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57 - 2024
NOTICE TO THE PROFESSION

Impact of Race and Culture Assessments (IRCA) Program UPDATE

LAM has recently been informed that the Justice Canada is launching a pilot project for Fiscal Year 2024-25. Previously an IRCA report was only available for adults being sentenced where:

- the client was Black, and
- the crown was seeking a sentence of 2 years or more.

As a part of the initiative Justice Canada is prepared to extend financing for IRCA reports to cases where the Court is considering alternatives to incarceration or where the sentence range is below the 2 year previous limit.

When making authorization requests for an IRCA through PBOonline or LAMAS, counsel **must** continue to indicate if their client is Black and what sentence the crown is seeking. If the crown is seeking a period of custody counsel must indicate if the sentence will be more than 2 years or less. This will assist us in authorizing the report as well as evaluating the program. This pilot project will be in place until March 31, 2025.

Big Case Management Time Limits

The purpose of a Big Case Management (BCM) meeting is to ensure that counsel have knowledge, at the relatively early stages of a criminal proceeding, of the resources that are available to them to deal with a particular case. While routinely considered on the more serious Category "A" type matters, the BCM process is available upon request for any category matter where it is appropriate.

Counsel should be aware of the following restrictions

- The BCM process is only available where the matter is proceeding to a Preliminary Inquiry or Trial. Where the matter is resolved for guilty plea it is not eligible for BCM.
- Preliminary Inquiry or Trial dates must have been set prior to applying for a meeting.
- The BCM Meeting must take place NOT LESS than 30 days before the first hearing date. Currently it takes approximately 30 days to schedule to meeting upon receipt of the completed BCM form by the BCM clerk.

Counsel who do not follow the above restrictions cannot be guaranteed a meeting with the BCM committee and risk not being considered for the BCM process as a result. In those situations, counsel will have to rely on discretionary increases if they are seeking additional funding.