

SUPREME COURT OF TASMANIA

CIRCULAR TO PRACTITIONERS

No 1 of 2022

6 January 2022

SUSPENSION OF JURY TRIALS

Because of risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, no jury trials will be conducted in Tasmania until at least 15 March 2022. A further announcement will be made in mid-February as to whether the suspension of jury trials will be continued beyond 15 March.

The main reasons for suspending jury trials are as follows:

- The risk of exposing jurors and others to COVID-19 infections are unacceptable. It must be remembered that jurors are compelled to come to the Court, whether they wish to or not.
- If jury trials were to proceed with infection rates as bad as they are now, or worse, it is likely that a lot of trials would be aborted as a result of jurors or others testing positive or having to go into isolation as close contacts.

Arrangements were in place for four weeks of jury trials to proceed in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie, commencing on 31 January. Those arrangements have been cancelled. The call over of Hobart matters on 24 January has also been cancelled.

Summonses for 31 January have already been mailed to a jury panel in Launceston. No such summonses have been mailed for Hobart or Burnie. The recipients of the summonses in Launceston will be told to ignore them.

Non-jury cases will proceed following the Opening of the Legal Year on 28 January. Practitioners wishing to participate remotely should contract the presiding judges' associates to make appropriate arrangements.



The Hon Alan Blow AO
Chief Justice