

Reconnection, Employment and Learning (REAL) Program

Participant fact sheet



Australian Government
Department of Employment
and Workplace Relations

What is the REAL Program?

The REAL Program is a voluntary program that helps First Nations people transition out of the justice system and back into the community.

REAL can support you for up to 6 months before release and 12 months after release.

Who delivers the REAL Program?

REAL mentors will support and work directly with you at the facility where you are located and then in the community.

Can I participate in the REAL Program?

You are eligible if you are a First Nations person aged 15 or over, and are either due for release within 6 months or currently held on remand.

Please note: Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee a place in the program. Availability may depend on capacity and other factors.

Want to know more?

Let a facility staff member know that you are interested in the REAL Program. A mentor from the REAL Program will reach out to let you know how to get started.

What can I do in the REAL Program?

You will work with a mentor to understand what you want to achieve after release. Together you will develop an Individual Action Plan, which sets out your goals and how your mentor will support you to achieve them. You will explore:

- what strengths and knowledge you already have to help you
- who you would like to walk alongside you
- how you will get back on track.

Your mentor can support you to connect with services and activities – both while in custody and after your release – that will help you achieve your goals, such as:

- cultural activities, art, caring for Country, healing, yarning circles
- health and fitness, housing and other social services
- financial counselling
- English language & literacy and numeracy
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) access
- volunteering in emergency services, supporting community activities
- Year 12 or TAFE
- apprenticeship programs
- getting tickets and licenses
- working in hospitality, construction, transport, customer service, cleaning and more.