ACT · DPP

ACT DPP MERIT initiative

1. Purpose

The Model for Early Resolution, Intervention and Triage (MERIT) Initiative introduces senior prosecutors at the earliest stage of prosecutions to support faster, fairer case resolution and reduce delays across the criminal justice system. The program seeks to: resolve matters by an appropriate guilty plea, withdraw matters where appropriate, or narrow issues for hearing or committal.

2. Priority Matters

- Burglary and aggravated burglary
- Robbery and aggravated robbery
- Assault matters (including affray and eligible DFV matters)
- Grievous bodily harm
- Drug offences
- Theft and property damage
- Traffic matters

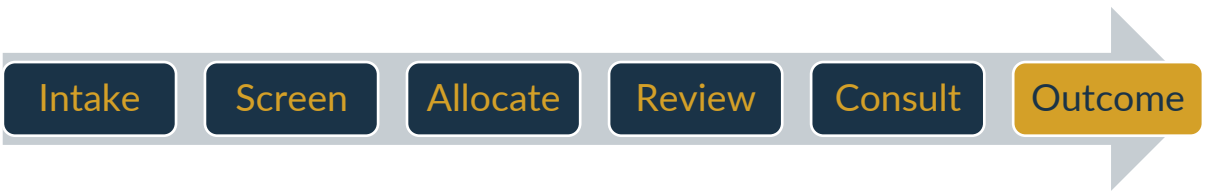
3. Key Cohorts and Exclusions

All matters involving young persons as defendants, and all defendants who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, will be referred to MERIT. Excluded matters include child sexual assault, adult sexual assault, and matters involving death. MERIT may also review matters that have not progressed in a timely manner, and identification of such matters by defence practitioners to the Practice Manager, Margaret Smith, is encouraged. The office is not presently accepting referrals from the Court into the MERIT initiative.

4. Team Structure

The program sits within Criminal Practice and is led by a Grade 4 Supervising Prosecutor. The team includes prosecutors supported by a Witness Assistance Service officer, a paralegal, and a Crown Prosecutor/Crown Advocate on a rotational basis.

5. High-Level Workflow



Intake and triage → Initial screening by Crown Prosecutor/Crown Advocate → Allocation by Supervising Prosecutor → Prosecutor review → consultation with victims/informants → Early resolution, withdrawal, or progression to hearing/committal.

6. Measures of Success

Performance data will assess average time to justice, representation status, prosecution outcomes, withdrawal rates, and estimated court time and cost savings generated through early resolution.