

## What is the AJSD?

The Ambulante Justizsozialdienst (AJSD, agency for criminal justice social work) is part of the Lower Saxony justice system. About 450 employees, who perform duties in the fields of probation service, supervision of conduct, court assistance, and offender-victim mediation, are working in the AJSD.

Criminal justice social workers are involved in the social reintegration of criminal offenders, support their clients in avoiding going to prison due to unpaid fines, prepare reports on participants in the proceedings and settle disputes.

We cooperate with private agencies and network partners concerned with offender and victim support and we support voluntary work.

The AJSD is committed to the basic values of tolerance, social justice, human rights and non-violent conflict resolution.

The AJSD does prevention work for our society and contributes to internal security.



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## Offender-Victim Mediation in the AJSD



Niedersachsen. Klar.



Niedersachsen

# Offender-Victim Mediation

Offender-victim mediation is based on the idea of handling conflicts connected with criminal offences directly with the parties involved.

Victims and offenders are given the opportunity to resolve the conflict and compensate for damage caused.

## Prerequisites

- Offender and victim must consent to the mediation effort.
- Their participation is voluntary and free of charge.
- The offender is prepared to own up to the offence and face the victim and to assume responsibility for his/her actions and the resulting damage.

## Victims can

- express their feelings and fears;
- submit their own ideas and wishes for resolving the conflict;
- possibly receive satisfaction and compensation without civil action.

## Offenders can

- describe the background of and assume responsibility for their behaviour;
- show that they take the victims' feelings seriously and can apologise for their behaviour;
- make restitution for the harm caused by the offence depending on the possibilities available;
- thus achieve a dismissal of proceedings, a mitigation of sentence or dispensation of punishment;
- avoid civil proceedings.

## How will Offender-Victim Mediation be conducted?

At first, impartial conflict mediators will separately conduct preliminary talks with the parties involved on the offence, its background and consequences and explain the mediation procedure.

Then the parties involved will decide whether they want to give mediation a try. They will discuss and reappraise the conflicts with the support of the conflict mediators. If possible, restitution will be agreed upon.

Compliance with the agreement achieved will be verified by the conflict mediators.

The public prosecution office or the court will be informed of the result of the offender-victim mediation process.

If the mediation process is not successful, the justice system will decide on the further course of the criminal proceedings.

