

Judge of the Māori Land Court

Position Description

The role of a Māori Land Court Judge

The Role

In the ordinary course of their work a Māori Land Court Judge deals primarily with proposals and disputes involving Māori land.

A Māori Land Court Judge's core responsibility is to exercise the jurisdiction of the Māori Land Court and the Māori Appellate Court conferred by Statute, principally under Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993.

Māori Land Court Judges are also eligible to preside at Waitangi Tribunal inquiries.

Criteria for appointment as Māori Land Court Judge

The following criteria will be used to assess candidates for the role of Judge of the Māori Land Court:

Statutory Criteria

Candidates must be eligible for appointment as a Māori Land Court Judge under section 7 of Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993. Under section 7, Judges must be 'fit and proper' for the position, and must:

- be deemed suitable, having regard to their knowledge and experience of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and the Treaty of Waitangi;
- have held a practising certificate as a barrister or solicitor for at least 7 years;
- be under the age of 70 years; and
- stop practising as a barrister or solicitor.

General Criteria

Successful candidates should display the following skills and attributes:

- legal ability, including:
 - excellence in the practice and/or theory of law, in particular knowledge of and experience with Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993, the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975, the Māori Fisheries Act 2004, the Māori Aquaculture Claims Settlement Act 2004, and the Protected Objects Act 1975; and
 - extensive experience in the Māori Land Court and the Waitangi Tribunal.
- technical skills, including:
 - administrative and organisational skills;
 - the ability to manage a courtroom;
 - a reasonable grasp of te reo Māori;
 - an understanding of tikanga Māori;
 - a good understanding of tribal structures, history, and culture; and
 - high-level communication skills.
- qualities of character, including:

- honesty and integrity;
 - open-mindedness and impartiality;
 - courtesy, patience and social sensitivity;
 - good judgment and common sense;
 - the ability to work hard, to listen, and to concentrate;
 - breadth of vision, independence, and acceptance of public scrutiny;
 - collegiality and leadership qualities; and
 - standing and good reputation within the community.
- an awareness of society and involvement in the Māori community.