



The Right Honourable Dame Helen Winkelmann

CHIEF JUSTICE OF NEW ZEALAND | TE TUMU WHAKAWĀ O AOTEAROA

19 December 2025

MEDIA STATEMENT

Chief Justice welcomes judicial appointment

The Chief Justice welcomes the Attorney-General's announcement today of the appointment of Wellington King's Counsel Victoria Heine as a Judge of the High Court.

Justice Heine will take up her appointment on 16 February 2026, and will sit in Wellington. She will be sworn in on Thursday 26 February 2026 at the Old High Court in Wellington.

Justice Heine is appointed in anticipation of the retirement in July 2026 of Justice Peter Churchman.

BIOGRAPHY

Justice Victoria Heine

Justice Heine graduated from Victoria University of Wellington with a Bachelor of Science (Biochemistry) in 1990 and a Bachelor of Laws (First Class Honours) in 1993. That same year she joined Russell McVeagh as a solicitor.

In 1997 she was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and obtained a Master of Laws from the University of Chicago. She then practised as a junior barrister until joining public law specialist firm Chen Palmer as a partner in 2002.

Justice Heine joined Chapman Tripp in 2005. She joined the partnership in 2007, subsequently becoming a Senior Litigation Partner while also serving as Deputy Chair and Chair of the firm's board for five years until 2018.

Since 2018 Justice Heine has practised as a barrister sole out of Thorndon Chambers in Wellington with a broad practice encompassing contract and equity disputes, enforcement under the Fair Trading Act and Commerce Act, regulatory disputes, and environmental work.

She is also an Adjunct Law Lecturer in civil remedies at the Victoria University of Wellington and a Reserve Panel member for the Singapore International Arbitration Centre. She is currently a board member of Equestrian Sports New Zealand.

Justice Heine was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 2021.

Helen Winkelmann
Chief Justice | Te Tumu Whakawā

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