



The Right Honourable Dame Helen Winkelmann

CHIEF JUSTICE OF NEW ZEALAND | TE TUMU WHAKAWĀ O AOTEAROA

## MEDIA STATEMENT

23 February 2023

# Jury trials deferred in Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay

The Chief Justice announced today that there will be no jury trials in Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay until after Easter weekend.

"We have made this decision in order to relieve pressure on the profession, court staff, judiciary, and the community in the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle," the Chief Justice said.

Jury trials will resume on 17 April 2023 in the Gisborne District Court and on 8 May 2023 in the Napier District Court.

Work is underway to give new hearing dates to trials which are adjourned as a consequence of these arrangements.

Any counsel with time critical trials that were scheduled to be heard before resumption of trials in Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay may make application for change of venue in the normal manner. Any applications for change of venue will be given priority for determination.

There are no High Court jury trials scheduled in Napier or Gisborne until after Easter.

Work is continuing to restore usual court operations in Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay. The current state of these courts is:

- Gisborne District Court is open and dealing with priority proceedings.
- Ruatoria District Court and Wairoa District Court remain closed.
- Napier District Court will reopen on Friday 24 February for priority proceedings.
- Hastings District Court is open and handling priority work and arrests for Hastings and Napier.

Next week all scheduled work will resume at Napier, Hastings and Gisborne District Courts with the exception of jury trials. The local solution framework will continue to apply to all of these courts and can be utilised as and when necessary.

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