

3 March 2023

Section (9)(2)(a)

Our ref: OIA 102711

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request: Disputes Tribunal Referee

Thank you for your email of 16 February 2023 in which you requested under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) information relating to Disputes Tribunal recruitment. Specifically, you requested:

“May I ask how did you call for public nomination and on what platform you have call for public nominations, e.g. govt.jobs website. Also, how many applications you have received from the public and how many you have received from other nominating agencies such as TPK or Ministry of women etc. further, how many you have shortlisted.

Please supply the pay rate and term of reference/job description of this role.”

Calls for expressions of interest in these rounds of Disputes Tribunal appointments were made via public advertisement on the following platforms:

- the Ministry of Justice website (Statutory Appointments);
- the New Zealand Law Society Newsletter (LawPoints);
- Lawfuel Media;
- the Māori Law Society Newsletter; and
- the Pasifika Law Society Newsletter.

Three expressions of interest were received as a result of advertisement through these platforms. The expression of interest period closed on 17 February 2023 and shortlisting for interview has not yet occurred. No nominations were received from nominating agencies and it is useful to note that for this role candidates should have either a legal qualification or significant experience in dispute resolution.


The present remuneration rate for the role is set under the Cabinet Fees framework and is \$530 per day. This figure is presently under review by the Remuneration Authority.

Attached is the wording of the advertisement which includes a description of the position requirements.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: [justice.govt.nz/about/official-information-act-requests/oia-responses/](https://www.justice.govt.nz/about/official-information-act-requests/oia-responses/).

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. The Office of the Ombudsman may be contacted by email to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phone on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Newall', with a horizontal line underneath.

Wayne Newall
Manager, Appointments and Specialist Functions

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REFEREE, DISPUTES TRIBUNAL – NEW PLYMOUTH

The Disputes Tribunal is currently seeking expressions of interest in the role of Disputes Tribunal Referee in New Plymouth. The Disputes Tribunal is a division of the District Court, and currently hears a range of civil claims up to a value of \$30,000.00. Most of our disputes involve contract and consumer issues, but we also deal with other civil matters, such as car accidents, or claims in negligence causing damage to property. Referees are appointed as judicial officers by warrant from the Governor-General on the advice of the Minister of Justice. The role generally involves 2-4 days a week of hearings, depending on caseflows.

The Disputes Tribunal is becoming increasingly central in the delivery of civil justice and a further increase in jurisdiction is possible. Referees are required to conduct hearings which take place at the local District Court. During the hearing, the Referee assesses whether the parties can come to an agreement about their dispute. If not, the Referee makes a decision in the matter. This decision is provided in writing, with reasons, and has the status of a District Court order. As a judicial officer working in a Tribunal setting, you would need to have strong legal and analytical abilities, hold relevant qualifications in law, mediation or arbitration, and enjoy working with people from all walks of life to help them resolve their differences. If you are new to the role, full training is provided.

It is important that the membership of the Tribunal reflects the community, and to that end we seek applications from people of diverse backgrounds, ethnicities and age groups. The Tribunal is also committed to providing a service that reflects the principles of Te Tiriti, and to ensuring that the Tribunal is a place where all people feel welcomed and supported.

Successful candidates will show abilities in listening, assessing information, making decisions, relating to and communicating with a wide variety of people, responding sensitively to cultural differences, expressing themselves clearly, and be able to engage in alternative ways of resolving disputes. A Referee also needs to show common sense and practical judgement and must be able to act with fairmindedness and impartiality. The full criteria for assessment are set out in R38 of the Disputes Tribunal Rules 1989.

The daily rate for a Referee is currently \$530.00. However, due to recent legislative change, the remuneration package for Referees is now under review by the Remuneration Authority. This is likely to change the basis of the pay.

Any person within the community may nominate you for the role. Nominations must be sent in writing or by email. They must contain the name, address, telephone number and email address of both the nominator and the person being nominated. Once a nomination has been received, the person who is nominated will be sent an application pack with details relating to the position and how to apply for it.

Nominations are to be made to the Principal Disputes Referee, DX SX 11159, Wellington, Ph: (04) 9143131, or email disputestribunal@justice.govt.nz **Nominations must be received by this office no later than Friday, 3 February 2023. We are unable to accept late nominations.**