

Justice and Community Safety Directorate

Justices of the Peace (JPs)

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By virtue of the Oath of Office taken at the time of their appointment, ACT Justices of the Peace undertake to 'well and truly serve in the office of justice of the peace of the Australian Capital Territory'.

JPs serve different roles in different jurisdictions. It is important, therefore, to understand the role of JP in the ACT, and the legislative basis for that role.

In the ACT, JPs are appointed by the Attorney-General under the [Justices of the Peace Act 1989](#), but the Act does not prescribe the role to be performed by JPs.

Generally, the role of a JP in the ACT is determined by procedural requirements of other ACT legislation. JPs may also perform a wider range of functions under Commonwealth law, including the witnessing of statutory declarations.

JPs in the ACT serve the community primarily by:

- administering oaths or affidavits and taking statutory declarations and affirmations
- witnessing signatures, and
- attesting and certifying documents.

The role of an ACT JP is limited to functions in the ACT and while the JP is physically present in the ACT.

There is legislation in most other jurisdictions, which allows documents witnessed in the ACT to be accepted in a court in that jurisdiction.

[How can I find a JP](#)

New changes to Oaths and Affirmations

The ACT Government has revised and modernised Oaths and Affirmations to better reflect the diverse beliefs and backgrounds of members of our ACT community.

The *Courts and Other Justice Legislation Amendment Act 2018*, commencing on 26 April 2018, makes a number of changes to the *Oaths and Affirmations Act 1984*. These changes are designed to standardise the oath or affirmation to be taken under various pieces of law, in line with the modern version contained in

the *Evidence Act 2011*. They are also designed to accommodate people with differing religious or cultural backgrounds and beliefs.

Further information can be found in the factsheet below.

[JACS Oaths and Affirmations Factsheet](#) [PDF 304kB]

[JACS Oaths and Affirmations Factsheet](#) [DOCX 73KB]