



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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CENTRE COUNTY ARD FACT SHEET

Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition Program

Certain types of criminal cases may be eligible for resolution by the Centre County Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD) Program, a special pre-trial intervention program for non-violent offenders who have limited or no prior criminal record. The primary purpose of the ARD Program is the prompt disposition of charges, eliminating the need for costly and time-consuming trials for defendants who lend themselves to treatment and rehabilitation rather than punishment, and who are unlikely to commit another crime.

The aim of the program is to intervene at an early stage, so that remedial steps can be taken to prevent future incidents of a similar nature. Defendants in the program are "fast-tracked" into the placement and treatment phase as soon as possible, which contributes to the public safety. Offenders may also be ordered to complete varying amounts of Community Service. For DUI cases, the defendant's operator's license will be suspended for varying periods, less than the minimum one-year suspension required after conviction.

The arresting police officer and the Victim of the crime have the opportunity to offer prior comment on the defendant's admission into the ARD Program. There is no right to participate in the ARD Program and eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis. Admission is within the sole discretion of the District Attorney's Office. Acceptance into and satisfactory completion of the ARD Program offers the defendant an opportunity to earn a clean record and dismissal of the pending charges. However,

should the defendant fail to satisfactorily complete the ARD Program, the defendant will be removed from the ARD Program and will be prosecuted as provided by law.

In order to be eligible for the program and to take advantage of the expedited nature of the program, defendants must agree to do the following: (1) apply for the program no later than the regularly scheduled preliminary hearing; (2) waive the right to a speedy trial; and (3) waive the filing of a criminal information. Defendants must also agree to abide by the terms and conditions of bail, refrain from the unlawful use and/or possession of controlled substances, and agree to remain arrest free prior to entry into the program and during their participation in the program.

ARD PLACEMENT DATE - Defendants must apply for ARD **at or before their preliminary hearing**. The defendant will be notified by the District Attorney when the ARD application is approved or denied. If the defendant's ARD application is approved, the ARD placement date **will be held on the defendant's FORMAL ARRAIGNMENT DATE**, unless notified otherwise by the Court. If the defendant's ARD application is denied, the arraignment date will simply proceed as the defendant's formal arraignment date and a Criminal Information will then be filed, and the defendant will be prosecuted as provided by law.

If the defendant's ARD application is approved, and the defendant fails to enter the ARD Program on the scheduled arraignment date or other scheduled date, the defendant's ARD approval will be rescinded. **IF THIS OCCURS, THE DEFENDANT IS NOT ENTITLED TO A REMAND FOR A PRELIMINARY HEARING.**

To apply for the ARD Program, please carefully and accurately fill out the Centre County ARD Application and submit it to the Centre County District Attorney's Office **at or before your preliminary hearing date**. Applications will be available at the preliminary hearing and can be found online at:

<http://centrecountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/257>