



YOLO COUNTY

NeighborhoodCourt

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY

A Division of the District Attorney

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Yolo County District Attorney





Yolo County - Jurisdiction Details



Northern California: Between San Francisco and Sacramento

Home of The University of California at Davis

Population of 219,000

Racial Diversity (46% White, 32% Latino, 14% Asian, 3% Black, Other...)

7 police/law enforcement agencies

DA's Office - 115 total staff, 36 prosecutors, \$16 million annual budget

File approximately 8000 criminal cases per year

District Attorney is a nonpartisan/elected office



What is Neighborhood Court?



Neighborhood Court is a Restorative Justice Program Initiated by the Yolo DA's Office in Cooperation with the Local Police Agencies

Pre- and Post-Filing Diversion Program

Addresses Offenses Through Community-Based Solutions

Alternative to Criminal Court



Restorative Justice: Our Founding Principle



“Restorative justice is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address *harms, needs, and obligations*, in order to heal and put things as right as possible.”

- Howard Zehr



Restorative Justice: Goals



- Puts key decisions in the hands of those most affected by crime.
 - Engage victims in the process.
- Make criminal justice more healing and, ideally, more transformative.
- Reduce the likelihood of future offenses.
- Reintegrate participants back into the community.



Volunteer-Driven Program



- ❑ Volunteers from each community will resolve cases originating from their own communities.
- ❑ Case outcomes are determined collaboratively between the volunteers and participants.





Community Engagement



- Neighborhood Court staff participate in over 40 community outreach events annually.
- Continuous recruitment of new volunteers through social media.
- Six entry-level training opportunities per year.

Confidential Process

- Not Open To The Public
- Participant Must Accept Responsibility
- Nothing Used Against Participant In Court
- Open/Honest Dialogue

