

## IF AN AGREEMENT IS NOT REACHED

Occasionally people are not able to agree on a satisfactory settlement in a meeting. If this happens, there are several options for obtaining results.

In some situations, the referring agency will decide a case should be prosecuted in court where a judge may order that restitution be paid, based in part on the victim's estimate of damages. We, or the referring agency, can assist in determining whether that is possible and whether you may be able to have some input into that decision.

You may also choose to file a suit in court. The probation department can provide you with the case number and necessary information.

**Volunteer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please call the VORP staff if you have further questions or if a problem arises.**

### **Victim Offender Reconciliation Program**

4882 E. Townsend Ave.  
Fresno, CA 93727  
(559) 455-9803



### **VICTIM OFFENDER RECONCILIATION PROGRAM**

**The Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP)** is a non-profit, community based program which seeks to address needs of victims and offenders that are not met by the traditional justice system.

VORP facilitates a meeting between you, the victim, and the offender(s) to provide you with the opportunity to:

- **Ask questions which may have arisen out of the offense and later experiences.**
- **Express your feelings and opinions about the offense directly to the offender(s).**
- **Work out a written agreement for restitution or an appropriate settlement.**

Participation in VORP requires the consent of all parties. The meetings are organized and led by a neutral, trained community volunteer, who is present to facilitate communication, not make a decision or impose a settlement.

Your case has been referred to us by the Probation Department which has determined that this case is of the type that can be facilitated well through the VORP process.

## WHO ARE WE?

VORP was first started in Kitchener, Ontario and later in Elkhart, Indiana by Mennonite Central Committee. Fresno VORP was begun by a local group of concerned citizens and now operates as a community based non-profit corporation dedicated to providing a constructive process for restoring both victims and offenders. Program policy is overseen by a Board of Directors representing a broad cross-section of the local community. Similar programs are now operating across the United States, Canada and Europe.

## WHAT DO WE DO?

VORP arranges and facilitates meetings between victims and offenders, assists in finding answers to problems arising from offense and in developing written restitution contracts. When restitution is paid over a period of time, VORP accepts those payment and forwards them to the victim.

**However, VORP does not do the following:**

- **Supervise the offenders. Supervision remains the responsibility of the probation department.**
- **Enforce restitution agreements. While we accept payments and forward them to victims, enforcement of restitution agreements remains with the court and probation department. VORP does follow your case and keeps probation informed of your progress. VORP is available to help out where we can if problems arise in paying restitution.**
- **Guarantee agreements or fulfillment of agreements. We will do our best on both parties' willingness to make it work.**

## PREPARING FOR A VORP MEETING

You have a choice of whether or not to participate in the VORP process. If you choose not to participate, we will return the case to the referring agency who will then decide what alternatives would be appropriate for the offender(s). Should you choose to participate, you can help make this a constructive process by doing the following:

- **Think through what the offense has meant to you and what questions you might have. This is an unusual chance for you to receive answers to questions you might have, such as the future intent of the offender, and for an offender to hear feelings expressed that only you, a victim, can express.**
- **Bring all documentation available which will help to establish your losses: insurance claims, damage estimates, sales slips, etc. Think through what you feel is needed for a satisfactory settlement. Sometimes, of course, no amount of restitution can fully compensate for all the emotional and financial cost of an offense. But think about what you consider to be your losses.**
- **Let the volunteer know as soon as possible if you find the time that has been arranged for a meeting not convenient for you.**
- **Contact the volunteer or our office if you have further questions or if any problems develop in the fulfillment of the restitution agreement. If there seems to be any unreasonable delays in payment, for example, let us know.**