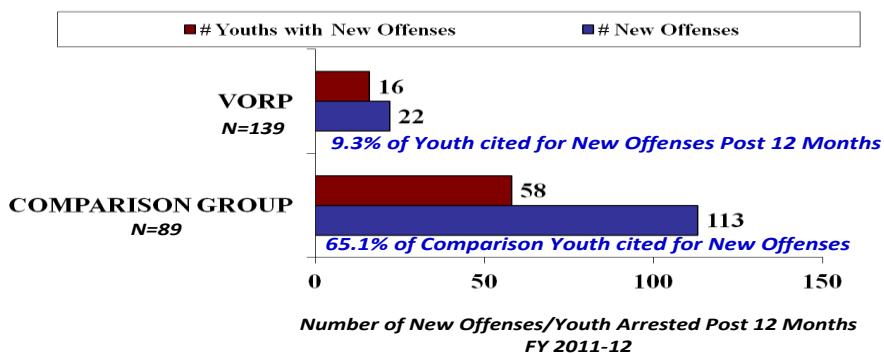
² "Strategic Growth Plan". Gov.ca.gov. <http://gov.ca.gov/index.php?/issue/sgp-backpage/sgp-prison-reform>. Retrieved 2009-09-14

the nation. This high recidivism rate has contributed greatly to the overcrowding of jails and prisons throughout.

Statistics show that 90.7% of kids who go thru the VORP process do not re-offend (see graph below). It costs \$220 for a minor to complete a VORP program versus incarceration of a minor at the Department of Juvenile Justice at a cost of \$179,400 annually.

ARRESTS VORP

VORP: Number of New Arrests and Youth with New Arrests Post 12 mo Program Entry
Comparison: Number of New* Arrests and Youth with New Arrests Post 12 mo Intake*



* Does not include probation violations. Comparison groups include youth with similar offenses and ages that have not participated in the program. Percentages rounded to one decimal.

California law enforcement and the criminal justice system constitute a significant portion of our state budget. When compared to California, Salinas has a crime rate that is higher than 84% of cities and towns of all sizes in California.³ The chances of being a victim of either violent or property crime in Salinas is 1 in 25.

The Pew Center study found two primary variables in recidivism which seem to be present in virtually all past and current studies: younger prisoners and those with longer records were more likely to be rearrested; and post-prison recidivism was strongly related to arrest history. They also found that the largest reductions in recidivism are realized when evidence based programs and practices are implemented in the prisons and govern the supervision of probationers and parolees in the community. The Pew Center findings highlight the importance of efforts to keep young people from entering the criminal justice system and intervention efforts to reduce recidivism and support the re-entry of those coming out of prison. RJP's programs are specifically designed to keep young people from entering or returning to the criminal justice system and support the transition of offenders from prison to the community.