



MARIJUANA DIVERSION PROGRAM

About this program

In an effort to provide an alternative, the *Marijuana Diversion Program* allows individuals who have been charged with possession of a small amount of marijuana to have charges dismissed.

This program is voluntary and is provided to you by the Berks County District Attorney's Office, in cooperation with the Council on Chemical Abuse (COCA). Participants are required to attend a 3-hour educational session provided by COCA which includes factual information concerning the pharmacology of marijuana, and marijuana and other substance use disorders. Participants will have the opportunity to examine the effects of their personal use of marijuana.

Those who choose to participate in the *Marijuana Diversion Program* must complete the program within 60 days following his/her preliminary arraignment before a Magisterial District Judge.

How to Get Involved

Any individual who has been charged with Possession of a Small Amount of Marijuana in Berks County, PA can participate in the *Marijuana Diversion Program*. Individuals charged with Possession of Drug Paraphernalia may also be eligible as well, as long as the paraphernalia is related to the marijuana charges.

If an individual is interested, the referral to the *Marijuana Diversion Program* is initiated by the Magisterial District Judge at the preliminary arraignment. The cost of the program includes a non-refundable \$50 fee payable to COCA prior to attending the program. The individual may also be responsible for any court costs assessed by the Magisterial District Judge.

Upon the successful completion of the program (including payment of any court costs), the District Attorney's Office will dismiss the charges pursuant to Pennsylvania Rule of Criminal Procedure Rule 546 entitled Dismissal Upon Satisfaction of Agreement.

If an individual does not wish to participate in the Marijuana Diversion Program, the charges will be handled as any other charges are handled by the Magisterial District Judge and by the Court of Common Pleas.



(610) 376-8669 | www.cocaberks.org