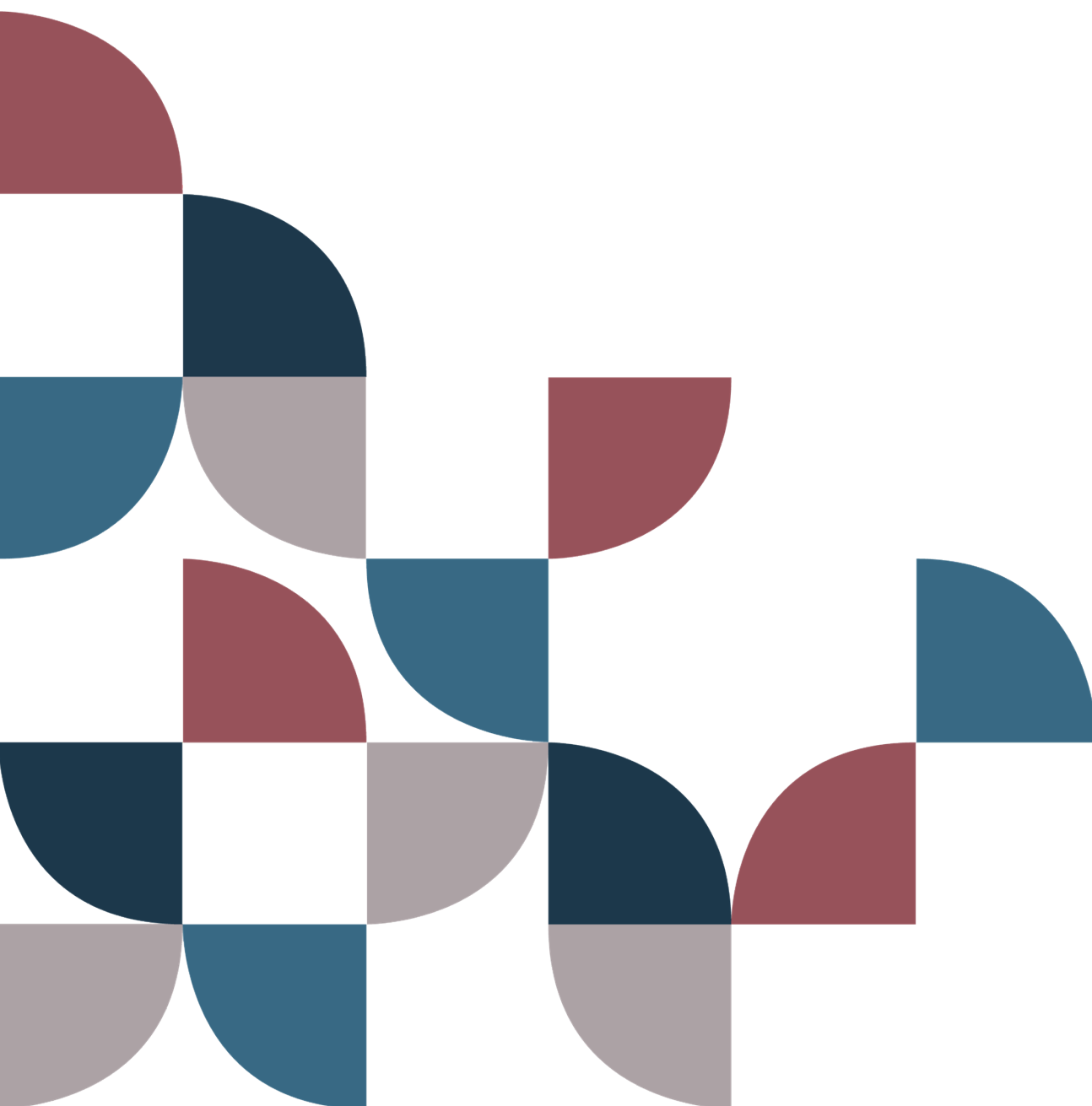


Information Package

Puisne Judge, Supreme Court of Tasmania

August 2026



Background

The Supreme Court is the highest court in Tasmania and includes the Full Court and the Court of Criminal Appeal.

The *Supreme Court Act 1887* (the Act) provides that, in addition to the Chief Justice and the puisne judge of the Supreme Court required to be appointed under the Charter of Justice, the Governor may appoint not more than five additional puisne judges. This vacancy is the result of the upcoming retirement of a puisne judge of the Supreme Court.

People accused of serious offences, such as murder, manslaughter and serious drug offences, are dealt with in the Supreme Court after preliminary hearings have been conducted in the Magistrates Court. If there is a plea of not guilty, then a jury will usually decide whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty.

In civil law matters the trial division hears all matters involving amounts of more than \$50,000. These cases are usually tried by a single judge, but in some cases at the election of a party to the matter, by a jury of seven people in a court presided over by a judge.

There is a right of appeal in the Supreme Court from the decision of the Magistrates Court and from most tribunals. In criminal cases, appeals from the decision of a Supreme Court judge and jury are usually heard by a court consisting of three or more Supreme Court judges, called the Court of Criminal Appeal. Where a matter has been determined by a single judge of the Supreme Court, or a judge and jury, in a civil matter, a party has a right of appeal to a court consisting of three or more Supreme Court judges, called the Full Court of the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court also hears matters pursuant to the *Judicial Review Act 2000*.

