



PRINCIPAL FAMILY COURT JUDGE FOR NEW ZEALAND
TE KAIWHAKAWĀ MATUA O TE KŌTI WHĀNAU
Judge Jacquelyn Moran

Embargoed till 8pm 11 November 2020

New AODT Court Stream Milestone for Family Court

The inclusion of certain Care and Protection matters in Hamilton’s first Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Court is a significant milestone for the Family Court, says the Principal Family Court Judge, Judge Jacquelyn Moran.

The extension of the AODT court into the family jurisdiction was announced by the Chief District Court Judge, Judge Heemi Taumaunu, as he outlined a vision for the District Court during the annual Norris Ward McKinnon Lecture.

The vision features a Te Ao Mārama mainstreaming model which will incorporate throughout the District Court the best practices developed in solution-focused specialist courts. The Te Ao Mārama model will be established in the Hamilton District Court next year and will include a new Care and Protection stream within Waikato’s new AODT court.

Judge Moran says creating a dedicated alcohol and other drug dependency stream within the Family Court jurisdiction promises to address a major underlying driver of serious risk and harm to babies and children.

“The provision of a treatment option for mothers whose dependency issues have led to the removal of children, or threatened removal, is a big step forward for the Family Court,” Judge Moran says. “It gives mothers the opportunity to access tailored programmes led by experts and monitored by specialist judges. It offers hope of recovery, strengthened by the incentive to reunite mothers and children and restore whānau.

“The Care and Protection AODT stream also provides an alternative type of intervention at a time the Family Court is forging new community partnerships for retaining whānau, hapū and iwi connections and building confidence in achieving the safe return of vulnerable babies and children to their whānau, and averting the need to separate them in the first place.”

Judge Moran says detail of the new Care and Protection stream will be designed in a spirit of partnership with the local iwi and alongside the local community.

“This honours Te Ao Mārama and its kaupapa Māori approach. It also recognises that tamariki Māori feature disproportionately in care and protection proceedings and in state care. It represents a collaborative response to consistent calls for transformative change in this area.”

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Further detail on Te Ao Mārama, including a media release from the Chief District Court Judge, is available on the [District Court website](#).

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