



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Yolo County District Attorney Restorative Justice Partnership Seeks Volunteers
Multiple Training Sessions Offered**

(Woodland, CA) – May 17, 2024 – The Yolo County District Attorney’s Restorative Justice Partnership (RJP) Program is seeking community volunteers to participate in a Spring Community Panelist Training course with sessions offered virtually and in-person from May 21st through June 8th, 2024.

RJP (formerly Neighborhood Court), has been in operation since June of 2013, and is an innovative restorative justice diversion program operated by the Yolo County District Attorney’s Office. RJP also includes the RJP Case Managed (RJP-CM) program, which is geared towards justice-involved people who are experiencing challenges due to mental health and addiction issues.

RJP conferences are staffed by local community volunteers who facilitate and hear criminal cases and use the principles of restorative justice to develop agreements aimed at providing individualized outcomes. This process provides a voice for members of the community, and those affected by crimes, to express how they have been harmed and what they need to make things right.

These conferences function best by involving a diverse group of volunteers who represent their local communities. Agreements created through this process are designed to educate and address underlying issues affecting

participants, while also emphasizing acceptance of responsibility by encouraging actions that focus on reparation of harms to the community and any direct victims, as well as self-reflection.

Through their input, volunteers make a real difference in the lives of justice-involved individuals. A successful program graduate shared the positive impact RJP had on their life: “It was a great experience. The panel was welcoming, warm, and non-judgmental. I felt safe to share my story and enjoyed being a part of the conversation on what would be best for me to not repeat the same mistakes.”

RJP volunteers must complete a 3-part training covering the basic principles of restorative justice, the three-step Restorative Justice Partnership conference process, and a discussion on the role of empathy in traditional and restorative justice practices. The RJP panelist training course is a prerequisite for service in any of the DA’s restorative justice programs. Interested local community members are encouraged to apply online at <https://btrr.im/by4if> and attend a one-hour virtual pre-training orientation session prior to training. For additional information, please email program director Nicole Kirkaldy at Nicole.Kirkaldy@yolocounty.org

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