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Tēnā koutou katoa,

I attach for your information modifications to the Jury Rules which will come into effect in January 2022. These changes have been made by the Chief District Court Judge and me pursuant to section 24A Epidemic Preparedness Act.

The purposes of the changes are:

- To allow for prospective jurors to assemble in different areas of the courthouse. This will enable physical distancing and different groupings of prospective jurors.
- To provide for pre-balloting to take place at a different location where there are size constraints at the courthouse and a larger venue would allow for better physical distancing of prospective jurors eg Rotorua.
- To enable pre-balloting to take place on a day before the trial is due to commence so that only those jurors who have been balloted need return on the day of the trial.
- To allow for pre-balloting to take place without prospective jurors being present but with them having the ability to be connected if they desire and for counsel and the parties to attend if they wish. This was the change discussed at our meeting last week.

The protocol has been posted on the Courts of New Zealand website. In the New Year the publication formalities, such as gazetting, will be attended to.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Hon Justice Susan Thomas
Chief High Court Judge