

Tēnā koutou e ngā roia o Te Kōti ā-Whānau

SOUTH AUCKLAND FAMILY COURT CLUSTER OPERATIONS

We take this opportunity to update the ongoing operations in the southern cluster Family Courts (Manukau, Papakura and Pukekohe).

From Monday 18th May 2020 we will be operating pursuant to the Alert 2 protocols released on 13th May 2020. With regard to the previously scheduled work:

- Courts will resume sitting at Papakura and Pukekohe.
- Short cause hearing lists, half day hearing lists and settlement conferences, will be the subject of a call over several days before the allocated dates to consider whether a hearing (or settlement conference) is still required and if so to discuss appropriate allocation on the scheduled day. In this way, the 10 am call over on short cause hearing days will be avoided.
- CoCA and general lists will continue to be allocated 20 min conference slots (unless a longer conference time had previously been directed), to prevent larger numbers appearing at 10am, 11.45am, 2.15pm and 3.45pm.
- Long cause hearings will resume.

All court appearances will be subject to the alert 2 protocols as published.

As previously reported, we have embarked on an ongoing triage process, which has now been completed. We have now embarked on (and almost completed) an audit of all active OT files in the Southern cluster courts. Because of this ongoing work:

- Currently all box work is up to date and continues to be dealt with on a “rolling basis” without the need to wait for allocated box work dates.
- In the next 2 weeks all matters on the ready list for short cause hearing and half day hearings will be the subject of a call over to ascertain whether the hearing is still required or whether the matter has been resolved or requires an alternative disposition. The purpose of these call overs is to reduce scheduling time and avoid lists “falling over” where matters have settled. Attached is the standard letter that will accompany all notices.
- The purpose of the OT audit is to seek ways to improve our engagement with OT work. We will update separately on this when this special project work is completed.

If there are any questions or concerns, please direct them to the Liaison Judge (Goodwin).

Again, we thank the South Auckland bar for their continued commitment to our communities and support of the Family Court.

Ngā mihi nui

Ngā Kaiwhakawā o Te Kōti ā-Whānau ki Manukau

14 May 2020

Letter to counsel

1. All short cause and half day fixtures on the “ready list” for allocation of a hearing date, will be subject of a callover before a Family Court judge during the next two weeks.
2. The purpose of the callover is to determine whether the case still requires hearing time, that it is ready for hearing, and if not, what further court event/intervention is required.
3. It is hoped that with the cooperation of counsel hearing time over the next months will be more efficiently used and the current delay in available hearing dates, compounded by the Covid 19 pandemic, will be reduced.
4. Counsel are **not** required to file a memorandum for the callover but must be prepared to confirm:
 1. That within five days of the callover date, counsel and parties have discussed a resolution of the issues subject of the hearing and if resolution is not achieved, what directions are required to progress the case.
 2. If a hearing is still required:
 - a. Does the time estimate for the hearing remain the same.
 - b. If the timetable directions have not been complied with, what is the appropriate new timetable for compliance and what other directions (if any) are needed.
 - c. If the timetable directions have been complied with, what further directions (if any) are necessary because of recent developments.
 3. If the hearing date is no longer required:
 - a. Why the hearing should be adjourned.
 - b. The nature and duration of the next court “event”.
 - c. Any directions required for that event.