



MAGISTRATES COURT OF TASMANIA

Circular 3 of 2020

After Hours Courts - Magistrates Court Arrangements Due to COVID-19

Background and Purpose

Bench justices normally preside over after hours courts in each registry of the Magistrates Court. Subject to need, after hours courts are held each weekday evening and each morning and evening on Saturdays and Sundays.

To reduce the impact of COVID-19 the Magistrates Court is taking steps to limit the numbers of people required to attend the Court in person. The arrangements set out below are designed to help achieve that aim.

After Hours Court Arrangements

The Chief Magistrate has determined that magistrates will preside over after hours courts at weekends, starting on **Saturday 18 April 2020**.

Subject to the temporary arrangements in Burnie set out below, the Chief Magistrate has determined that bench justices will continue to preside over after hours courts in each registry on Monday to Thursday inclusive. There will be no change to the times of weekday after hours courts.

No weekday after hours courts will be held in Burnie registry between the period 15 April and 24 April 2020. Refer to Circular 2 of 2020.

Two magistrates will sit each weekend day. One magistrate will deal with all after hours matters for the South of the state and the other will deal with all after hours matters for the North and North West.

Weekend after hours courts will commence at 11am each Saturday and Sunday, as required.

Procedure

Weekend after hours courts will be held by audio visual link, using Zoom. The court clerk will connect the magistrate and all parties to the court session by audio visual link, or if necessary, by telephone. The court clerk will record the proceedings.

A prosecutor from each region will attend court via audio visual link, and the court will connect by audio visual link to the reception prison (in Launceston and Hobart) or police station (Burnie and Devonport) where the defendant is being held.

Every electronic court session will have a password and meeting number. A person with that information can join the court session. It is not necessary to download Zoom or be a licensed user.

Prosecutors will provide the court and defence counsel with relevant documents electronically. They will also advise the court clerk of the parties to be connected to the session, and their contact details.

Members of the media who wish to report on court proceedings should contact the District Registrar/Manager on jane.mcleod@justice.tas.gov.au by close of business each Friday to make the necessary arrangements to be included in the court session.

Any enquiries outside business hours can be sent to the Administrator of Courts, Penelope Ikedife at penelope.ikedife@justice.tas.gov.au.

17 April 2020

Penelope Ikedife
Administrator of Courts