



Neighborhood Court

Description of the Panelist's Duties and Qualifications.

The Yolo County District Attorney's Office is seeking community volunteers for the position of Panelist in the new Neighborhood Court diversion program.

The Neighborhood Court Panelist plays a very important role in the program. A Panelist represents the community's needs, interests, and perspectives with respect to the crime committed. A Panelist agrees to meet, along with other panelists, to speak directly with the offender in a face-to-face conference facilitated by a trained, neutral mediator. During the conference, panelists 1) name the harms the community experiences as a result of the crime, 2) ask questions of the offender to understand the circumstances around the crime, and 3) and decide together with the offender the steps that are necessary to make the harm right (as much as possible). On any given case three (3) Panelists (and never less than two) will, together, represent the community voice. This face-to-face dialogue is designed to encourage accountability on the part of the offender and to arrive at the steps necessary to remedy the situation as fully as possible.

All Panelists will receive training in all aspects of the Neighborhood Court program, including how a conference is run, what kinds of questions to ask the offender, how to name the harms done for crimes, and the array of options open for Panelists to consider with the offender to make things right. We are looking for a diverse pool of community representatives, with members from different segments of the community (e.g., downtown business, residential neighborhoods, students, etc.). Important qualities for applicants include the ability to work with others to solve problems, the willingness to learn how to apply restorative justice concepts to solve problems and familiarity with the community and culture of their neighborhoods.

All Panelists will undergo a Livescan criminal history background review and complete a confidentiality agreement designed to protect the integrity of the Neighborhood Court hearing participants and process. Applicants cannot have any felony convictions or recent misdemeanor convictions. Applications are available online at www.yoloda.org. You can email neighborhoodcourt@yolocounty.org or call (530) 681-6323 for additional information.