

## What happens at Murri Court?

You tell your lawyer you want to go to Murri Court. Your lawyer tells the Magistrates Court that you want to go to Murri Court.

Elders and a person from the Community Justice Group (CJG) will come and yarn with you about your offending, culture, family, health and what changes you want to make in your life.

They will link you to support services that can help you make changes and stop offending. This may include counselling or help to stop drinking alcohol.

The Elders and the CJG will write a report and give it to the Murri Court, your lawyer and the police.

The Magistrate will use the report to decide if you can go to Murri Court. If you can't go to Murri Court your matter will be heard in the mainstream Magistrates Court.

You will need to go to support services while you are on bail.

Murri Court will check you are going to these support services and working hard to stop offending.

Before you get your sentence, the Elders and the CJG will come back to yarn with you about the changes you have made in your life and the plans you have for the future.

The Elders and the CJG will write another report to tell the Murri Court, your lawyer and the police what you have achieved.

The Magistrate will read this report and take your hard work into account when they give you your sentence.

For more information you can call:

*The artwork used for this brochure was created by Gilimbaa artist David Williams. David is a proud Wakka Wakka man born in now based in Brisbane.*

# Murri Court

If you are an Aboriginal person and/or Torres Strait Islander person who has been charged with an offence in the Magistrates Court you may be able to go to Murri Court.

### What is Murri Court?

Murri Court links Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander defendants to culture and services to help them make changes in their lives and stop offending.

Murri Court has Elders or Respected Persons from the community in court to help the Magistrate understand the lives and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Murri Court is not as formal as mainstream court so you can speak up for yourself. You will have to face the Elders and talk about your offending. You will go to services and be expected to work hard to make better choices.

Elders will be in court to guide and encourage you, and help you tell your story in court.

There are Murri Courts for adults and for children.

### Where is Murri Court?

There are Murri Courts in Brisbane, Caboolture, Cairns, Cherbourg, Cleveland, Mackay, Mt Isa, Richlands, Rockhampton, St George, Toowoomba, Townsville and Wynnum.

### Who can go to Murri Court?

You can go to Murri Court if:

- there is a Murri Court in the Magistrates Court where you have to go to Court
- you want to go to Murri Court
- you are on bail
- you identify as an Aboriginal and/or a Torres Strait Islander person or are connected by kinship
- you have pleaded guilty or are going to plead guilty
- the offence you have committed is one which the Magistrates Court can hear.

### How can I go to Murri Court?

Talk to your lawyer and tell them you want to go to Murri Court. You and your lawyer will need to complete an Eligibility Assessment form which your lawyer will give to the Magistrate. If the Magistrate agrees, your matter will be considered for Murri Court.

### What happens if I don't want to go to Murri Court?

If you don't want to go to Murri Court, or can't go to Murri Court, then you will go to the mainstream Magistrates Court.

### Who will be at Murri Court and what is their job?

**Elders and Respected Persons** from the community will be in the courtroom to help the Magistrate understand Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture and history. The Elders will meet with you to hear your story and help you explain your story to the Murri Court Magistrate.

**Murri Court Magistrate** is the person in charge of the court. They decide if you can go to Murri Court, check how you are going on the program and attending all of your appointments, and give you your sentence.

**Community Justice Groups (CJG)** help to organise the Murri Court, bring Elders to court and write reports for the court. They help the Elders explain your story to the Murri Court Magistrate. They will link you to support services and help you make changes in your life and stop offending.

**Your lawyer** needs to fill out the forms so you can go to Murri Court. They will help you understand what is happening at Murri Court.

**You can ask any of these people if you have any questions about Murri Court.**

