



Chief District Court Judge's Chambers
Te Whare o Ngā Kaihautū Waka o Te Kōti-ā-rohe o Aotearoa

Updated – August 2026

INTRODUCTION

This resource is a plain English quick reference guide to clarify some of the most common issues that regularly cause confusion between the Youth Court and media representatives. The contents are drawn from correspondence received by the Chief District Court Judge's Chambers, the existing media guidelines and the Media and Reporting Protocol in the Youth Court. It aims to help build a shared understanding and positive working relationship between the judiciary, court staff and the media. It applies specifically to the Youth Court.

RIGHT TO BE IN COURT

Media are defined as those being in court to report on proceedings and being subject to a code of ethics and an official complaints body. Individuals do not have to be on the Ministry's 'accredited media' list which is used to distribute media information electronically. They do have to be defined as media under legislation and as explained in the Media Guide.

Media are legally entitled and permitted to attend Youth Court proceedings, including in chambers discussions and closed sessions.

Media do not have to apply to attend court unless they intend to film/record proceedings in which case they do have to fill out and submit a form.

It is good practice for media to identify themselves to court staff prior to attending Youth Court. Equally it is good practice for judges to acknowledge/welcome their presence.

REPORTING OF PROCEEDINGS

Permission is required from the sitting judge prior to media publishing coverage of any proceedings in the Youth Court.

This includes information arising from being present in court or from a published decision.

The welfare and best interests of the child or young person is the primary consideration when judges are determining whether or not permission to publish is granted.

It is the responsibility of the media to ensure coverage of court observes any statutory prohibitions, suppressions or conditions.

ACCESS TO COURT INFORMATION

In general media have access to all court information where legislation allows. Judges make decisions where legislation does not allow, following applications made by media.



TE AO MĀRAMA

Enhancing Justice for All

Media in court (and those applying to the registry) should usually be given copies of agreed Summary of Facts, Minutes, Suppression Orders, Judgments and Sentencing Notes unless a judge decides there are grounds for them to be withheld. It is good practice for judges to supply an explanation for any denied applications.

ISSUES/ADVICE COMPLAINTS

Questions around requests, coverage or behaviour can be raised through counsel, the Principal Youth Court Judge or directly with the Principal Advisor at the Chief District Court Judges Chambers (who is also the secretariat for the District Court Media Committee). This applies to media and judges.

KEY CONTACTS

- Principal Youth Court Judge – Judge.malosi@justice.govt.nz
- Te Whare Principal Advisor Media – steve.corbett@justice.govt.nz

KEY SOURCES

- Media and Reporting Protocol in the Youth Court – District Courts website
- In-Court Media Coverage Guidelines 2016
- Ministry of Justice Media guide – Ministry of Justice website
- District Court (Access to Court Documents) Rules – NZ Legislation website