

The Restorative Justice Advisory Committee

2025 Annual Report



Submitted by: The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

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Restorative Justice Advisory Committee Membership

Seat	Member	Appointed By:
Secretary, EOPSS	Undersecretary Andrew Peck	Ex Officio
Secretary, HHS	Scott Taberner	Ex Officio
House of Representatives, Speaker	Representative Simon Cataldo	Legislature
Senate, Senate President	Senator Pavel Payano Replaced Senator Robyn Kennedy on 9.17.2025	Legislature
President, MA District Attorney's Association	DA Marian Ryan	Ex Officio
Chief Counsel, Committee for Public Counsel Services	Attorney Kristen Graves	Ex Officio
Commissioner of Probation	Brad McNichols	Ex Officio
President, MA Chiefs of Police Association	Ret. Chief Fred Ryan	Ex Officio
Executive Director, MOVA	Lisa McCue Replaced Stephanie McCarthy 1.24.2025	Ex Officio
MA Sheriff's Association	Andrea Berte	Ex Officio
Retired Trial Court Judge	Hon. Peter Agnes (ret.)	Governor
Restorative Justice	Kara Hayes	Governor
Restorative Justice	Maddrey Goode appointed on 3.31.2025	Governor
Restorative Justice	Vacant as of 6.24.2025 Formerly Susan Jeghelian	Governor
Restorative Justice	Samuel Williams	Governor
Restorative Justice	Vacant	Governor
Restorative Justice	Vacant	Governor

Restorative Justice Advisory Committee (RJAC) Statute

The Restorative Justice Advisory Committee (hereinafter “RJAC” or “the Committee”) was established by Section 202 of Chapter 69 of the Acts of 2018, An Act Relative to Criminal Justice Reform (hereinafter “*The Criminal Justice Reform Act*”):

“The advisory committee shall consist of 17 members: 1 of whom shall be: the secretary of public safety and security or a designee who shall serve as chair; 1 of whom shall be the secretary of health and human services or a designee; 1 of whom shall be a member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker; 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate appointed by the senate president; 1 of whom shall be; the president of the Massachusetts district attorneys association, or a designee; 1 of whom shall be the chief counsel of the Committee for public counsel services or a designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of probation or a designee; 1 of whom shall be the president of the Massachusetts chiefs of police association, or a designee; 1 of whom shall be the executive director of the Massachusetts office for victim assistance or a designee; 1 of whom shall be the executive director of the Massachusetts sheriff’s association, or a designee; and 7 of whom shall be appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall be a retired trial court judge and 6 of whom shall be representatives of community-based restorative justice programs or a member of the public with expertise in restorative justice. Each member of the advisory committee shall serve a 6-year term.”

Section 202 of the Criminal Justice Reform Act charges the RJAC with the following obligations:

“The advisory committee may monitor and assist all community-based restorative justice programs to which a juvenile or adult defendant may be diverted pursuant to this chapter.”

“The advisory committee shall track the use of community-based restorative justice programs through a partnership with an educational institution and may make legislative, policy and regulatory recommendations to aid in the use of community-based restorative justice programs including, but not limited to: (i) qualitative and quantitative outcomes for participants; (ii) recidivism rates of responsible parties; (iii) criteria for youth involvement and training; (iv) cost savings for the commonwealth; (v) training guidelines for restorative justice facilitators; (vi) data on gender, racial socioeconomic and geographic disparities in the use of community-based restorative justice programs; (vii) guidelines for restorative justice best practices; and (viii) appropriate training for community-based restorative programs.”

“The advisory committee shall annually, not later than December 31, submit a report with findings and recommendations to the governor, the clerks of the house of representatives and senate and the house and senate chairs of the joint committees on the judiciary and public safety and homeland security.”

RJAC Mission, Vision, Values

The mission of the RJAC is to promote and expand restorative justice education, practices, and programming statewide in collaboration with practitioners, participants, sponsors, stakeholders, and the general public, for the purpose of fostering healing for people and communities impacted

by harm and systemic/structural violence and with an aim towards promoting public safety and accountability.

