



Contact: Diversion Strategies Group, 602-372-7300

Justice Court Diversion Overview:

The Maricopa County Attorney's Office (MCAO) is committed to the efficient and just resolution of misdemeanor cases assigned to the various justice courts. The Justice Court Diversion Program will permit MCAO to respond more effectively to the needs of adult offenders who have been charged with specific types of low level misdemeanors. Benefits to diverting this specific type of offender include: allows offenders to gain insight into the harm their behavior caused, reduces the offender's contact with the criminal justice system, increases connections to appropriate community-based systems of care, and holds the offender accountable for criminal conduct through their participation in an educational program.

How the Justice Court Diversion Program Works:

- Eligibility: will be determined by the Deputy County Attorney (DCA) for a range of eligible misdemeanor offenses;
- The DCA is solely responsible for referring offenders to the Justice Court Diversion Program. Post-file cases only. Offender is given 90 days to complete diversion;
- Contractor: SAGE Counseling Inc., a community-based behavioral health organization;
- The offender is instructed on how to contact SAGE Counseling to schedule their educational class;
- SAGE Counseling must submit documentation to the Justice Courts, supporting successful or unsuccessful completion within the 90-day time frame; and
- If the offender successfully completes the Justice Court Diversion Program, the DCA will file a motion to dismiss the charges with prejudice. If the offender fails to successfully complete the Justice Court Diversion Program, the DCA will file a motion to reinstate prosecution.

The Educational Class:

- The offender will contact SAGE Counseling, complete a brief intake over the telephone, and schedule the appropriate education class. Depending upon the offense, the offender will have to take either one or two, 8-hour educational class(es);
- Locations and class schedule vary throughout Maricopa County; some classes may be offered virtually;
- Payment is due at the time of service or may be prepaid through SAGE Counseling's client portal; and
- At the end of the class, offenders will receive a certificate of completion and SAGE Counseling will send verification to MCAO.
- Class Goals:
 1. Explore consequences for their past decisions,
 2. Practice critical thinking skills and problem-solving techniques to promote meaningful learning experiences, and
 3. Recognize how faulty thinking patterns are related to criminal behaviors.