

Justices of the Peace Branch

February 2023 Update

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Good afternoon colleagues,

Welcome to our first update for 2023.

This year will be very busy for the Justices of the Peace Branch (JP Branch) team as daily life becomes more familiar after three years impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We remain committed to all registered Justices of the Peace (JPs) and Commissioners for Declarations (Cdecs) through ongoing support.

We trust you will find this update useful and always feel welcome to contact JP Branch on [1300 301 147](tel:1300301147) or jp@justice.qld.gov.au if you require any assistance in your role.

Clarification on Public Liability Insurance coverage for JPs and Cdecs

The JP Branch frequently receives enquiries from JPs and Cdecs around the state about insurance coverage while providing witnessing services to the public.

When performing official duties as a JP or Cdec for the State of Queensland, all JPs and Cdecs are covered for personal injury, public liability and professional indemnity insurance through the [Queensland Government Insurance Fund \(QGIF\)](#).

The QGIF policy protects JPs and Cdecs while they are witnessing anywhere in Queensland or Australia (regardless of whether it takes place in the JPs in the Community program, a private residence or workplace). In these cases, you should use the [Incident Report Form](#) to report the incident to the JP Branch.

Additionally, the Queensland Government Indemnity Guidelines apply to all registered JPs and Cdecs. According to the guidelines, volunteers offering their services on behalf of the state, cannot be personally held liable for any injury they may cause to a third party as long as they are acting in good faith. In this case, injury refers to monetary loss and good faith means they made an honest mistake on a client's form.

Under the guidelines, the Queensland Government accepts responsibility for and financial harm caused inadvertently. The purpose of this coverage is to ensure all JPs and Cdecs continue to provide an important service to the Queensland community.



Celebrating 20 years of the JPs in the Community Program



This year marks the 20th anniversary of the JPs in the Community Program (JPITCP) and JP Branch will host several events across the State to recognise, celebrate and promote the vital role that volunteer JPs and Cdecs play in their local communities. Further information will be released throughout the year.

To quantify the impact of a highly accessible and professional witnessing service, last year the 222 JPITCP locations witnessed over 1.86 million documents for over 624,000 clients, demonstrating the impact of a highly accessible and professional witnessing service.

Every one of these 222 locations are made up of a team of like-minded people who volunteer their time to assist the public with their witnessing needs. According to research, volunteering not only improves our health and happiness, by increasing wellbeing and relieving stress, but it is also a fantastic way to meet new people and create strong social connections ([Department of Health and Aged Care, 2019](#)).

Existing JPITCP participants frequently express their gratitude for the life-long friends and colleagues they have made, as well as numerous testimonials about their personal and professional growth.

Visit www.qld.gov.au/volunteerjp to find out more about how you can get involved and volunteer at your local JPs in the Community Program signing site.

After-hours JP search review

JP Branch is currently undertaking a review of the JPs and Cdecs listed on the [after-hours JP search](#) service on the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's website.

This review is focused on JPs and Cdecs to ensure details are correct and that they are still able to assist the community with their witnessing requests.

For any JPs or Cdecs not currently on the after-hours JP search, information will be sent on how you can list your details online.

No action is required until you receive an email with specific instructions.

Titles Queensland eConveyancing mandate

From 20 February 2023, in accordance with the *Land Title Regulation 2022*, certain types of Qld Titles Registry documents must be lodged through an Electronic Lodgement Network (ELN).

This may result in a reduction of the number of physical Titles Registry forms that must be witnessed from this date. However, there may be times when a client requires their forms witnessed in person, in which case our standard witnessing procedure applies. You can read more about the [upcoming mandate](#) by visiting Titles Queensland's website.

Volunteer recognised for service

After 10 years of volunteering at the Mareeba Courthouse, Mick Dwyer still loves volunteering and helping the community.

"I feel at home here, I know everyone and I love being able to help people," said Mick.

Mick's dedication to volunteering was recognised by the Mareeba Shire Council which presented him with the Senior Community Service Award on Australia Day. "As well as volunteering as a JP in the courthouse and in my private capacity, I have also been involved in amateur theatre in town," said Mick.

"I must have been on stage a least 200 times, one of the most memorable was playing a police sergeant shot dead by Ned Kelly."

Mick has been a JP for 17 years.

"I mainly witnessed simple documents before joining the team at the courthouse," said Mick.

"This is where I really got all my experience, you see such a wide variety of documents at the courthouse, not all of which are in the handbook. Sometimes you just need to use your best judgement."

JP Branch would like to extend their congratulations to Mick on his recent award.



DJAG on social media

Did you know that you can follow DJAG on social media?

DJAG social media pages are a great way to keep up with what's going on across DJAG that may benefit your witnessing or personal life. Visit our [social media](#) page to find out more.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your role as a witnessing officer in Queensland, please don't hesitate contacting the Justices of the Peace Branch on [1300 301 147](tel:1300301147) or jp@justice.qld.gov.au.

Warm regards,

Damien Mealey
Registrar and Manager
Justices of the Peace Branch



As a Justice of the Peace (JP) or Commissioner for Declarations (Cdec) you play a vital part in the administration of justice for the community. From time to time, there are changes made to the laws and functions that relate to your duties. As an active JP or Cdec, it is important you are made aware of this information to ensure you are exercising your duties correctly and lawfully.

If you believe you should not be receiving this email entirely, contact the Justices of the Peace Branch on jp@justice.qld.gov.au or phone 1300 301 147 during business hours.