

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council  
Attorney-General  
Minister for Resources



Tuesday, 18 May 2021

## NEW COURT APPOINTMENTS BRING WEALTH OF EXPERTISE

The state's court system has been further strengthened with the Andrews Labor Government appointing the first-ever judicial registrars to the Children's Court, as well as two new judges of the Supreme Court.

Judicial registrars play a crucial role in the smooth and efficient running of the court, helping judges to manage their workload and performing key administrative and judicial tasks.

Starting on 25 May, Judith Benson, Majella Foster-Jones, Robyn Hamilton and Julia Lever-Davidson will each bring their extensive and diverse experience to these new key roles at the Children's Court.

Ms Benson's 23 years as a barrister includes work across both jurisdictions of the Children's Court, including child protection, juvenile crime, family violence and intervention order matters.

Ms Foster-Jones is a skilled legal practitioner who has held a number of roles at Victoria Legal Aid. She is a member of the Law Institute of Victoria Council and holds an accredited specialisation in children's law.

Ms Hamilton is currently the senior in-house counsel for family and children's law at Victoria Legal Aid, where she has previously been the manager of the youth legal service program and a child protection and senior independent children's lawyer.

Ms Lever-Davidson also has extensive experience at Victoria Legal Aid, including in her current role as managing lawyer for youth crime and acting associate director in the criminal law program.

The appointments of Richard Attiwill QC and Stephen O'Meara QC as judges of the Supreme Court start today – bringing a combined total of more than 50 years' legal experience.

Appointed Senior Council in 2013, Mr Attiwill has appeared in a broad range of matters, including commercial, public and common law cases, class actions, Royal Commissions, and parliamentary inquiries. He appeared at the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and the second Hazelwood Mine Fire Board of Inquiry.

Mr O'Meara has also appeared in several matters of importance since being appointed Senior Council in 2011, including the coronial inquest into the 2017 Bourke Street Incident, the Royal Commission into the Victorian Mental Health System and the Kilmore and Murrindindi bushfire class actions.

### Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes

*"I congratulate Ms Benson, Ms Foster-Jones, Ms Hamilton and Ms Lever-Davidson on their well-deserved appointments as the first judicial registrars to the Children's Court – they will help deliver better and fairer outcomes for young Victorians."*

*"Together, Mr Attiwill and Mr O'Meara hold a wealth of legal experience and expertise, dealing with matters that have greatly impacted Victoria and Australia. Their appointments will continue the drive to promote justice, transparency and important reform."*

**Media contact:** Casey Lodge 0410 964 928 | [casey.lodge@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:casey.lodge@minstaff.vic.gov.au)