



Magistrates' Court of Victoria

Practice Direction

No. 4 of 2015

Background

Fast tracking of the hearing and determination of criminal offences arising out of family violence incidents.

Background

It is well known with family violence cases that the rate of recidivism for crimes of violence against intimate partners is much greater than crimes of violence against strangers. We also know that usually the violence increases, in number and intensity. Accordingly, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria (the Court) has commenced the introduction in stages of a fast tracking listing process of these cases. The first stage commenced at the Court at Dandenong on 1 December 2014. The second stage will commence at the Court at Broadmeadows and the Court at Shepparton on 1 May 2015.

Direction

1. As and from 1 May 2015, all criminal charges arising out of family violence incidents and filed in the Court at Broadmeadows or the Court at Shepparton will be listed according to the timelines:
 - (a) Where the accused person is on bail, from the date of his or her release on bail to the first listing of those charges – one week;
 - (b) Where the accused person has been summonsed, from the date of the issue of the summons to the first listing – four weeks;
 - (c) In either case described in (a) or (b):
 - i. From the date of the first listing to the date of the second listings – four weeks;
 - ii. From the date of the second listing to contest mention – four weeks¹;
 - iii. From the date of the contest mention to trial – four weeks.

¹ In some instances, a proceeding may be adjourned for trial without a contest mention. Whether that occurs is a matter for the presiding magistrate.

2. At the time of release on bail or when served with a summons, the accused person must be given a document entitled "Family violence relation criminal proceedings", a copy of which is attached to this Practice Direction.
3. This Practice Direction commences on 1 May 2015.

**Peter Lauritsen
Chief Magistrate**

Date: 9 April 2015