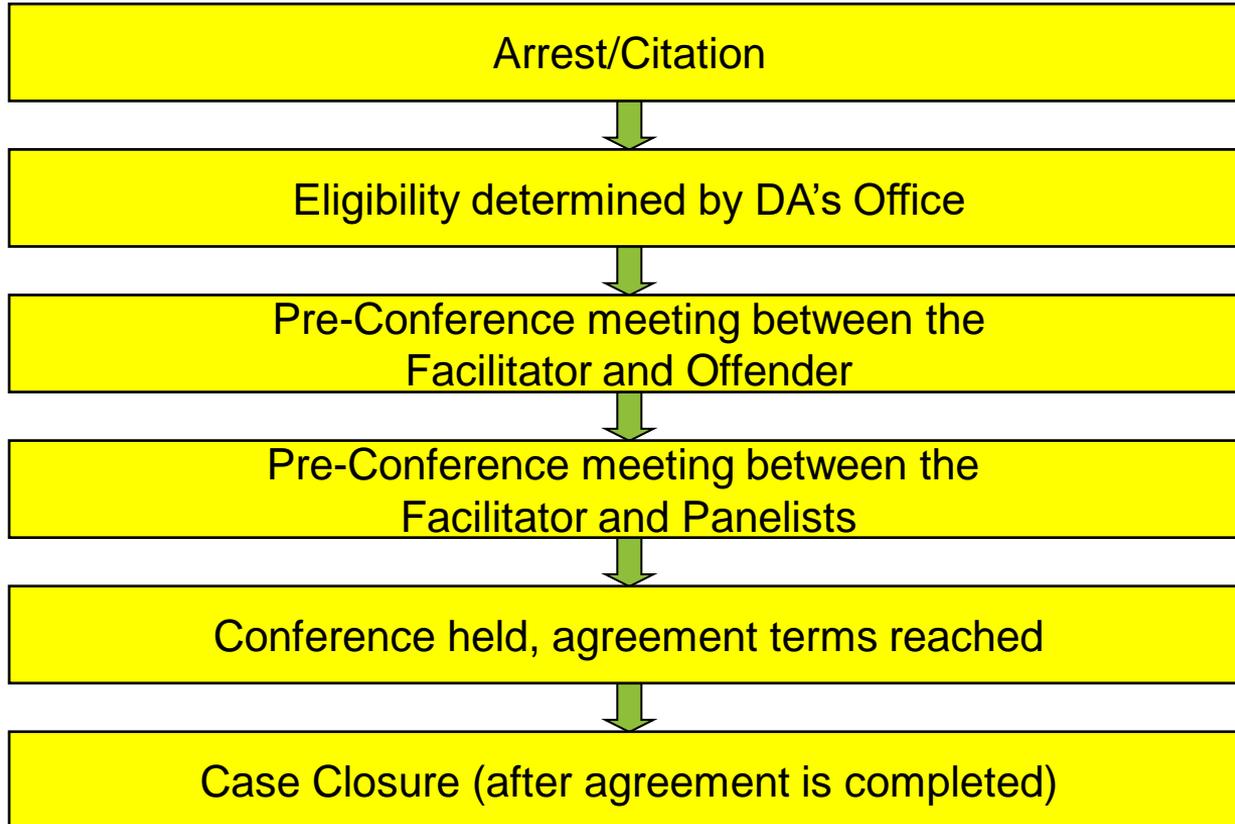


NEIGHBORHOOD
COURT IN
SESSION

This means Community Members focus on the harm instead of determining guilt or innocence.

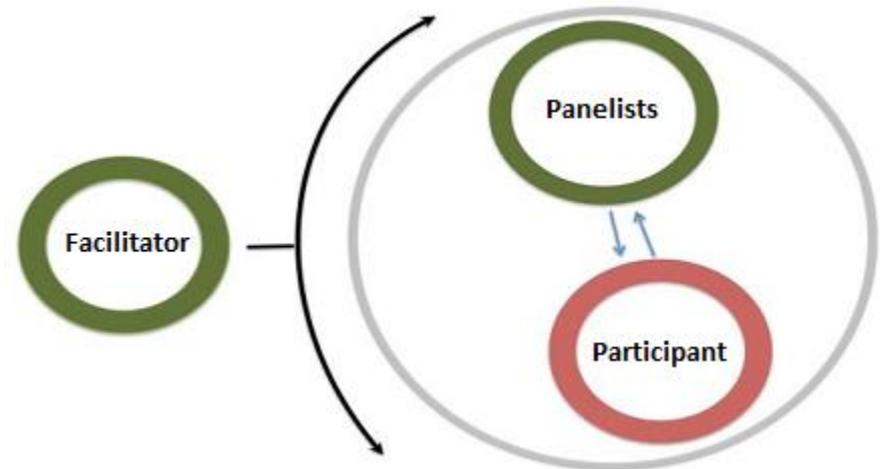


The Neighborhood Court Process





Face-to-Face Facilitated Conference



Panelist: Represents the community's needs, interests, and perspectives with respect to the crime committed.

Facilitator: Leads/guides all parties through the process.



The 3-Step Conferencing Process



Step 1 Recognizing the Injustice

- Sharing Experiences
- Naming Harms

Step 2 Restoring Equity/Making Things Right

- Sharing Needs
- Sharing Ideas

Step 3 Clarifying Future Intentions

- Sharing Needs
- Requesting commitments
- Making Agreements



Individualized Approach



Traditionally:

- ❑ “One size fits all” disposition.
- ❑ Only fines imposed in most cases, some jail time.

Restorative Justice:

- ❑ Customized outcomes to address the harms.
- ❑ Addresses the root causes of crimes.
- ❑ Educates the participant, rather than imposing a punishment.



Community Partnerships



- ❑ Local Law Enforcement Agencies
- ❑ University of California, Davis
- ❑ Yolo Conflict Resolution Center
- ❑ Health and Human Services Agency
- ❑ Empower Yolo
- ❑ National Alliance on Mental Illness
- ❑ CommuniCare Health Centers



Victim Participation Options



- Directly and with a Victim Advocate's assistance.
- Directly and without a Victim Advocate's assistance.
- Indirectly through a Victim Impact Statement.
- No participation at all.



How Restorative Justice Meets Victims' Needs



- Process is **victim-centric** in that it gives victims:
 - **Choices**: Consent for NHC or evaluation for prosecution.
 - **Inclusion**: Option to participate directly, indirectly, or not at all.
 - **Opportunity**: Ask questions, get answers, and understand the who, what, where, when, why, and how of their victimization.



