

Briefing Paper #3

**Just Desserts: Drug Court Incentives Group**

**Who is Just Desserts?**

With representation from a variety of organisations and individuals, *Just Desserts* was formed to assist and complement the work of the Court Mandated Drug (CMD) treatment program of the Magistrates Court.

* On the one hand, the sanctions associated with CMD programs focus on negative consequences if offenders fail to fulfil certain obligations.
* On the other hand, incentives are also available for individuals exhibiting conforming behaviour and that recognise special efforts.

**What does Just Desserts do?**

* Incentives are available for individuals exhibiting conforming behaviour and that recognise special efforts. Incentives to positively engage in such programs can also benefit from additional ideas and input from independent groups such as *Just Desserts* that interact with but are nonetheless separate from the official institutions of government.
* The mission of Just Desserts is to assist in building up the incentives side of the drug use equation. Working with community members, the key task is to establish and maintain a wide range of items and services for use in incentivising participants in the CMD program as they achieve various stage-related goals.

**What does Just Desserts not do?**

* Just Desserts is not part of the formal system of criminal justice and courts in Tasmania.
* It is not involved in the ‘penalties’ side of the drug use equation.
* It is oriented toward positive outcomes for CMD clients and positive interactions between offenders and the rest of the Tasmanian community now and into the future.

**What are the aims of Just Desserts?**

* To assist the Drug Court in providing tangible incentives to offenders in a way that is transparent and supports the practices of the program;
* To provide a link between the community and the Drug Court by being the key group for the tangible incentives scheme, steering fundraising efforts and ensuring a successful collaboration between local charities, corporates and the Drug Court;
* To discuss issues of concern such as criticisms, and ensure appropriate incentives are acquired through communication with the public, the Chief Magistrate and Community Corrections.
* To be a positive promoter of the therapeutic justice courts operating in Tasmania in order to increase public awareness and muster local support;
* To operate as a partner with the Magistrates Court with respect to the promotion of the Drug Court; and
* To operate within the rules and procedures of the Law Society and other relevant laws and regulations.

**Incentives and Innovations**

Incentives and rewards may be tailored to the particular person and their specific circumstances and may include:

* Food vouchers
* Bus tickets
* Vouchers for tangible goods
* Football game tickets
* Toys for children
* Books and book vouchers

**Incentives Over Time**

*Picking the right moments and special occasions* it’s important to provide incentives and rewards at the appropriate moments and on special occasions such as:

* Significant milestones (such as 50, 100, 250 or 365 drug free days)
* Progression to Phase 2 (Stabilisation to Consolidation)
* Progression to Phase 3 (Consolidation to Reintegration)
* Graduation – participants receive a certificate, a personalised gift (e.g., a clock, keyring, book) and a cake (their ‘just dessert’).

*For further information contact: justdesserts.drugcourt@gmail.com*