Going to Downing Centre Local Court on Drug Manufacturing Charges

Downing Centre Local Court is one of the largest courts in Sydney and it deals with a number of different drug matters, including possession, supply and manufacture of drugs. If you are scheduled to appear at Downing Centre Local on drug manufacturing charges, it's important to have an understanding of what your charges mean, what to expect in court, and what the possible outcome might be.

What is drug manufacturing?

According to the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act, drug manufacture is an indictable offence, which means it is generally dealt with in the district court. In some cases, it may be possible to have drug manufacturing charges dealt with summarily in the local court. This generally applies in situations where the quantity manufactured wasn't considered to be a large or commercial quantity.

Drug manufacturing is classified as the production or manufacture of any prohibited drug and it includes taking part in the manufacture or production of a prohibited drug, even if you are not the main person responsible. Whether or not a drug is considered to be a prohibited drug depends on how it is classified according to the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration. Laws vary slightly between states and the penalty you will get for manufacturing or growing different drugs may be different depending where the matter is dealt with.

What is the penalty for drug manufacturing?

The penalty you receive for a drug manufacturing charge will

depend on your previous history and the type and quantity of drug manufactured. There are also different penalties depending on whether the matter is dealt with as an indictable offence or a summary offence. If you are due to appear at Downing Centre Local for drug manufacturing, the offence is being handled summarily, which means you will be liable for a lower maximum penalty than if you were appearing at the district court.

The maximum penalty for drug manufacturing charges dealt with at the local court is a two-year prison sentence, or a fine of up to $2,200. Other penalties you might receive include a good behaviour bond, community service, a suspended sentence, or if you plead guilty, a section 10 dismissal or conditional release order.

For matters involving the manufacture of indictable or commercial quantities of drugs the maximum penalty increases significantly and long-term imprisonment is a strong possibility. The maximum jail sentence for the manufacture of commercial quantities of drugs is life imprisonment. Cases involving larger quantities of drugs will be heard at the district court rather than the local court, and will usually involve a judge and jury instead of a magistrate.

What will happen at court?

If you have been arrested on drug manufacturing charges and released on bail, or you have been given a court attendance notice, you will be required to attend the local court on a specified date. It is a good idea to seek legal advice as soon as possible, even if you intend to plead guilty.

Make sure you attend court on your nominated day and time. If you can’t attend for any specific reason, make sure you call the court as soon as possible and provide evidence of the reason, for example a medical certificate from your doctor if you are sick. Failing to turn up to your court date may lead

to a warrant being issued for your arrest and the matter can even be decided without you.

You will need to bring all your papers and documents to court and prepare to wait around, as it can take a while for your turn. The first court date is where you plead guilty or not guilty. If you decide to plead guilty, the matter may be decided then and there, and the magistrate will give you a sentence. If you choose to plead not guilty, the matter will be postponed so that both sides can prepare their evidence.

If you are unsure how to plead it’s a good idea to speak to a lawyer before your court appearance. If you choose to plead not guilty, you will need help in preparing your defence, and it’s a good idea to have representation in court. Drug manufacture charges can be serious, so make sure you have the best chance of a positive outcome.