The vision of the RJAC is a Commonwealth where community accountability for harm is based on healing and not on retribution, and where effective restorative practices are embedded within schools, public institutions, and communities and supported by public policy, programming, funding, and infrastructure.

The RJAC has adopted the following restorative justice values:

- Victim-centered
- Trauma-informed
- Public safety-oriented
- Accountability and healing for all
- Meaningful dialogue

Year in Review

In 2025, the RJAC advanced its mission by forming a subcommittee dedicated to supporting communities in the RJAC space, known as the Guidelines Subcommittee. Chaired by RJAC member, Kara Hayes, this subcommittee was established to create a clear pathway for the development of community-based restorative justice programs in the Commonwealth. More information on the Subcommittee can be found below.

Additionally, RJAC commemorated Victims' Rights Week with a presentation by Kara Hayes and Delinda Passas emphasizing the importance of a victim-centered approach to restorative justice and exploring its historical roots. The central theme of the presentation focused on identifying best practices to ensure survivor safety within restorative justice organizations and promoting meaningful restitution through accountability.

The Guidelines Subcommittee

The Guidelines Subcommittee was established in 2025 to advance the development of clear, consistent, and values-aligned guidance for restorative justice practice across the Commonwealth. Chaired by Kara Hayes (joined by RJAC Members Samuel Williams, Delinda Passas, Lisa McCue, and Kristin Graves), the subcommittee brings together practitioners and system stakeholders committed to strengthening the integrity, safety, and accessibility of restorative justice processes.

The creation of this subcommittee reflects the RJAC's statutory responsibility to develop training guidelines, best practices, and recommendations that support the effective use of community-based restorative justice programs statewide.

Core Areas of Focus

The subcommittee's work centers on several key priorities:

- Facilitator Standards: Developing statewide guidance that articulates the core competencies, ethical responsibilities, and practice expectations of restorative justice facilitators.
- Safety and Integrity: Ensuring that restorative processes are trauma-informed, victim-centered, and grounded in practices that prioritize both participant safety and meaningful accountability.
- Alignment with National and Emerging Practices: Conducting a literature review of standards and frameworks from other jurisdictions to inform Massachusetts-specific recommendations.
- Accessibility and Equity: Supporting pathways for community-based practitioners to engage in restorative justice practices while maintaining rigor without creating unnecessary barriers to entry.

2025 Activities and Contributions

In 2025, the subcommittee:

- Presented an initial framework for Facilitator Standards for Massachusetts to the full RJAC.
- Conducted and shared a comparative literature review examining how other states and jurisdictions approach restorative justice standards and guidelines.
- Initiated discussions on how to balance standardization with community-based flexibility, ensuring that restorative justice practices remain responsive to local context while upholding shared values.

This work is grounded in the RJAC’s commitment to restorative justice principles, including being victim-centered, trauma-informed, and accountability-driven, while promoting meaningful dialogue and public safety.

Subcommittee Next Steps

The Guidelines Subcommittee will continue to refine and expand its recommendations with the goal of:

- Developing a comprehensive standards and guidelines framework for restorative justice practice in Massachusetts
- Supporting training and implementation across both community-based and system-based programs
- Contributing to broader policy discussions on the role of restorative justice in advancing healing, accountability, and equitable outcomes

Through this work, the subcommittee seeks to strengthen the foundation of restorative justice across the Commonwealth while preserving the relational and community-driven nature of the practice.

RJAC Looking Forward

The RJAC remains dedicated to promoting healing and accountability through restorative practices and anticipates continued collaboration with stakeholders throughout the Commonwealth.

The RJAC expresses its sincere appreciation to all members, community representatives, and stakeholders for their commitment and valuable contributions to this important work.

Looking ahead, the RJAC will continue advancing the work of the Guidelines Subcommittee, focusing on the development of clear, consistent, and values-aligned guidance for restorative justice practices across the Commonwealth. The RJAC will also work to support accessible and equitable implementation, contribute to training and policy development, and promote a cohesive framework that upholds the integrity, safety, and community-driven nature of restorative justice.

Appendix

Victim's Rights PowerPoint Presentation