

Practice Direction 17: Tribunal Etiquette

Attention to the following matters will assist you during your visit to the Resource Management & Planning Appeal Tribunal.

- 17.1 Instructions by Staff:** Visitors must obey the instructions of all Tribunal staff while on Tribunal premises.
- 17.2 Attendance during Hearings:** Representatives appearing for a party (whether lawyer, agent or litigant in person) must not leave the hearing room without permission from the Chairperson, Presiding Member or Tribunal Officer. Proceedings cannot continue in the absence of representatives.
- 17.3 Electronic Devices and Media Guidelines:** The Tribunal has issued media guidelines which includes requirements related to the use of electronic devices. These guidelines are available for viewing on the Tribunal's website. Please ensure anyone who wishes to attend any hearings of the Tribunal, whether parties, witnesses, media or members of the public are aware of the requirements set out in those guidelines. Please note, electronic devices of any kind are not to be used in the hearing rooms of the Tribunal except in accordance with the guidelines.
- 17.4 Turn off all Communication Equipment:** Radio receivers or transmitters (including mobile phones) and pagers must be switched off when in any Tribunal room, unless the Chairperson, Presiding Member or Registrar permits otherwise.
- 17.5 Food and Drink:** Food or drink (except water) is not to be taken into any Tribunal hearing room.
- 17.6 Avoid Disturbances to Proceedings in the Registry Area:** Whilst you are in the waiting/reception area, please be aware that there may be proceedings being conducted in the adjoining hearing rooms and that loud conversations may be distracting to the parties in those hearing rooms.
- 17.7 Avoid Disturbances to Proceedings in Hearing Rooms:** Visitors should enter and leave hearing rooms without undue delay while proceedings are in progress and should sit at the rear of the hearing room. Standing in doorways is not permitted. Conversation in hearing rooms must be restricted to that which is reasonably necessary and, in any event, it must not interfere with the proper conduct of the proceedings.
- 17.9 Limited Access to Mediations:** Some Tribunal proceedings, for example mediations, are closed to the public. Unless you are a party to these proceedings you must not enter these hearing rooms and must leave the hearing room immediately upon being requested by a Tribunal officer to do so.
- 17.10 Etiquette Rules apply to Remote Venues:** A room in another building ('a remote site') that is connected by means of an audio link or an audio-visual link is part of the Tribunal room while the link is in operation. Accordingly, the same standards of behaviour apply to persons who are present at the remote site as if they were present at the Tribunal building.

17.11 How to Address the Tribunal:

You should address the Chairperson as either:

- “Mr Chairman” or “Madam Chairperson”; or
- “Sir” or “Madam”.

You should address the other Tribunal members as “Sir” or “Madam” or by their name (e.g. Mr Smith). You should address the Registrar as “Sir”, “Madam” or “Registrar”.

17.12 Politeness and Professionalism: You should always endeavour to be polite and professional in both correspondence and communications with the Tribunal. Rudeness and discourtesy are not acceptable and in some circumstances may constitute an offence (See Section 33 of the Act).