



# Neighborhood Justice Panels



## What is the Neighborhood Justice Program (NJP)?

**NJP** is a pre-filing diversion. This means that for people who commit certain misdemeanors, NJP is a way to avoid going to court, of being convicted or pleading guilty, and of having a criminal record. Instead, participants in NJP appear before a panel of community members, where they discuss the crime, the reasons why it was committed and the harm it caused. The panelists decide what obligations (consequences) are appropriate for the participant given the crime and the harm caused. Such obligations can include community service, a letter of apology, restitution, and classes aimed at ensuring that the participant never has contact with the law again. If the participant completes those obligations, no criminal case will be filed. If the participant fails to complete the obligations, the case is referred back to the City Attorney for prosecution.

## NJP is an opportunity for:

- **Community Members** to take an active role in how their community responds to the commission of minor crimes, such as vandalism and petty theft.
- **Business and Home Owners** to have a voice in a process that respects their role as victims of property crime.
- **Individuals With No Criminal Record** to take responsibility for their part in a minor crime and to avoid criminal court in the hope that they will have no further contact with the law.

## Neighborhood Justice Panels convene once a week in your community to:

- **Repair** the harm done to the community by the commission of minor crimes, such as vandalism and petty theft.
- **Restore** the victim of such crimes back to how they were before the crime was committed.
- **Rehabilitate** the individual who committed the crime by avoiding the criminal justice system and connecting them to services.

## For more information, contact:

Jose Egurbide at (213) 978-4096 or [jose.egurbide@lacity.org](mailto:jose.egurbide@lacity.org)

**Each panel consists of:**

- **The Participant**, the person who committed the crime, who agreed to make things right through participation in the Neighborhood Justice Program.
- **Three Panelists** who represent the community in a discussion with the participant about the effect of his/her actions and what should be done going forward to make things right. Panelists receive eight hours of training in restorative justice and consensus building as well as on-going training on criminal justice matters, active listening and conferencing. Panelists agree to serve for one year and generally can expect to commit at least four hours a month to the Neighborhood Justice Program.
  - Panelist applications are available by contacting **Jose Egurbide at (213) 978-4096 or [jose.egurbide@lacity.org](mailto:jose.egurbide@lacity.org)**
- **A Facilitator**, trained in mediation and conflict resolution, who guides the discussion and maintains decorum as the panel progresses towards an agreement wherein the participant agrees to complete certain obligations to make things right.

