



Episode 17 Study Guide

Circle Sentencing with Maree Jennings

Background

- (1) Explain what is meant by the term “restorative justice”.
- (2) How did Maree get involved in Circle Sentencing?
- (3) Explain the structure of Circle Sentencing.

Assessment and eligibility

- (4) What types of offences come before a Circle?
- (5) Explain the assessment process, including:
 - a. the role of the Aboriginal Community Justice Group, and
 - b. what happens if an offender is determined to be suitable or not suitable for the Circle.

Process and roles

- (6) Describe how the Circle operates once it is formed.
- (7) How long is usually allowed for a Circle hearing?
- (8) Describe the roles of the following members of the Circle Sentencing Group:
 - a. magistrate
 - b. offender
 - c. respected community members, and

- d. victim/s (if present).
- (9) Who are the respected community members on a Circle? How are they selected? What informs this choice?
 - (10) Describe the role of the Project Officer in organising the Circle.
 - (11) Community members in Circle Sentencing are volunteers. What do you think are the pros and cons of this?
 - (12) How does Circle Sentencing contribute to the sentencing purpose of rehabilitation?
 - (13) How is a sentencing recommendation made? Who makes it? Is the Magistrate bound to accept the sentencing recommendation?

Circle Sentencing outcomes and expansion

- (14) Once an offender goes through a Circle, is there any follow-up?
- (15) What benefits does Maree see from Circle Sentencing? Why does she see community involvement in the criminal justice system as a positive?
- (16) Maree mentions the 2020 BOCSAR (Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research) evaluation of Circle Sentencing. What findings from the report did Maree highlight?
- (17) In Maree's view, how do Aboriginal communities generally view Circle Sentencing?

Further resources and activities

The 2020 review of "Circle Sentencing, incarceration and recidivism" is available on [BOCSAR's website](#).



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