



High Court Practice Note — Proceeding Timeline

1. This Practice Note applies to general civil proceedings commenced on or after 1 January 2026. It addresses the completion and filing by the plaintiff of a new document named a “Proceeding Timeline”.¹

Background

2. A new regime for general civil proceedings in the High Court commences on 1 January 2026. The new regime has three key differences from the existing approach:
 - (a) an “evidence first” model;
 - (b) a judicial issues conference (JIC) will largely replace the existing case management regime; and
 - (c) at trial, a greater focus on contemporaneous documents.
3. For the new regime to be effective, the JIC needs to take place relatively early in a proceeding, shortly after the exchange of factual witness statements, draft chronologies, and any additional documents referred to in those materials which have not already been disclosed (collectively, the “factual evidence”).
4. The Working Group charged with oversight of the implementation of the new Rules considered it would assist the parties, the Registry and the Court if the plaintiff were to confirm with the Court the calculated (or proposed) dates by which the parties’ factual evidence is to be served. This will be done by the plaintiff completing and filing a Proceeding Timeline.
5. The proceeding will then be listed in an Associate Judge’s chambers list for a JIC ready listing approximately two weeks after the date advised in the Proceeding Timeline for last factual evidence to be served. The purpose of that listing will be to confirm that the parties are ready for a JIC to be scheduled, and to make all necessary timetabling and other directions in relation to that step.

The Proceeding Timeline

6. A template of the Proceeding Timeline can be found here [Documents - prescribed forms & useful templates | New Zealand Ministry of Justice](#).² A copy of this document will

¹ This document has been referred to in some previous materials as a “Proceeding Notice”.

² Available on the Ministry of Justice website from 1 January 2026.

also be issued to the plaintiff at the same time endorsed copies of the plaintiff's pleadings are released by the Registry for service.

7. In addition to providing for confirmation of the timetable for the service of factual evidence, the Proceeding Timeline also reminds the parties of the overriding objective of the new Rules (r 1.2), contains a statement of the Court's expectation that parties (in addition to lawyers) will attend JICs, provides for confirmation that no dispositive interlocutory applications (being those referred to in r 7.4(8)) have been filed (if that is the case), and provides for the plaintiff to list the further pleadings (beyond the statement of claim) that have been filed and served.

Completion of the Proceeding Timeline

8. The plaintiff is to confer with the other parties prior to completing and filing the Proceeding Timeline. The parties are to comply with the duty to cooperate (r 1.2A) when conferring on the completion of the Proceeding Timeline.
9. The completed Proceeding Timeline is to be filed in accordance with the following timeframes:
 - (a) if no notice of intention to file a r 7.4(8) interlocutory application is given by any party in accordance with r 7.4(3)(a), **five working days** following the time prescribed by r 7.4(3)(a); or
 - (b) if notice is given in accordance with r 7.4(3)(a) and a r 7.4(8) interlocutory application is subsequently filed in accordance with r 7.4(3)(b), **ten working days** after disposition of the application, or the filing of the statement of defence(s), whichever is the later; or
 - (c) if notice is given in accordance with r 7.4(3)(a) but no r 7.4(8) application is subsequently filed in accordance with r 7.4(3)(b), **five working days** after the time prescribed in r 7.4(3)(b).
10. As set out in the template Proceeding Timeline, if the parties agree to an alternative timetable for the service of factual evidence to that set out in r 7.4(4), or one party seeks an alternative timetable which is not agreed, the plaintiff is to file the Proceeding Timeline together with a joint memorandum setting out the proposed alternative timetable agreed,³ or if not agreed, the parties' respective positions on the proposed timetable. Reasons are to be given as to why any proposed alternative timetable is appropriate and consistent with the overriding objective set out in r 1.2. Separate memoranda addressing disputed timetables are not to be filed.
11. In the event an agreed or disputed alternative timetable is proposed, the joint memorandum is to be referred to an Associate Judge who will deal with the matter on the papers pursuant to r 7.4(10) (unless directions are made otherwise).

³ Parties should not assume that consent to an alternative timetable will result in an amendment to the default timetable set out in r 7.4(4).

12. Parties and counsel should be aware that the Court's expectation is that the default timetable in r 7.4(4) will be appropriate for the very large majority of general proceedings.

JIC ready listing

13. Following the Proceeding Timeline being filed, the Registry is to schedule the proceeding for a JIC ready listing appearance approximately two weeks after the scheduled date by which the last of the parties' factual evidence is to be served. Even if there has been slippage in the timetable, the JIC ready listing will proceed (save for exceptional circumstances). At the JIC ready listing, the party or parties in default will be expected to explain to the Court why there has been default and what is required to bring the matter back into compliance.
14. This Practice Note is not intended to effect any change to the requirements of the High Court Rules governing general proceedings filed on or after 1 January 2026.

Hon Justice Sally Fitzgerald

Chief High Court Judge – Te Kaiwhakawā Matua

17 December 2025