

Joint Statement

Heads of Jurisdiction of Victoria's courts and tribunal Monday, 29 June, 2020

We are each committed to making sure that our courts and tribunal are safe, healthy and respectful workplaces. We understand the importance of doing so.

We understand that a safe workplace has people who value honesty, use their power responsibly, and strive to earn and sustain trust.

A healthy workplace fosters wellbeing through sound governance and accountable, open and transparent practices. A respectful workplace is fair and inclusive, with leaders who model ethical behaviour.

Diversity and inclusion cannot thrive where disrespectful and unethical conduct occurs.

Judicial officers hold a leadership position in society. Our behaviour should reflect the trust and confidence the community places in us. The judiciary must lead by example by rejecting improper and unethical behaviour. It must not be tolerated in any circumstance. We will not tolerate it.

Failing to do so will jeopardise the operation of the justice system and erode trust.

Robust workplace policies and procedures are important. But they must be accompanied by building a culture in which improper conduct does not occur and where anyone who sees it or learns of it will take steps to address it.

We have worked in the past with the Judicial College of Victoria to develop and deliver its advanced court leadership and workplace programs for judicial officers to ensure we have that culture and that the Victorian judiciary maintains the highest standards of integrity both individually and collectively. Our work with the College in this area is continuing.

We have policies and procedures in place to protect our staff and address improper conduct. We are reviewing them and we will do more to ensure that all who work in our courts and tribunal are aware of and clearly understand them.

We are united in our commitment to providing a positive and inclusive environment for all who work with us. Together, we will continue to build a culture of respect in our courts and tribunal.



The Honourable Justice Anne Ferguson
Chief Justice of the Supreme Court



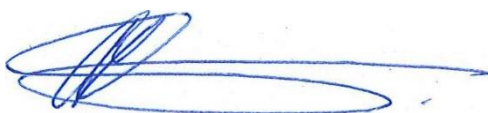
The Honourable Justice Peter Kidd
Chief Judge of the County Court



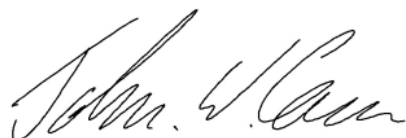
The Honourable Justice Michelle Quigley
President of the Victorian Civil and
Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)



Her Honour Judge Lisa Hannan
Chief Magistrate



Her Honour Judge Amanda Chambers
President of the Children's Court



His Honour Judge John Cain
State Coroner

Background

In Victoria, non-judicial staff, including associates, are covered by the Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2016 and have all the protections provided by that industrial instrument and the relevant code of conduct.

The complaints processes in Victoria's courts and tribunal and in Court Services Victoria (CSV) enable staff to seek assistance and are underpinned by their *Respect in the Workplace* Policy.

Complaints can also be made through CSV's *Integrity Framework* and processes exist within the structure of the independent Judicial Commission of Victoria for complaints about judges.