

PRACTICE BRIEFING

Addressing members of the Judiciary

INTRODUCTION

Being able to appear as an advocate for any person before any New Zealand court or tribunal is one of the areas of work expressly reserved for New Zealand lawyers. As advocates, it is obviously important that lawyers observe the correct forms of address in their dealings with members of the judiciary. This Practice Briefing summarises the expected forms of judiciary address, both in the courtroom and in written communications.

ORAL ADDRESS

By convention, judges of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal and High Court are referred to as Justice [surname]. Judges in the District Court are referred to as Judge [surname] or Chief Judge [surname] as appropriate.

If a judge is referred to without name, the appropriate reference is “the Judge”. It is not correct to refer to judges by their full names unless it is necessary as a point of distinction from another judge of the same surname.

When you refer to a judge in court, don’t speak of judges of the High Court, Court of Appeal or Supreme Court as “Doe J” or “Judge Doe”.

If you meet a member of the judiciary socially, it is usual to address them as “Judge” (as in “pleased to meet you Judge”).

WRITTEN ADDRESS

In all the following, the use of Judges’ surnames in the salutation is optional.

Chief Justice

Address on letters: The Rt Hon Dame Sian Elias GNZM
 Chief Justice
 Chief Justice’s Chambers
 DX SX10084 or PO Box 61
 Wellington 6140

Salutation: Dear Chief Justice (or if personally known, Dear Dame Sian)

Supreme Court Judges

Address on letters: The Rt Hon Justice [surname] *(if the Judge is a Privy Councillor)*
If not:
The Hon Justice [surname]
Supreme Court of New Zealand
DX SX 11224 or PO Box 61
Wellington 6140

Salutation: Dear Judge

Court of Appeal Judges

President

Address on letters: The Hon Justice Stephen Kós
President, Court of Appeal
DX SX 11223 or PO Box 1606
Wellington 6140.

Salutation: Dear Judge

Other Court of Appeal Judges

Address on letters: The Hon Justice [surname]
Court of Appeal
DX SX11223 or PO Box 1606
Wellington 6140.

Salutation: Dear Judge

High Court Judges

Chief High Court Judge

Address on letters: His/Her Hon Justice [surname]
The Chief High Court Judge
DX SX11199
Wellington

Address on letters: The Hon Justice [surname]
[place] High Court
[postal address]

Salutation: Dear Judge

District Court Judges

Principal Family/Youth Court Judges

Address on letters: His/Her Hon Judge [surname]
Principal Family/Youth Court Judge
District Court
DX SX 11240
Wellington

Salutation: Dear Principal Judge

Chief Judges of District/Employment Court

Address on letters: His/Her Hon Judge [surname]
Chief Court Judge
[postal address]

Salutation: Dear Chief Judge

Other District Court Judges and Judges on Māori Land Court or Tribunals

Address on letters: His/Her Hon Judge [surname]
[place] District Court/Māori Land Court/Tribunal name
[postal address]

Salutation: Dear Judge

NEW ZEALAND LAW SOCIETY

Law Society Building
26 Waring Taylor Street
WELLINGTON 6011

PO Box 5041 or DX SP 20202
Lambton Quay
WELLINGTON 6140
(04) 472 7837

Information in the Practice Briefing series is provided by the Law Society as a service to the legal profession. This briefing is intended to provide guidance and information on best practices. Some of the information and requirements may change over time and should be checked before any action is taken.

September 2018.