

Media Release

Two new judges appointed to the Supreme Court of NSW

Wednesday, 18 June 2025

Two highly respected members of the legal profession, his Honour Judge Paul McGuire SC and Dr Hayley Bennett SC, have been appointed as judges of the Supreme Court of New South Wales.

They will replace the Hon Justice James Stevenson and the Hon Justice David Davies, who will shortly retire from the bench.

Dr Bennett will be appointed to the Equity Division of the Supreme Court, while Judge McGuire, currently a judge of the District Court of NSW, will take up his role in the Common Law Division.

Dr Bennett regularly appears in complex matters involving mental capacity, both in succession law disputes as well as guardianship and mental health law applications and appeals.

She has also practised extensively in the areas of legal and health discipline, as well as appearing, usually as counsel assisting, in coronial inquests and royal commissions.

Dr Bennett has an interdisciplinary background with a PhD in Clinical Neuroscience, and within the law has specialised in issues requiring expert evidence and analysis across law and medicine.

Judge McGuire has served on the District Court bench since August 2023 and brings deep expertise in criminal and commercial law.

As a barrister, he appeared in some of Australia's most complex criminal trials. Known for simplifying intricate legal issues, he was widely praised for his calm demeanour and meticulous preparation.

These appointments reflect the depth of talent within the NSW legal profession and the Government's commitment to maintaining the excellence of the Supreme Court bench.

Judge McGuire will be sworn in on 8 July 2025. Dr Bennett will be sworn in privately on 1 July 2025 with a public welcome at a date to be advised.

Attorney General Michael Daley said:

"Dr Bennett brings extensive legal experience and her impressive career, including her academic background and earlier work as a neuropsychologist, reflects a strong commitment to justice and public service. I'm confident she will be an outstanding addition to the Supreme Court."

"Judge McGuire has shown exceptional legal skill throughout his career. Widely respected at the Bar and now during his time on the District Court. His appointment to the Supreme Court is richly deserved.

"Dr Bennett and Judge McGuire bring unique perspectives and extensive experience that will enhance the court's capacity to serve the people of New South Wales."

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BIOGRAPHIES

Dr Hayley Bennett SC

Dr Bennett was admitted to the NSW Bar in 2009 and appointed Senior Counsel in 2024. Her practice covers equity, succession and protective law, public law, and coronial inquests and other commissions of inquiry. She has been recognised as a leading practitioner in trusts and estates, and health and aged care law. Dr Bennett holds a PhD in Clinical Neuroscience from the University of Sydney and a Bachelor of Laws with first class honours from UNSW. Before joining the Bar, she worked as a clinical and research neuropsychologist. Over her time as a barrister, she has variously held honorary and adjunct academic roles at Neuroscience Research Australia and the University of Sydney Law School and continues to contribute to education and research at the intersection of law and neuroscience.

His Honour Judge Paul McGuire SC

Judge McGuire was appointed to the District Court in 2023 after more than two decades at the Bar, where he developed a national reputation for his work in white collar crime, fraud, insider trading and terrorism prosecutions. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Queensland. A former solicitor and senior practitioner in both Australia and the UK, he is known for his exceptional advocacy skills, judicial temperament and dedication to mentoring junior counsel. He was appointed senior counsel in 2015 and previously led 7 Garfield Barwick Chambers.