

Aims of Custody and Victim Support

- To reduce the number of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system.
- Contribute to and participate in raising cultural awareness for police.
- Improve the relationship between Police and Aboriginal people.
- Aboriginal members to gain a better understanding of police practices and procedures.
- Provide a service to meet the needs of Aboriginal victims of crime.
- Provide appropriate support to Aboriginal persons arrested or detained in custody.

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons may be called on by Police on a twenty-four-hour basis.

Police will generally contact an Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support person, as well as the required contact of the Aboriginal Legal Service, for the person arrested or detained for both juveniles and adults, if required. Support for victims will be on a needs basis.

Commitment and dedication by Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons demonstrates the community is determined to maintain positive relationships between police and Aboriginal people.

NSW Police Force will continue to establish and maintain Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support across NSW.

For more information about Custody and Victim Support Group in your area please contact the Aboriginal Engagement Officer at your local Police Station or the ACLO.



NSW Police Force

Custody and Victim Support

Working Together to Build a Safer Community

The primary function is to provide support to the Aboriginal people being held in custody and Aboriginal victims of crime.



All members of the Aboriginal community can volunteer to be part of Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support.

This program came from The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991) - Recommendation No. 145 and 220.

In the Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2018-2023, Priority 3 "Collaborate with other Agencies to Reduce Aboriginal Over-representation in the Criminal Justice System."

Diversion is first Key Area under this priority and one of the anticipated outcomes is the "Safe, secure and humane management of Aboriginal people in custody can be provided" and this outcome would be supported by the establishment of Custody and Victim Support group.

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support consists of volunteers from the Aboriginal community, who would like to participate in providing support for Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system or Aboriginal victims of crime.

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support allows participants to gain knowledge and understanding of practices and procedures with regards to the laws relating to arrests and detention.

A criminal record check and working with children check will be conducted for each applicant. Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons must complete the consent forms and receive a clearance prior to being accepted as a support person.

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons are issued with a photo identification card as proof of identity when called by Police requesting their attendance at the Police Station.

The Commander of your Police Area Command (PAC) or Police District (PD) has the authority to approve or terminate the identification card.

A Terms of Reference and policy has been developed outlining the aims and objectives of Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support for members and police in relation to the rights and responsibilities of the Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons.

In addition, an Agreement to accept the conditions must be co-signed and approved by the Commander.

An information session has been developed to ensure Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support people receive information relating to the practices and procedures relating to their role.

Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support assists in reducing the number of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system by assisting the development of awareness, communication skills and understanding of Aboriginal culture by police and Aboriginal community gaining a greater understanding of police and coming together to address Aboriginal community needs.

Training and on-going support is provided by the local police to assist Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support persons to understand policies and legislation relating to custody issues providing a better understanding of police practices and procedures as it relates to arrest and detention.

Commitment and dedication by the Aboriginal Custody and Victim Support person shows that the community is striving to maintain positive relationships between police and Aboriginal people.

