



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

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TWO ADDITIONAL MAGISTRATES TO JOIN LOCAL COURT

Two new magistrates will be appointed to the NSW Local Court, continuing the NSW Government's \$56.1 million investment to strengthen the state's busiest court to deliver more efficient justice.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said the appointments of Juliana Crofts and James Viney will add to four extra magistrates appointed in December and January, to bring the number of judicial officers on the Local Court bench to a record 147.

"Mr Viney and Ms Crofts bring more than six decades of experience between them, with Mr Viney practising as a barrister for 25 years, and Ms Crofts being the Solicitor-in-Charge at the Port Macquarie Legal Aid NSW office," Mr Speakman said.

"These two appointments bring us closer to fulfilling the commitment made in last year's budget to fund eight additional magistrates to ease pressure on the Local Court. Two more additional appointments will be made as part of this investment.

"The Local Court is the engine room of the NSW justice system, overseeing a caseload that amounts to 96 per cent of all criminal prosecutions and more than 90 per cent of civil matters before the state's courts."

Both appointees will commence in mid-March, sitting in the Local Court, Children's Court and Coroner's Court in the Sydney metropolitan region, after which they will preside at locations to be determined by the Chief Magistrate of NSW.

Magistrates' biographies

Juliana Crofts

Ms Crofts was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court in 2002. She has worked for Legal Aid NSW since 2003 on a wide variety of criminal matters including terrorism, people smuggling and indictable and summary crime. Ms Crofts was honoured with the "Government Lawyer of the Year Award" by the Women's Lawyers Association of NSW in 2019.

James Viney

Mr Viney began his legal career in 1986 as a District Court Judge's Associate. He practised as a solicitor from 1987. He was called to the Bar in 1997, where he specialised in criminal law. Mr Viney has been a member of Lachlan Macquarie Chambers for 24 years and has served on its board of directors.

MEDIA: Rachel Browne | 0437 472 455