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Family Law Update - 3 November 2021

Tēnā koe

Implementation of recommendations from the Auckland scan

We last met with Chris King, Regional Manager Northern, Courts and Tribunals, Ministry of Justice on 29 October. Below is an update for members on the implementation of recommendations from the Auckland scan (review):

- The ministry has completed reviewing the current approaches to case management across courts within Auckland so it can plan for the transition to end-to-end case management. The design of the case management is in progress notwithstanding the constraints of the current operating environment due to covid restrictions
- Training material has been developed and is ready to roll-out to registry teams to assist with the return of case-to-case end management
- A business case has been completed outlining required resourcing to accommodate re-establishment and completion of re-establishing registries at Papakura, Pukekohe, Waitakere and North Shore
- Project planning has been completed to factor the impact of covid-19 lockdowns and the potential return to less restricted operations when key tasks can be completed
- The re-establishment of the Pukekohe and Papakura registries and the completion of the re-establishment at Waitakere and Northshore is not likely to occur until after Christmas given the current covid restrictions.

Cases that require urgency

Counsel have identified that some urgent cases are not automatically being given earlier court times when this is necessary. Counsel are reminded that in those cases, a memorandum should be filed explaining why the matter should be given urgency and making a specific request, for example, for an earlier date and/or a teleconference to be convened. That memorandum will be escalated to a judge for a decision to be made. Under

the current alert level there are fewer registrars available to make decisions about these priorities.

Post covid gathering for FLS members

The FLS will be hosting a free function for all Auckland FLS members, possibly in February next year post lockdown. This is to acknowledge how difficult it has been for many, if not all Auckland members, over the extended lockdown period. We will provide more detail on this event later this year/early next year when things are more certain in terms of covid restrictions. The FLS hosted a similar function in Christchurch after the earthquakes. We hope this event will provide a collegial opportunity for practitioners to meet up again in person.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou i tēnei ao hurirhuri / Greetings to you in this changing world

Caroline Hickman
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