

# Mental Health Court

## Tips for attending a hearing

### General

The mental health court (the court) is constituted by a Supreme Court Judge assisted by one or two assisting clinicians. The Supreme Court is a very formal place and there is an expectation that you will behave in a respectful way and follow the rules and procedures. Everyone in court must conduct themselves according to the court's rules.

Information about the court can be found at <https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/courts/mental-health-court/about-the-mental-health-court>

### Court location

The court is located at the [QEII Courts of Law Complex, 415 George Street, Brisbane.](#)

The court predominantly sits in courtroom thirteen (13) on floor five (5), however this depends on the matter and sometimes the court moves at short notice to accommodate attendees.

The court commences hearings at 10am, however this can also vary depending on several factors. If you are unsure about the court's location or its commencement time, information is available on the Daily Law List is available at <https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/daily-law-lists/daily-law-lists>

Security staff and court volunteers on the ground floor of the courts complex are available to assist as required.

If you are attending as a party to the proceeding, to give evidence, or to otherwise support the court process, the court expects that you will be ready at least 20 minutes prior to the scheduled hearing time. Please ensure that you attend the courts complex early, ensuring that you have enough time to be processed through security, reach the appropriate courtroom, and access any toilets prior to the court commencing.

### Appropriate dress

Whether you are attending the court via videoconference, or in person, please ensure that you are dressed appropriately. Please remember you are attending the Supreme Court and appropriate attire should be worn i.e. your clothes should be neat and tidy (preferably business attire), and enclosed shoes are encouraged.

### Entering the courtroom

Please ensure that you:

- have turned off your mobile phone before entering and do not answer your phone while in the courtroom (or the far end videoconference room).
- have removed your sunglasses from your head.
- bow your head to acknowledge the Judge every time they enter or leave the courtroom (if the court is in session).
- take your seat quickly in the public gallery.
- sit quietly – don't talk, comment or make noises.
- don't eat, drink or chew gum – courthouses have an area outside the courtroom where you can eat (this also includes the far end video conference room).

- do not record the hearing using audio or visual recording devices.

## Videoconference and telephone appearances

It is common for matters to be heard by the court by conferencing facilities, and sometimes by a mix of modes. It's important to remember that the same court etiquette applies to all appearances, whether in person, or not.



The picture above shows the teleconference facilities used in the courts complex. When appearing by videoconference, please remember that you are attending court and are visible on an 80-inch television. This means that everyone in the court room can see and hear what is happening at the far end of the videoconference.

To ensure that background noises are not transmitted into the court, the far end of the videoconference or telephone equipment should always be muted. The only time that you should unmute is if someone on the far end of the conference is being addressed by the judge or an assisting clinician.

If addressed, please remember to use appropriate titles, such as Your Honour, doctor, bailiff etc.

Please note that there are some instances where you may call into the court while a previous matter is still being finalised. If this occurs, you may be asked to call back at a later time or remain on mute until the previous matter is completed. Please ensure that you follow any instructions provided by the Judge or the bailiff.

## Issues with attendance or conference facilities

There may be times when you, the patient, or a person you are supporting is running late, or a situation may arise where you are unable to connect to a conferencing facility. Communication with the court Registrar in these circumstances is important, and contact should occur immediately following the identification of the issue.

The court registry's contact details are located at <https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/contacts/mental-health-court>

## Sound quality issues

Sound quality issues are common in the courts complex, and sometimes it is difficult to hear information being provided by the Judge, an assisting clinician or from a witness. If you, your patient, or a person you are supporting is unable to hear what is happening within the court, you can bring this to the attention of the Registrar (if you are attending via a conferencing facility), or one of the barristers or instructing officers at the bar table in a respectful way in order for the issue to be considered.

Where a person attending a matter at the courts complex has an identified hearing problem, headsets are available to assist with sound quality. Please ask the bailiff for a headset when arriving at the courtroom.

## Contact

The Mental Health Act Liaison Team can be contact on (07) 3328 9899 or by email at [MHA2016@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MHA2016@health.qld.gov.au) if you have a question about the court or its processes.

Representatives of the Office the Chief Psychiatrist are present for all matters heard in the court and are always seated in the middle of the bar table.