

Deputy Premier
Attorney-General
Minister for Justice, Corrections and Rehabilitation
Minister for Small Business, Trade and Consumer Affairs
Minister for the Environment and Climate Change

Level 10, 15 Murray Street, HOBART TAS 7000
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001
Phone: 03 6165 7678
Email: barnett.correspondence@dpac.tas.gov.au



Peter George MP
Member for Franklin

By email: haprocedure@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr George, *Peter*

Constituency Question – Hobart Magistrates Court Understaffing

Thank you for your question in Parliament on 1 September 2026. I provide the following information:

Question

My question is for the Attorney-General and comes from Tammy Cunningham of Roches Bay. Tammy contacted my office after being unable to reach the Hobart Magistrates Court despite repeated phone calls over several days. When she attended the court in person during normal business hours, she found the office closed and was later advised by email that the court was understaffed. Attorney-General, how has such a critical frontline justice service as the Hobart Magistrates Court become understaffed to the point that members of the public cannot access basic assistance? What immediate action will you take to restore adequate staffing and service levels?

Response

The Hobart Magistrates Court provides an important frontline service and handles hundreds of phone calls, emails and in-person enquiries each day, while also processing court documentation and supporting the daily operation of the Court.

In relation to the matter raised, I am advised that Ms Cunningham emailed the Hobart registry regarding a civil matter on 13 August 2026 and that correspondence was forwarded to the Court's civil division. Unfortunately, due to an administrative error, the matter was not actioned at that time. Ms Cunningham subsequently followed up by email on 19 August 2026 and received a response the same day.

The Magistrates Court has worked proactively in recent years to strengthen workforce capability, support staff wellbeing and improve employee retention. This has included

staffing adjustments, training in mental wellbeing and vicarious trauma, promoting healthy workplace practices, and ensuring staff have appropriate opportunities for rest and recovery. These initiatives have contributed to improved workforce stability and a significant reduction in staff turnover.

The Member also refers to the registry office being closed. I am advised that where operationally necessary, the registry may close between 1 pm and 2 pm to allow staff to take a lunch break. Importantly, urgent matters continue to be managed during this period, including family violence matters, restraint order applications and court-related documentation required that day.

While I regret the inconvenience experienced by Ms Cunningham, I am advised that this matter arose from an administrative oversight rather than any broader issue with the Court's ability to provide services to the Tasmanian community. The Court remains committed to ensuring members of the public can access timely assistance and support.

Thank you for raising this matter on behalf of your constituent.

Yours sincerely



Hon Guy Barnett MP
Deputy Premier
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