



**Montana Board of Crime Control**

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TO: Law and Justice Interim Committee  
FROM: Natalia Bowser, Bureau Chief, Crime Control Bureau  
DATE: June 29, 2021  
RE: Restorative Justice report per MCA 44-7-302

The Montana Board of Crime Control (MBCC) is directed to actively seek federal grant money to establish restorative justice programs. The purpose of this report is to fulfill the requirements of MCA 44-7-302.

**44-7-302. Restorative justice grants.**

- (1) The purposes of the restorative justice grant programs are to:
- (a) promote the use of restorative justice practices throughout the state; and
  - (b) provide technical assistance to local and state jurisdictions and organizations interested in implementing the principles of restorative justice.

Restorative justice is a theory that focuses on repairing the damage caused by criminal behavior through programs focused on transforming people and communities. This practice includes all stakeholders to strengthen relationships and provide positive alternatives for intervention to avoid the criminal justice system.

MBCC seeks grant funding under competitive grant solicitations to support restorative justice initiatives and qualified, evidence-based programs.

**The Center for Restorative Youth Justice (CRYJ)**

Funded through a Title II grant focused on juvenile justice, MBCC allocates funds to CRYJ in the Flathead Valley. CRYJ provides proactive support for at-risk youth to avoid contact with the juvenile justice system. The program enhances communication between victims, youth offenders, and community members and helps individuals take responsibility for their actions and set goals. Achievements include:

- Facilitate a restorative integration program for youth struggling with school connections, escalating behavior problems and/or chronic absenteeism.
- Reduced suspensions, expulsions, and contact with the criminal justice system for minor school-based offenses.