

# Media Release

**The Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP**  
Attorney General  
Minister for Planning



Tuesday, 16 December 2025

## **NEW MAGISTRATES AND JUDGES TO SUPPORT VICTORIA'S COURTS**

The Allan Labor Government is ensuring cases move quickly and fairly through Victoria's court system, with the appointment of more than a dozen new magistrates and judges.

Attorney-General Sonya Kilkenny today announced the appointment of 12 new magistrates and two County Court judges to boost the courts' capacity and help ensure cases move through the system efficiently.

Seven of these appointments have come as part of the Government's investment in this year's Budget to ramp up capacity in prisons and youth justice centres, and further support courts in managing the expected rise in demand due to our tough new bail laws and Adult Time for Violent Crime measures.

Eight new magistrates – Emily Allan, Davide (David) Barrese, Zoe Broughton, Aviram (Avi) Furstenberg, Kartya Gracer, Michael Hoyle, Zubin Menon and Samantha Seoud – will join courts across Victoria.

Four more magistrates – Brendan Annear, Isabelle Harrison, Teresa Porritt and Melanie Younis – will serve in the Children's Court.

Two new County Court judges – former Deputy Chief Magistrate Susan Wakeling and barrister Anthony Lewis – replace retiring judges Her Honour Elizabeth Gaynor and His Honour Michael Cahill.

The Victorian Court of Appeal will also be bolstered by the appointment of Dr Stephen Paul Donaghue KC. Dr Donaghue served as Australia's Solicitor-General since January 2017, prior to which he spent 16 years at the Victorian Bar.

Judge Melissa Daly will also join the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal as a Vice-President. Her Honour has served as an Associate Judge of the Supreme Court since 2008.

These appointments bring decades of legal experience and a wealth of knowledge across criminal and civil jurisdictions, ensuring courts can deliver fair and efficient outcomes for Victorians.

### **Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Sonya Kilkenny**

*"These appointments will strengthen our courts and ensure cases are heard promptly – because every Victorian deserves timely access to justice."*

*"Our reforms are tough on violent crime and practical for the courts – these appointments will make sure they are put in place."*