



FEDERAL CIRCUIT AND FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA

PRONUNCIATION OF NAMES & FORMS OF ADDRESS (IN-PFA)

FCFCOA Information Notice

1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

- 1.1 This Information Notice applies to all proceedings filed in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and (Division 2) (Courts) in the Courts' family law, migration and general federal law jurisdictions.
- 1.2 The Courts recognise that the correct pronunciation of names and use of the appropriate gender pronoun is a matter of respect and is an important component of ensuring public confidence in the proper administration of justice. As such, the Courts seek to facilitate a simple process by which legal practitioners can provide, and the Courts can seek, guidance and clarification.
- 1.3 This Information Notice takes effect from the date it is issued and, to the extent practicable, applies to proceedings whether filed before or after that date.

2. RESPONSIBILITY OF LEGAL PRACTITIONERS AND LITIGANTS

- 2.1 Where reasonably practicable prior to any hearing, legal practitioners, or if unrepresented, litigants, should consider whether any names associated with the case may be difficult to pronounce and provide the Court with the correct phonetic pronunciation for those names.
- 2.2 Legal practitioners or litigants should also consider the gender pronouns of a person and provide the Court with information as to the appropriate gender pronouns.

2.3 This includes, but is not limited to, counsel, parties, children, witnesses, interpreters, solicitors, and entities.

2.4 Guidance may be provided:

- (a) by email to the Chambers of the presiding judicial officer, in close proximity to the date of the hearing or court event, and may form part of other permissible correspondence that is generally addressed to Chambers prior to a hearing, in accordance with the protocol on communicating with Chambers;
- (b) in a case outline, summary document or written submissions, where the name of a party, counsel, witness or other relevant person appears;
- (c) when entering an appearance with the Associate or Court Officer prior to a hearing or court event commencing.

2.5 Guidance may be provided as to:

- (a) the pronunciation of names by inserting the phonetic spelling of the name in square brackets directly after the name. For example: “*The Applicant intends to call Mr Tim Soutphommasane [Soot-pom-ma-sarn] as an expert witness*”;
- (b) the gender pronouns of a person in square brackets directly after the name by inserting the appropriate pronoun. For example: “*The Respondent [they/them]...*” or “*The Respondent uses the pronouns ‘they/them’*”.

2.6 Prior to a hearing or court event, if the Court asks parties for appearances and other preliminary information, legal practitioners or litigants should, where appropriate, provide the Court with the correct pronunciation of names and gender pronouns.

3. CLARIFICATION BY THE COURT

3.1 Should the Court wish to clarify the correct pronunciation of any name or the appropriate gender pronoun to be used, the Court may contact the parties. A judicial officer may also seek clarification during the proceedings by asking for

clarification. Practitioners must therefore know the correct pronunciation of all names and the appropriate pronouns for those involved in the case.

The Honourable Justice William Alstergren AO
Chief Justice (Division 1) | Chief Judge (Division 2)
Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia
Date: 4 August 2023