

# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE COMMUNITY COURT- AVONDALE



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TIMOTHY EVANS – CHIEF JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

BEATRIZ SANTIAGO – PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE AVONDALE RJCC

JAMAL JACKSON – ASSISTANT STATE'S ATTORNEY

MELANIE NUBY – PUBLIC DEFENDER

MARGARET KULUJIAN – COURT COORDINATOR

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“Welcome to the Restorative Justice Community Court, where healing is the goal rather than punishment, and the quest for justice becomes a collective effort.”

Honorable Timothy C. Evans, Chief Judge



# WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

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- Restorative Justice is a philosophy that creates responses to conflicts and harm
- Restorative Justice is healing not hurting
- Restorative Justice is a response to crime that is less concerned about punishment and more concerned with participant behavior change and better results for the community



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## TRADITIONAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- What laws have been broken?
- Who did it?
- What does the offender deserve?

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

- What happened?
- Who was hurt?
- What can be done to heal and repair the harm?



# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE COMMUNITY COURTS

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- Restorative Justice Community Courts are community-based criminal courts that resolve non-violent cases committed by young individuals.
- Restorative Justice Community Courts are the first courts of their kind in Cook County to adopt peace circles as the resolution process for criminal cases for adults.
- In addition to resolving cases, Restorative Justice Courts are committed to helping their participants with finding jobs, education, transportation, and other needs that they might have to succeed in life and avoid falling back into the court system.

# ELIGIBILITY

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- Must be 18 to 26 years old
- Have been charged with a nonviolent felony or misdemeanor
- Live, work, or worship in one of the neighborhoods which has a community court
- Have a non-violent criminal history
- Accept responsibility for the harm caused

❖ Note: victim must agree to participate in the process

# GOALS OF THE PEACE CIRCLE

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- Healing relationships
- Giving victims a voice
- Holding participants accountable
- Determining what is needed to repair the harm from crime to the community
- Empowering the community to heal its issues
- Restoring and transforming RJCC participants
- Help to determine a path to productive adulthood
- Create a Repair of Harm Agreement (ROHA)
- Confidentiality – whatever is shared in the peace circle remains within the circle.

# THE REPAIR OF HARM AGREEMENT (ROHA)

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- The Repair of Harm Agreement is an agreement by all members of the circle that delineates the steps necessary to repair harm caused by crime the RJCC participant committed. The ROHA reflects the consensus decision arrived upon during the circle.



# METHODS TO REPAIR THE HARM MAY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

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- An apology (oral or written) to those affected by harmful actions
- Reflection letter
- Restitution to victims or the community
- Community engagement hours

# METHODS TO CREATE A PATH TO PRODUCTIVE ADULTHOOD MAY INCLUDE:

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- Participation in educational programs
- Completing educational goals
- Participation in counseling or therapy sessions
- Addressing substance use issues
- Parenting classes
- Obtaining a part-time or full time job
- Obtaining an ID or Driver's License

# WHAT IS REQUIRED OF THE RJCC PARTICIPANT?

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- Be willing to accept responsibility for the harm caused
- Actively participate in all RJCC processes including pre-circle work and peace circle meetings
- Appear in the court meetings and meetings with case managers as scheduled
- Follow all of the requirements of the Repair of Harm Agreement
- Complete all of the requirements of the Repair of Harm Agreement created in the peace circle

# DEFERRED PROSECUTION

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- Allows offenders a chance to avoid a Felony Conviction
- Non-violent offenders only
- Victim must agree
- Misdemeanor & Felony offenders included
- Restitution must be fully repaid
- One time only offer
- Offer made anytime in criminal process pre-plea
- Charges are dismissed upon successful completion
- Expungeable



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT

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- Community events, meetings, and open houses
- Partnering with local elected officials, churches, organizations, community groups, neighborhood associations, chambers of commerce
- Being part of community events, church festivals, back to school fairs, and community meetings
- Cooperating with local social and family service organizations
- Inviting community members to the court and to RJCC peace circles