Program Growth Over Time



- Founded as a pilot project in the City of Davis & UC Davis in June 2013.
- First program of its kind in Adult Criminal Cases in CA
- Expanded to other cities in county in 2014 – 15.-



Program Outcomes Since Launch



Over 1,400
cases resolved
since 2013

Over 200+ volunteers
trained since 2013

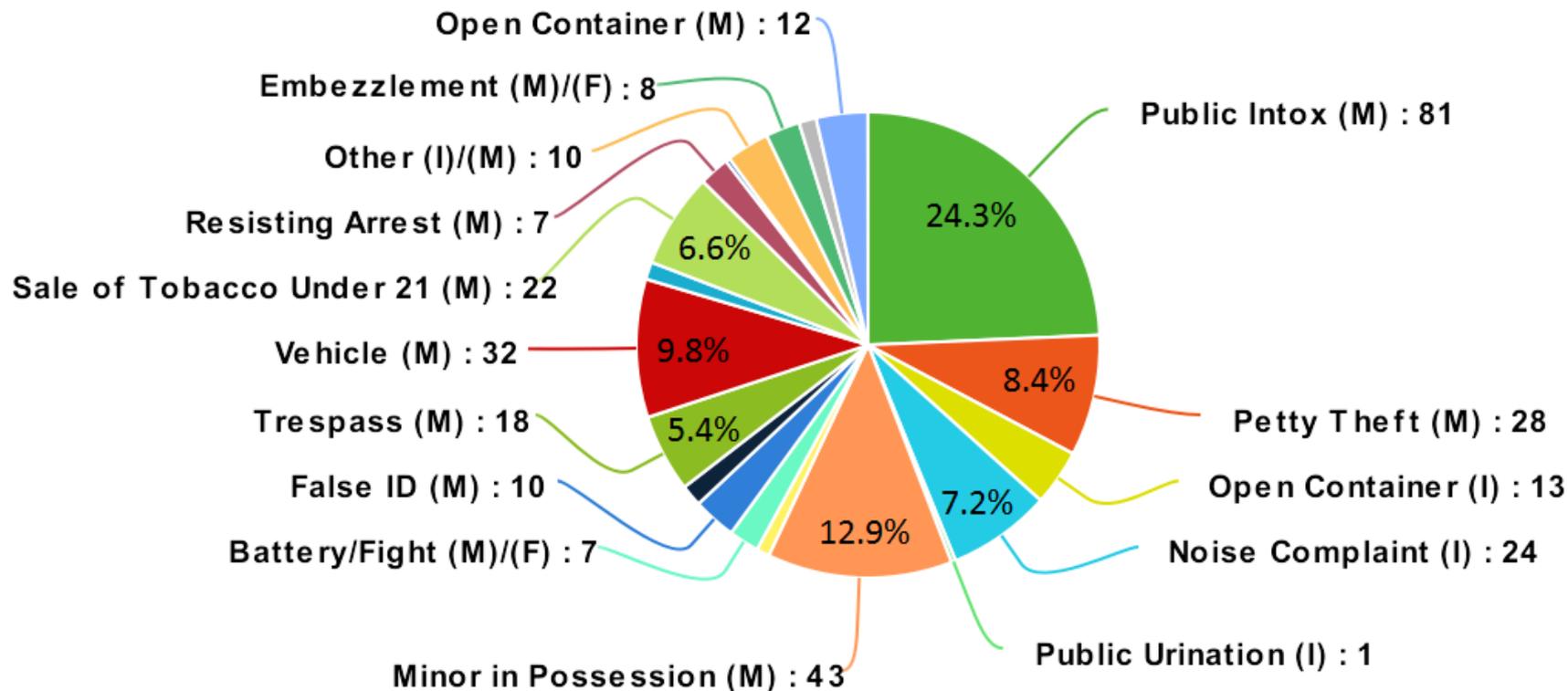
95%
Participant
Satisfaction
Rate

92.7%
Completion
Rate

94%
Victim
Satisfaction
Rate



2017 Neighborhood Court Offenses





Program Recidivism Rate



	Rearrest (1 yr)	Conviction (1 yr)	Rearrest (3 yr)	Conviction (3 yr)
Recidivism Rate	4.8%	3.1%	10.6%	6%
First-time Offenders	3.4%	2.6%	10.7%	6.2%
1 or more Prior Arrests	13.4%	6.25%	--	--



Neighborhood Court Expansion: The Future



- ❑ Felony-level property crimes.
- ❑ Expanding into blended cases.
- ❑ Welfare Fraud Under \$7,000.
- ❑ Expanding to cover all of Yolo County.
- ❑ Spanish-language only conferences.
- ❑ Cases involving mental illness and drug addiction where the participant has existing case management services.