More information about the Supreme Court can be found on its website www.supremecourt.tas.gov.au

Eligibility for Appointment

In accordance with section 4(1) of the Act:

A person is eligible for appointment to the office of judge of the Supreme Court if the person –

- (a) is an Australian lawyer of no less than 10 years' standing who has attained the age of 35 years; or
- (b) is, or has been, a judge of –
 - (i) the Federal Court of Australia; or
 - (ii) the Family Court of Australia; or

- (iii) the Supreme Court of another State or a Territory; or
- (iv) the High Court of New Zealand; or
- (v) the Supreme Court of New Zealand; or
- (c) is, or has been, appointed as a magistrate under the [Magistrates Court Act 1987](#).

Selection Criteria

Appointment of puisne judges is made in accordance with the Tasmanian Government's Protocol for Judicial Appointments (see www.justice.tas.gov.au/about/policies/protocol_for_judicial_appointments).

The Protocol provides that candidates wishing to be considered for the role should be:

- an experienced legal practitioner with a high record of professional achievement coupled with a knowledge and understanding of the law consistent with judicial office.
- an excellent conceptual and analytical thinker, displaying independence and clarity of thought.
- an effective oral and verbal communicator in dealing with legal professionals, litigants and witnesses and able to explain technical issues to non-specialists.
- highly organised, able to demonstrate or develop sound court management skills and work well under pressure.
- capable of making fair, balanced and consistent decisions according to law without undue delay.
- a person of maturity, discretion, patience and integrity who inspires respect and confidence.
- committed to the proper administration of justice and continuous improvement in court practice, working collegiately with judicial colleagues and effectively with court officers to those ends

Basis of Appointment and Remuneration

Applicants will be assessed by an assessment panel as either suitable for appointment or not suitable for appointment. A statement of reasons will be provided to the Attorney-General.

After receiving the assessment panel's recommendations, the Attorney-General may consult on a strictly confidential basis with whomever the Attorney-General sees fit.

Once the Attorney-General has identified a preferred candidate, the Secretary of the Department of Justice will contact the Executive Director of the Law Society of Tasmania and Chair of the Legal Profession Board on a confidential basis seeking their comment on whether there is any reason (including impending disciplinary action) why the appointment should not proceed.

If the proposed appointee is a practitioner from another jurisdiction a further check will also be made with the equivalent professional bodies from their home jurisdiction.

The proposed appointee must also consent to a criminal history check being carried out.

All judicial appointments whether permanent or temporary must be considered by Cabinet prior to submission to the Executive Council in compliance with government policy on senior appointments.

Recommendation to Executive Council

Following consideration of the matter by Cabinet, the Attorney-General will recommend an appointment to the Governor-in-Council. Once the Executive Council has issued letters patent in the case of a Judge, the appointment may be announced by the Attorney-General.

While every effort is made to contact unsuccessful applicants prior to an announcement regarding the appointment, this is not always possible.

Remuneration

A puisne judge is paid 90% of the salary of the Chief Justice. As at 1 July 2026, the salary rate is \$540,798 per annum. In addition, the appointee will receive employer-funded superannuation payments made in accordance with relevant legislative requirements. Previous defined benefit schemes for judicial officers have been closed.

A puisne judge may arrange a salary sacrifice in accordance with Australian Tax Office rules.

A privately plated and fully maintained vehicle is provided. Judges may select from a list of approved vehicles. Alternatively, judges may elect to not receive a vehicle, and receive an allowance in lieu of a vehicle.

A puisne judge may take leave during court vacations or when ill. Judges are also entitled to 13 weeks' sabbatical leave after every five years of service.

Additional Information

Support staff

Each judge has a dedicated associate who provides assistance in court, records orders and sentences, manages juries, and conducts legal research. Associates are usually drawn from graduates of the Legal Practice Course on a 1 or 2 year contract.

Judges are also supported by an attendant (who assists in the operation of courts during trial, manages exhibits, and administers oaths); and by judges' secretaries who manage diaries, appointments, and type, proofread, and publish judgments.

Library

The Supreme Court maintains a separate legal library for the Judges. It is heavily used by the Judges when researching and writing their judgments. It contains significant hard copy resources (law reports, journals etcetera) as well as on-line legal resources.

Other matters

Judges may not hold any other paid office.

A judge can only be dismissed for misconduct by the Governor at the request of both Houses of Parliament.

There is a convention that a judge should not engage in political or any other public activity which might have the effect of identifying him or her with one segment of the community as opposed to another.

Judges abide by the Guide to Judicial Conduct published by the Council of Chief Justices.

Applications

Applications should be marked "PERSONAL and CONFIDENTIAL" and include a current curriculum vitae and three professional and confidential referees.

Applicants may refer to the selection criteria when completing their expression of interest. Assessments will be made against these criteria as a minimum for all judicial appointments.

Applications may be emailed to secretary@justice.tas.gov.au or sent by post to:

Ms Kristy Bourne
Secretary
Department of Justice
GPO Box 825
HOBART TAS 7001

Applications must be received by close of business **Sunday, 13 September 2026**.

Further information on this vacancy is available by contacting Ms Kristy Bourne, Secretary, Department of Justice, by telephone (03) 6165 4943 or email secretary@justice.tas.gov.au.

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