

5 November 2024

John Luke
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Ref: OIA 117019

Tēnā koe John

Official Information Act request: Appointments

Thank you for your request of 30 October 2024, under the Official Information Act 1985 (the Act), requesting information relating to court appointments. Specifically, you requested:

*I noted- Appointment as a District Court or Environment Court
<https://www.justice.govt.nz/about/statutory-vacancies/>*

How long you have had this- Appointment as a District Court or Environment Court on your website, how many expression of interest (register your interest) you have received so far? When is the appointment process for District Court or Environment Court in general. How many expression of interest you have shortlisted or interviewed so far? May I also request to view the appointment letter for District Court and Environment Court, happy for you to remove any personal information.

The Ministry maintains a register of expressions of interest for appointment to the District and Environment Court on behalf of the Attorney-General. This aspect of the Ministry's Statutory Appointments web page is a permanent feature which you can visit at [justice.govt.nz/about/statutory-vacancies/](https://www.justice.govt.nz/about/statutory-vacancies/)

It is not possible to advise how many expressions of interest (Eols) have been received over the many years the register has been in operation as Eols are added to and removed from the register regularly, following either the appointment of a candidate or the withdrawal of an Eol due to the particular circumstances of the applicant. However, at any one time there are usually between 200-300 live Eols on hand.

There is a statutory cap on the number of District Court Judges prescribed by section 12 of the District Court Act 2016 (presently 182) and in any given year there are usually 10-20 appointments made, most often as a consequence of presently appointed judges reaching the compulsory retirement age of 70. The appointment and shortlisting for interview process is described in the booklet that appears on the website and interviews are conducted at regular intervals throughout the year as vacancies arise.

The appointment letter is issued to newly appointed judges on behalf of the Chief District Court Judge and is not held or issued by the Ministry. The courts are a separate and independent arm of government and are specifically excluded from the Act under section

2(6)(a). Therefore, this aspect of your request is refused under section 18(g), as the information requested is not held by the Ministry and there are no grounds for believing it is held by another agency subject to the Act.

If you require any further information, please contact Media & Social Media Manager Joe Locke at media@justice.govt.nz

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: justice.govt.nz/about/official-information-act-requests/oia-responses

You have the right under section 28 of the Act to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at ombudsman.parliament.nz or call 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Newall', with a horizontal line underneath.

Wayne Newall
Manager, Appointments and Specialist Functions