

## KEY STEPS

### Referral

Referrals for Victim Offender meetings (VOM) come through the Diversion Program of Skagit County's Youth and Family Services.

### Initial Meetings

The VOM facilitator meets privately with the offender and their parents to explain the VOM process.

The VOM facilitator meets privately with crime victims who have indicated an interest in VOM. Information is provided regarding the process and the victim has the opportunity to share their experience and ask questions. Crime victims can then choose if they wish to participate.

On the basis of these two meetings, the DRC determines whether the case is appropriate for a face-to-face meeting.

### Training for Offenders

The offender participates in a class designed to help them think through their actions and the consequences.

### Victim Offender Meeting

The victim and offender each discuss what happened, why it happened and how it has impacted their lives. There is an opportunity for each person to respond to the other and to ask important questions. The meeting then focuses on how the offender needs to make amends: to what degree can harms be repaired or made right. If appropriate a written agreement is drafted and signed.

### Follow-up

A report and any written agreements will be passed along to the Probation Officer for follow-up.

*Our trained facilitators guide the participants through the established stages of the Victim Offender Meeting. They have the responsibility to ensure that each person is treated respectfully, given ample opportunity to ask questions, share information and create a plan that addresses the harms done.*



WESTERN WASHINGTON

## Dispute Resolution Center

of Snohomish, Island and Skagit Counties

Mount Vernon Mailing Address:

1932 E College Way, Suite B

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

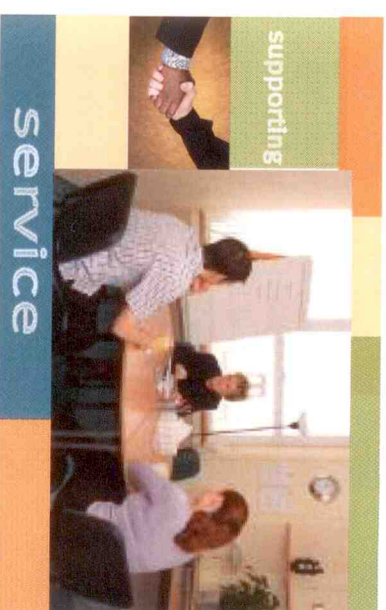
### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Dispute Resolution Center is to provide quality dispute resolution services and education to all members of the community.



# Victim Offender Meetings

A Restorative Justice Alternative



## Dispute Resolution Center

of Snohomish, Island and Skagit Counties

For Information and Referrals:

**360-542-8488**

E-Mail: [skagitdrc@voaaww.org](mailto:skagitdrc@voaaww.org)  
Website: [www.voaaww.org/drc](http://www.voaaww.org/drc)



WESTERN WASHINGTON

# Restorative Justice

The Dispute Resolution Center in partnership with Skagit County's Youth and Family Services offers Victim Offender Meetings for victims of property crimes and minor assaults.

Victim Offender Meetings are based on a set of Restorative Justice principles that views crime as harm done to the individual and the community. The whole community is impacted by crime and in order to restore a sense of well-being, crime must be meaningfully addressed. In a Restorative Justice approach, those harmed by crime should be offered a primary, active role in determining what needs to be addressed. Victims should be given a voice and a role in determining how resolution should happen.

The DRC welcomes the participation of the community in this endeavor to help build a

## **WHAT IS A VICTIM OFFENDER MEETING?**

A process that provides interested victims the opportunity to meet with their offenders in a safe structured setting with the assistance of a trained facilitator.



## **WHAT ARE THE GOALS?**

Victim Offender Meetings provide:

- The opportunity for victims of crime to help determine a **fair and reasonable** resolution of the harm they have suffered;
- The opportunity for young offenders to take **direct and meaningful** responsibility for their actions in a manner that encourages and strengthens their ability to be positive, contributing members of the community;
- The opportunity to resolve crime offenses that builds and strengthens a **safe and healthy** community.

## **WHO PARTICIPATES ?**

- Victims of crime who have questions they want the offender to answer.
- Victims who would like to share with the offender how they were impacted by the crime.
- Offenders who are prepared to acknowledge responsibility for their offense and are willing to make amends for the harm done.

## **WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?**

- Crime victims are given a voice in identifying harms done and what steps need to be taken for meaningful accountability by the offender.
- Young offenders are confronted with the human cost of their actions and challenged to take direct responsibility for their actions.
- There is a focus on real harms caused by crime and the accountability required of the offender that truly address those harms.

*Victim Offender Meetings are held when:*

*The offender accepts responsibility for the offense*

*The offender is willing to make meaningful amends*

*The youth has attended VOM training*

*The youth has been referred from a probation counselor who has screened the case*

*The Victim wishes to participate*