

MEDIA RELEASE

24 October 2022

New podcast lifts the lid on sentencing

The NSW Sentencing Council has released a new podcast explaining how sentencing decisions are made in NSW courts to help promote better understanding of the issue.

Host of the *Sentencing Explained* podcast and Chair of the Sentencing Council, the Hon Peter McClellan AM KC, said sentencing is complex and often misunderstood.

“The perceived harshness or leniency of a sentence by the community makes it one of the most contentious areas of the court’s work,” Mr McClellan said.

“It can stir up a lot of emotion and criticism.”

Sentencing Explained aims to help students, legal practitioners, those who work within and alongside the justice system, as well as the general public, better understand how judges make sentencing decisions. It also explores how sentencing practices continue to evolve.

The podcast will be particularly relevant to high school Legal Studies students looking for ways to improve their knowledge of the criminal justice system.

Mr McClellan interviews key figures, thinkers and innovators including judges, prosecutors, defence counsel, and current and past members of the Council. Participants include Director of Public Prosecutions NSW Sally Dowling SC and Senior Public Defender Belinda Rigg SC.

The Sentencing Council is an independent advisory body consisting of 16 members. It monitors sentencing trends and practices and makes recommendations to the NSW Attorney General. The Council is also committed to educating the public about sentencing.

“So often a sentence is communicated in a headline or a brief mention in a news story with little context provided. We want the community to have confidence in the decisions made by the courts and the factors that a judicial officer is required to balance,” Mr McClellan said.

To listen to a preview of *Sentencing Explained* and subscribe visit [sentencingcouncil.nsw.gov.au/podcast](https://www.sentencingcouncil.nsw.gov.au/podcast). It will be available on major podcast platforms from October 24 along with study guides and transcripts.

Visit the NSW Sentencing Council website <https://www.sentencingcouncil.justice.nsw.gov.au/> to find out more about its work.

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