New Zealand Law Society
Te Kāhui Ture o Aotearoa

Canterbury Westland Branch
Level 1, 307 Durham Street, Christchurch
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lawsociety.org.nz/canterbury-westland

Application for Certificate of Character

Important points to note

Please refer to guidelines in the application form to ensure you provide all necessary information and documents.

- Please have your **application form** to us by the due date for your chosen ceremony along with certified **ID.** We can accept initially by email but must have the original of both the application form and certified ID before our process is complete.

- Certified ID must have the **correct wording** according to the guidelines, i.e. must refer to the ID photo. Drivers Licence must show the expiry date, Passports must be signed.

- **Invoice** and instruction for payment of the fee will be sent to you following receipt of your application.

- A link for the New Zealand **criminal conviction check** will be sent to you to complete online. Please include any other names you are or have been previously known by.

- If you have **lived** in a country other than New Zealand for more than one year since you turned 18 you must also arrange for an equivalent **criminal conviction/police check** report to be sent to the Law Society branch from that country. This can be a lengthy process for certain countries. Allow plenty of time and to have this information arrive, preferably around the time your application is filed, or soon after.

- If your **name has changed officially**, or you are known by another name, please provide appropriate documents and/or a Statutory Declaration to support this. Your name is advertised to the legal profession and listed on the NZLS website for the public to view. (including previous names or variations you are known by)

- Extra time may be required if any issue is declared in the 'Fit and Proper Person' section. Please include a separate explanation with relevant supporting documents of the circumstances with your application.

- **Referee reports** must be sent to the branch office independently and can be sent by email from a recognised workplace. Reports received from personal gmail/hotmail etc will not be accepted. Referee reports are valid for 3 months.

- Application documents must be dated no earlier than 3 months prior to the date the Certificate of Character is approved/ issued.

- Your **Certificate of Character is valid for 3 months** from the date of issue and **must** be valid on the day of admission. If you require a new certificate some of the application process may need to be repeated including payment of the fee, so please be certain of the date you want to be admitted and that you are able to obtain all documents required.

- It is **recommended** that you have finished your Professional Legal studies (Profs) course when you file your Certificate of Character application. The Branch enquiry required, as part of our process, cannot be made of your Profs course provider until your course has been completed, including all final assessments, and marking.

- When your Profs course is complete you must also obtain a **Certificate of Completion** from the NZ Council of Legal Education, a document required by the court (not us). This can take up to 40 working days. There is a fast-track option for NZ Law graduates should you require this. For more information refer to the Council of Legal Education website information

- All court documents under Admission Rules 2008 are required to be filed one month before the ceremony, along with a court filing fee. Please see separate information from the Christchurch High Court to

assist you. Your Counsel Moving must hold a current NZ practising certificate.

- All information and forms you require can be found on the NZLS website and this includes court documents (LA1, LA2/LA3 and LA5)

- It is helpful if documents are not double sided and not stapled and if handwritten, please print clearly.

- If you have any questions regarding the process, please email canterburywestland@lawsociety.org.nz or ph (03) 366 9184.

- You can apply to the court for a one-off ceremony. Please contact the branch office to make sure a Certificate of Character can be issued to meet the court filing deadline set by the Registrar.

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