

# Aboriginal Justice Agreement Fact Sheet

## What is an Aboriginal Justice Agreement?

### An Aboriginal Justice Agreement is:

- an agreement between government and Aboriginal people to work together to improve the lives of Aboriginal Territorians by putting in place Aboriginal community-owned and led initiatives that focus on stopping Aboriginal people from going or returning to prison.
- a framework for government agencies, in partnership with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Territorians, to address the complex issues that contribute to the disadvantage of Aboriginal Territorians.
- an agreement that will recognise, reassert and support traditional leadership to improve the lives of Aboriginal people and make communities safer.

## Why have an Aboriginal Justice Agreement?

### The Agreement is required to provide a joint partnership between community and government to:

- deliver on the NT Government's commitment to reassert local power and increase the role for traditional leadership in our justice system.
- include traditional leadership in community court decision making processes.
- reduce imprisonment and re-offending rates for Aboriginal people in the NT.
- develop a road map of Aboriginal justice issues that engage Aboriginal leaders.
- reassert local Aboriginal power and recognise the role of cultural authority in legal matters.

## What are the aims of the Agreement?

### The Agreement aims to:

- deliver on the government's Aboriginal justice election promises.
- reduce the high levels of disadvantage of Aboriginal people who live in the Territory.
- reduce the high levels of Aboriginal imprisonment and reoffending.
- provide Aboriginal people with services that support human rights, and individual and community resilience.
- reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system.

- work in partnership with the Aboriginal community to address the current levels of disadvantage of Aboriginal people.
- ensure government agencies do not work in isolation in the delivery of projects and programs.
- develop targeted justice responses for diversionary and grassroots rehabilitation programs focusing on breaking the cycle of offending.
- engage Aboriginal people in law and justice matters.

### How will the Aboriginal community participate in developing the Agreement?

The Aboriginal Justice Unit of the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice will consult widely with the community with a view to empowering local communities, embedded within a culturally competent framework.

The agreement will be driven by the Territory's Aboriginal community through listening and learning from Aboriginal people across the Northern Territory.

### What information will be sought at the community meetings?

**Responses to the following questions will be sought from the meetings with community members:**

- What measures can the community take, or need assistance with, to prevent Aboriginal people offending?
- How can community and government work together as partners to reduce the number of Aboriginal people being imprisoned or detained?
- How can communities reassert local power, and increase the role for traditional leadership and cultural authority in legal matters in the NT justice system?
- How can traditional leadership be used in the decision making processes to reduce imprisonment and re-offending rates of Aboriginal people in the NT?

### When will the Agreement be finalised and ready to commence implementation?

The Government aims to finalise a draft version of the Agreement by the end of December 2018.

### Reference committee

An independent reference group comprised of 17 representatives from 16 relevant NGO's has been formed to assist with the preliminary development of the Aboriginal Justice Agreement, and to guide and monitor the deliverables of the Agreement.

### Contact details

For more information, or to discuss anything regarding the Aboriginal Justice Agreement, please contact the Aboriginal Justice Unit on (08) 8935 7655 or by e-mail at [AGD.AJU@nt.gov.au](mailto:AGD.AJU@nt.gov.au).