



**CHIEF DISTRICT COURT JUDGE FOR NEW ZEALAND  
TE KAIWHAKAWĀ MATUA O TE KŌTI-Ā-ROHE  
Judge Jan-Marie Doogue**

**PRINCIPAL YOUTH COURT JUDGE OF NEW ZEALAND  
TE KAIWHAKAWĀ MATUA O TE KŌTI TAIOHI  
Judge John Walker**

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## **Whangārei to host next Rangatahi Court**

Northland will be the next region to have a Kōti Rangatahi, Rangatahi Court, to be hosted by Terenga Parāoa Marae in Whangārei.

It will become the 15<sup>th</sup> Rangatahi Court since the first court was established in Gisborne in 2008, and will be opened officially at a ceremony on 24 February 2018.

Rangatahi Courts aim to provide the best possible rehabilitative care for young offenders by reconnecting them with their cultural identity, and meaningfully involving local Māori in the process.

They are judicially led initiatives. Principal Youth Court Judge John Walker said providing culturally responsive justice is vital when two thirds of those appearing in the Youth Court are Māori.

“This is a significant addition to the approaches available to the Youth Court in Whangārei for delivering effective interventions to address the underlying causes of offending,” Judge Walker said. “Whangārei Terenga Parāoa Marae is part of an inclusive marae complex that allows Māori of the district to come together, and we hope that a Rangatahi Court there will provide an alternative for young people and their whānau, hapū and iwi.”

Chief District Court Judge Jan-Marie Doogue acknowledged the contribution of local Māori to the initiative. “The establishment of a Rangatahi Court requires a big commitment from the local community to provide the sort of support, insights and knowledge of tikanga that makes these courts so impactful. District Court Judges appreciate this generosity and engagement, and also the support and resources of the Ministry of Justice.”

Ministry of Justice Group Manager, Courts & Tribunals, Jacquelyn Shannon, said the Ministry is pleased to support the launch of the 15<sup>th</sup> Rangatahi Court.

“I would like to acknowledge the work undertaken by the judiciary, local court staff, stakeholders, service providers, iwi and the wider community,” Mrs Shannon said.

Whangārei's Judge Greg Davis and Hamilton-based Judge Denise Clark have led development of the Whangārei court. In the initial months, Judge Clark (Ngāpuhi), who is originally from Kohukohu, Hokianga and has developed Rangatahi Courts in Hamilton and Huntly, will be the presiding judge. Judge Greg Davis (Ngāpuhi) will take over later in 2018.

Background:

Rangatahi Courts operate within the Youth Court jurisdiction and are not separate courts.

They are an option for those who have admitted to their offending or had charges proved in the Youth Court and choose to undergo monitoring of their family group conference plans in a marae setting.

Marae social services and kaumātua and kuia provide guidance, under the leadership of a Youth Court judge.

The new court will bring to nine the number of judges who are running 15 Rangatahi and two Pasifika courts. Rangatahi Courts sit on marae around the Auckland region and in Hamilton, Huntly, Rotorua, Taupo, Whakatāne, Tauranga, Gisborne, New Plymouth and Christchurch. Pasifika courts adapt the same model in a community setting in Mangere and Avondale in Auckland.

In Northland last financial year, 134 young people appeared in Youth Court, just over half of those in Whangārei. More than 80% of those young people were Maori.

A 2014 Ministry of Justice analysis of reoffending rates estimated that young people who appeared in a Rangatahi Court were 11% less likely to reoffend.

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