

# **Review of criminal procedure laws in QLD's Magistrates Courts**

**Department of Justice and Attorney General**



**Easy English**



**Queensland  
Government**

## Hard words



This book has some hard words.

The first time we write a hard word

- the word is in **blue**
- we write what the hard word means.

## You can get help with this book



You can get someone to help you

- read this book
- know what this book is about



- find more information.

We will write contact information at the end of this book.

## About this book

### CRIMINAL PROCEDURE REVIEW MAGISTRATES COURTS

This book is from the **Criminal Procedure Review Team**.



Our job is to review **criminal procedure laws**.

The criminal procedure laws tell us the steps in a criminal case.

For example

- how a criminal case starts
- what happens when a person goes to court
- how a criminal case ends.

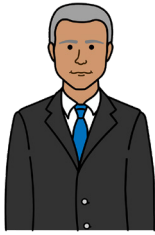


We will call them **the laws**.

We will **only** review the laws used in the Magistrates Courts.



## About Mr Shanahan



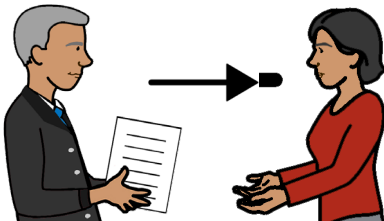
Mr Shanahan will lead the review.

Mr Shanahan was a judge and a criminal lawyer.



Mr Shanahan's job is to

- talk to people
- understand what people think about the laws.



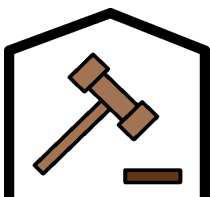
Mr Shanahan will share what he finds to help improve the laws.



Mr Shanahan does **not** work for

- the government

or



- the courts.

# About the Magistrates Courts

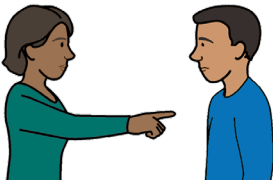
All **criminal charges** start in a Magistrates Court.

A criminal charge is when a person

- is **accused** of breaking the law

and

- **must** go to court.



Accused means someone else says you have done something to break the law.



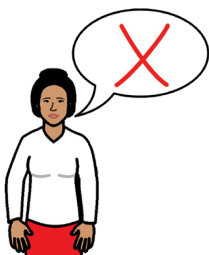
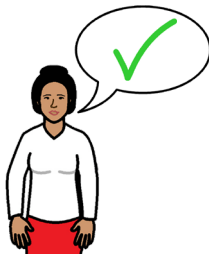
A Magistrates Court does **not** have a **jury**.

A jury is a group of people that decide if a person is

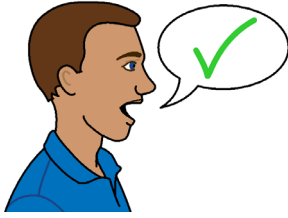
- guilty

or

- **not** guilty.



## What happens at a Magistrates Court?



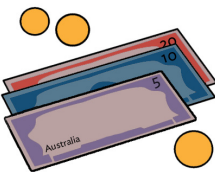
A person can tell the court they are

- guilty

or



- **not** guilty.



If a person says they are guilty, the court will give the person a punishment.

For example, the court may fine the person money.



If a person says they are **not** guilty, the court will

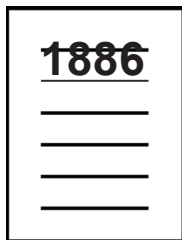
- look at information about the case

and



- decide if the person is guilty or **not** guilty.

## Why do we want to review the laws?

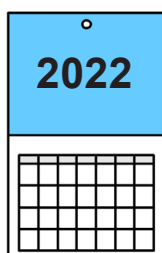


The laws are written in the Justices Act 1886.



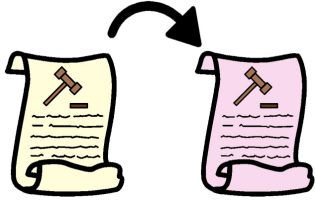
The laws were written a long time ago.

The laws are hard to understand.



We want to make sure that the laws work for people in court today.

## What you can tell us



You can tell us

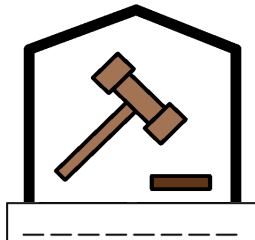
- what you would change about the laws



- what changes would help vulnerable people
  - for example, people with disability



- how technology could be used in the courts
  - for example, coming to court by video call.



You can tell us if we should change the name of the Magistrates Courts to be called the Local Court.



You can tell us if we should change the name of Magistrates to be called Local Court judges.



You can tell us if you have any other ideas.



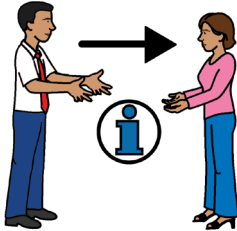
## What happens next?



We will write a report to the government about how to improve the laws.



You **must** tell us if you do **not** want us to share your ideas in the report.



We may need to share your ideas with other people if the law says so.

You **must** tell us if you would like to be **anonymous**.

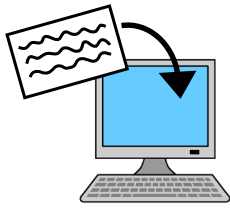


Anonymous means that we do **not** share your name or contact details.



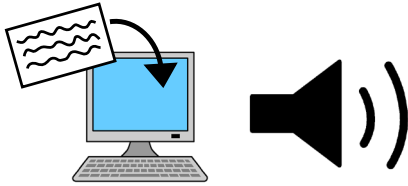
You can read more about privacy on our website.  
[justice.qld.gov.au/initiatives/criminal-procedure-review-magistrates-courts-consultation](http://justice.qld.gov.au/initiatives/criminal-procedure-review-magistrates-courts-consultation)

## How to tell us your ideas



Email

[Criminal-Procedure-R@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:Criminal-Procedure-R@justice.qld.gov.au)



You can also email your ideas in an

- an audio message
- a video recording.



Send us a letter.

Criminal Procedure Review

Magistrates Courts

GPO Box 149

BRISBANE QLD 4001

## More information



For more information contact the Criminal Procedure Review Team.



Website

[qld.gov.au/cpmcreview](http://qld.gov.au/cpmcreview)



If you need help to speak or listen use the National Relay Service.



Call            1800 555 660



Website

[communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs](http://communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs)

Give the relay officer the phone number you want to call.

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