



The Right Honourable Dame Helen Winkelmann

CHIEF JUSTICE OF NEW ZEALAND | TE TUMU WHAKAWĀ O AOTEAROA

13 March 2026

MEDIA STATEMENT

Chief Justice welcomes judicial appointments

The Chief Justice welcomes the Attorney-General's announcement today of the appointment of Manukau Crown Solicitor Natalie Walker as a Judge of the High Court, and Christchurch barrister and solicitor Christopher (Bill) Gambrill as an Associate Judge of the High Court.

Justice Natalie Walker will take her up appointment on 28 May 2026, and will sit in Auckland. She will be sworn in on 4 June 2026 at the Auckland High Court.

Associate Judge Gambrill will take up his appointment on 30 March 2026, and will sit in Christchurch. He be sworn in on 17 April 2026 at the Christchurch High Court.

BIOGRAPHY

Justice Natalie Walker

Justice Natalie Walker graduated from the University of Auckland in 1998 with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws. After a period with Chapman Tripp, she attended University College London and graduated with a Master of Laws (Distinction) in 2000.

On her return to New Zealand in 2001, Justice Natalie Walker spent six months as a junior barrister for the late John Haigh QC before joining Auckland Crown Solicitor firm Meredith Connell. Specialising in Crown prosecution work in the District and High Courts, she was made Senior Crown Counsel and an Associate of the firm in 2008, and joined the partnership in 2013.

In 2014, Justice Natalie Walker left the partnership at Meredith Connell to establish Kayes Fletcher Walker alongside two other directors. In 2015 she was appointed the Crown Solicitor at Manukau, the first appointment to that warrant. As a Principal Crown Prosecutor, Justice Natalie Walker prosecuted serious crime in the Counties Manukau region, and represented the Crown in appeals to the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court. Justice Natalie Walker holds a Diploma of Māori Language Fluency from Te Wānanga Takiura o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa.

Associate Judge Christopher (Bill) Gambrill

Associate Judge Gambrill graduated from Victoria University of Wellington with a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) in 1992, and worked with Simpson Grierson Butler White in Wellington until 1994.

In 1995 he joined London law firm Berwin Leighton and was admitted as a Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales in 1996. On his return to New Zealand, he worked as a commercial litigator with law firms White Fox & Jones in Christchurch and Simpson Grierson in Auckland until 2005.

From 2005 to 2019 Associate Judge Gambrill was based in the United Arab Emirates, working with advocate and legal consultancy firms. He spent nine years as a special counsel with Everys Legal Consultancy, conducting proceedings before the Courts of the Dubai International Financial Centre (a separate common law jurisdiction operating in Dubai), and international and local arbitral tribunals.

Since March 2020, Associate Judge Gambrill has been a special counsel working in commercial litigation at Martelli McKegg in Auckland, with principal areas of practice including company and insolvency law, conflict of laws, contractual disputes, and trust and equity disputes. He is a fellow of the Arbitrators' and Mediators' Institute of New Zealand.

Helen Winkelmann
Chief Justice | Te Tumu Whakawā

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