



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

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EIGHT NEW MAGISTRATES FOR THE LOCAL COURT

***Brief biographical details of each appointee are included below**

Attorney General Mark Speakman today announced the appointment of eight new magistrates to the bench of the Local Court of NSW.

Mr Speakman said barristers Holly Kemp and Allison Hawkins and solicitors Sally McLaughlin, Kevin Hockey, Lisa Viney, Jillian Kiely, Janine Lacy and Michael Love will bring a total of more than 150 years of legal experience to the Local Court.

“Six magistrates replace retiring judicial officers, while two will fill new roles created by the \$4.1 million package that addresses a rise in child sexual abuse cases following the recent Royal Commission,” Mr Speakman said.

The latest appointments boost the number of female magistrates to a record 65.

“While the upper echelons of the justice system have traditionally been male dominated, it is pleasing to see the gender gap closing in the Local Court with females to make up a 46 per cent of magistrates,” Mr Speakman said.

Each new magistrate was subject to a rigorous merit selection process. The new magistrates will begin their judicial career in Sydney before relocating to regional or suburban courts.

Mr Speakman said the Local Court has some of the country’s hardest working judicial officers, who continue to deliver fast, fair and accessible justice.

“The Local Court is the work horse of the legal system, dealing with 96 per cent of all matters from start-to-finish and continues to be a national leader in managing its huge workload,” Mr Speakman said.

The magistrates will begin taking their judicial oaths on Monday, 30 September when Ms Kemp and Ms Viney are sworn in. Mr Love and Ms McLaughlin commence their judicial careers on Tuesday, 8 October. Ms Lacy and Mr Hockey rise to the bench on Monday, 21 October and a week later on Monday, 28 October they’ll be joined by Ms Hawkins and Ms Kiely.

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MAGISTRATES' BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES

Michael Love started as a clerk in the Supreme Court Criminal Registry. His most recent position has been Managing Solicitor for the Wollongong Office of Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). Mr Love has spent the majority of his 30 year legal career working in the criminal justice system. He joined the DPP as a solicitor in 2002 and is in charge of the south-eastern circuit courts from Nowra and Bega to Queanbeyan and Goulburn. He also worked at the NSW Ombudsman's Office, Department of Juvenile Justice and NSW Rural Fire Service.

Lisa Viney's legal career spans nearly two decades predominantly in criminal law as a solicitor at the DPP. Ms Viney is a managing solicitor in charge of one of the trial groups managing up to 30 lawyers. She has appeared as an advocate in summary prosecutions and committal matters in the Local Court, as well as sentences and appeals in the District Court. Ms Viney has also held senior legal positions at both the NSW Ombudsman and Crown Solicitor's Office.

Holly Kemp became a Crown Prosecutor in 2017, conducting complex trials in the District Court. Ms Kemp worked in the Rolling List Court, which is designed to reduce backlogs in the District Court. In 2018, the NRL retained her to appear on its behalf in matters relating to female players charged with infringements. Before this, she was a solicitor for almost 18 years overseeing criminal matters in the Local, Children's, District and Supreme Courts.

Sally McLaughlin began working in the legal system in 2000 as a volunteer at Bidura Children's Court and the Aboriginal Legal Service. Ms McLaughlin worked as an Associate to Her Honour Judge Flannery SC in 2009 before joining Legal Aid NSW as a criminal lawyer. She has represented clients in the Local, Children's, District and Supreme Courts, as well as the High Court of Australia, for offences such as murder, sexual assault, drug importation and manufacturing.

Jillian Kiely has worked almost exclusively with the DPP as a solicitor for 14 years, appearing regularly in the Local Court on matters ranging from murder to drink driving. She was most recently the acting solicitor in charge of the Sutherland Office of Legal Aid NSW, carrying a full case load and managing eight staff. Prior to practising law, she spent seven years working in Local Court registries. She also has a Masters of Public Administration and a degree in health science.

Allison Hawkins has been a barrister with Wardell Chambers, where she practised since 2014. Ms Hawkins has appeared in the Local, Children's, District Supreme and High Court. She has extensive experience in civil and criminal law, appearing in cases involving murder, sexual assault, kidnapping, and High Risk Offender matters. She has also appeared in matters involving commercial disputes. Before being called to the Bar, she practised as a solicitor in the criminal division of Legal Aid NSW for 11 years.

Kevin Hockey is a former prosecutor with the NSW Police Force, holding the post for more than ten years. After an honourable discharge from the Police in 1998, he pursued his legal career, rising to manage his own law firm in Dubbo. His areas of practice have included criminal and family law, conveyancing, personal injury and general litigation. Prior to joining the police, he worked as a motor mechanic.

Janine Lacy has been a solicitor with the DPP, where she has worked for more than 14 years. She has appeared in the Local, Children's and District Courts with carriage of a wide range of serious criminal matters. Ms Lacy was previously the managing solicitor at the Campbelltown office of the DPP and has worked as a casual tutor in criminal law at Western Sydney University. Most recently, Ms Lacy was deputy solicitor of the DPP's Sydney West operations where she supervised 150 solicitors and support staff located at the Campbelltown, Penrith and Parramatta offices.