



Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices

ACN 004 226 448

Chief Patron: The Governor of Victoria

Patron: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Melbourne

Update: 27th March 2020 RVAHJ CoronaVirus Advice

*****IMPORTANT ADVICE FOR ALL HONORARY JUSTICES FROM RVAHJ*****

Following on from our earlier advice and continued careful consideration based on our guiding principle that all Honorary Justices should minimise any and all potential risks and always consider their their own wellbeing.

The RVAHJ has updated our advice in regards to CoronaVirus for both JPs and BJs as follows:

1. Document Witnessing & Certification Services

- All JPs over 80 Years of age should refrain from all signing and certification duties
- Any JP with existing medical issues should refrain from all signing and certification duties
- All Document Signing Stations should be closed immediately
- No Witnessing & Certification Services should be conducted at a JPs home
- Urgent Witnessing & Certification Services may be considered on a "one off" basis provided all requirements and recommendations for social distancing and other precautions are in place
- Refer all simple requests (Stat Decs & Certified Copies) to the list of Authorised Witnesses - www.justice.vic.gov.au/information-for-authorised-statutory-declaration-witnesses
(NOTE: There are thousands of people in Victoria authorised to witness Stat Decs and Certify True copies)
- If you do decide to witness a document, always wash your hands and sanitise any items used (pens etc) immediately follow each signing event (that is, between clients if there are multiples as well as at the end of the session) and maintain the social distancing and other precautions at all times.

2. Bail and Interim Accommodation Order Hearings

- BJs must be comfortable that all requirements and recommendations for social distancing and other precautions are in place before conducting any hearing. Otherwise, feel free to refuse the hearing.
- Preference should be given to Bail Hearings for Children and Interim Accommodation Orders. That is, if a BJ wishes to reduce their service and exposure a little, but still be available for critical cases, then the critical cases should be Children and IAOs. We are confirming with the HJSS that there will be no penalty in service commitment obligations (9 out of 10 acceptances) for refusing to conduct hearings for First Nations people and people with mental health concerns during the current emergency
- In addition we are also confirming with the HJSS that if any BJ chooses to stand down during the pandemic, they may do so without effecting their service commitment obligation to be reasonably active and available. If you want to do this, please adjust your roster accordingly and note the reason for the exception as "Covid-19"





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Over the last few weeks I have been in contact with many HJ's and your positive outlook, energy and drive to want to help others in the community has been overwhelming. Thank you for your service and commitment to wanting to help others, and please remember that at this time you should however consider you own health and the health of your families and friends first, so so that you can continue to support your communities in the future.

We wish all our members the best as we all work through this difficult time together.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Mracek

Paul Mracek JP FRVAHJ
President, RVAHJ
27th March 2020

USEFUL CONTACTS & RESOURCES

- Vic Department of Health & Human Services Coronavirus Hotline 1800 675 398 (24 hours)
- Vic Department of Health & Human Services website – health professionals:
<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/health-services-and-general-practitioners-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
- Vic Department of Health & Human Services website – consumers:
<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
- Vic Department of Health and Human Services News Page:
<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/news-media/news>
- Vic Department of Health and Human Services Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/VicGovDHHS/>



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