

What are the benefits of the program?

- It allows for the efficient resolution of some minor court matters
- It saves on the amount of time victims and witnesses may have to spend in court
- It recognizes that community-based sanctions can be an effective way of holding some individuals accountable for some minor offences
- It holds individuals accountable for their actions while ensuring they also make amends for the harm caused

Is participation in the program mandatory?

- No. Participation in the program is voluntary
- Individuals who are not accepted into the program or who don't successfully complete the program will be returned to the formal court process

Is there a cost to participate in the program?

- No. The program is offered at no charge
- Participants; however, may be expected to pay restitution or make a charitable donation in some circumstances

Is a record kept?

- Although there is no conviction following successful completion of the program, records of program participation are retained for two years and can be brought forward if the program participant re-offends during this period



Giving Hope Today

The Salvation Army

ONTARIO COURT OF JUSTICE

**4 Wellington Street
St. Thomas, Ontario
N5R 3G1**

***The Salvation Army
Community Justice Services
Mission Statement***

*Community Justice Services of
London, Elgin and Area supports,
encourages and assists all persons
affected by the Justice System*

COMMUNITY JUSTICE WORKER

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Community Justice Services Direct Accountability Program

What is the Direct Accountability Program?

The Direct Accountability Program is an alternative to prosecution for eligible individuals who have been charged with minor criminal offences. The program involves accused persons being held accountable through community-based sanctions.

Who Qualifies?

Individuals over the age of 18 years of age with no or limited prior involvement in the adult court system who are charged with minor offences.

How is a person referred to the program?

The Crown Attorney will notify the accused if they are considered eligible. The accused then meets with the Community Justice Worker who explains the details of the program and assigns sanction(s).

Individuals can also ask their Counsel or Duty Counsel about their eligibility. Participants should ask for legal advice from Counsel about their rights, the benefits of the program and the legal implications of their participation in the program.

To be considered for the program an individual must:

- Be willing to accept responsibility for actions that led to the charge
- Be willing to make amends for their offence through an assigned task or “sanction”
- Complete an agreement, outlining the terms and/or sanctions to be met

What is expected of Participants in the Program?

The Community Justice Worker will meet with the individual to determine their ability and willingness to make reparation for the offence and their suitability and motivation to complete the assigned sanction(s). The Community Justice Worker will set a time limit for the completion of the agreed upon sanction(s).

Some of the sanctions available through the Direct Accountability Program include:

- Restitution
- An apology
- Volunteer Work
- Contribution to a Charitable organization
- Attending a program or presentation
- Peace Bond

Being eligible to participate in the program does not mean a person is “getting off easy”. It does

mean; however, that by successfully completing the sanction(s) imposed, individuals can be held accountable for their behaviour and have the charge(s) withdrawn by the courts.

Participants may be required to participate in a Direct Accountability Programming option when their involvement on the criminal justice system appears to have been the result of substance use and/or anger management.

PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

Anger and Substance Abuse Program

This education/informational program will target persons charged with a criminal offence where anger management and/or substance use appear to have been a contributing factor to the offending behaviour.

Program Structure

This is a two-day 3 hours or one-day 6 hour session. The program may alternatively run every 6 to 8 weeks depending on referral numbers.

Who should attend?

- Individuals where the offending behaviour was aggressive, threatening or assaultive where alcohol or other substances may have been a contributing factor to the offending behaviour
- Individuals who require insight into whether there appears to be evidence showing a pattern of problematic usage
- Individuals who may benefit from an increased awareness and understanding of their management of emotions and uncomfortable situations without using substances and/or resorting to aggression to solve problems or get their needs met

Specific Topic Areas:

- Definition of anger, the cycle of anger and factors that can lead to anger problems
- When substance use is a problem and the factors that can lead to substance misuse

- Trigger and how to identify and avoid them
- Emotions underlying anger and substance use and misuse and strategies to better manage them
- Effects of substance misuse and inappropriate expressions of anger on all areas of life: health, finances, employment, family, personal impact, leisure time and legal concerns
- The development of a personal plan for change

Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program

This educational/informational program will target persons charged with a criminal offence while under the influence of drugs or alcohol or where substance use appears to be a contributing factor to the offending behaviour.

Program Structure

This is a two-day 3 hour or one-day 6 hour session. The program may alternatively run every 6 to 8 weeks depending on referral numbers and takes place at:

539 Talbot Street, St. Thomas, Ontario

The program consists of specific topic areas:

- Factors that influence an individual's substance of choice
- Definitions of substance use and abuse
- Impact of substance on brain and body
- Topics specific to alcohol use
- Legal concerns and potential future impact

How long does it take to complete the program?

Cases referred to the Direct Accountability Program can be resolved as quickly as the same day, but most cases require an adjournment for a period of time for participants to fulfill the terms of their sanction(s).