



# MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC  
Attorney General  
Minister for Justice

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Embargoed to Thursday , July 3, 2008

## NEW CODE OF CONDUCT TO WEED OUT ROGUE JPS

NSW Justices of the Peace will have to abide by a strict new code of conduct which comes into force on 1 August 2008, Attorney General John Hatzistergos announced today.

Mr Hatzistergos said a state-wide roll out of the *Code of Conduct for Justices of the Peace in NSW* would begin today, with all 85,000 JPs to be sent a copy. The code is also live today on the website [www.jp.nsw.gov.au](http://www.jp.nsw.gov.au).

"The lemma Government has moved to ensure all JPs registered in NSW are subject to a strict code of conduct which clearly defines acceptable behaviour," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"While most JPs are upstanding citizens, the new code will weed out rogue operators who engage in misconduct, such as breaches of client confidentiality, incorrect witnessing of documents and JPs advertising services in association with a business.

"Over the last two years, 22 JPs have lost office due to illegal behaviour, dishonest conduct or bankruptcy, while since the beginning of last year some 90 JPs have been warned for not following correct procedures."

Mr Hatzistergos said JPs played a valuable role in the community and it was important to ensure the reputations of JPs doing the right thing were not tainted.

"The code will not only clarify standards for JPs who are uncertain of their obligations, but will also be useful for members of the public who may be unsure of what to expect when seeking the services of a JP," he said.

Breaches of the code could result in JPs being removed from office. It covers:

- Prohibitions on charging fees;
- Ensuring JPs do not profit from their office;
- The need to maintain confidentiality;
- Requirements to notify certain information to the Attorney General's Department of NSW; and
- Guidelines relating to the general conduct of JPs.

A revised handbook will be available which explains the duties and procedures.

Members of the public can locate a JP or check an individual's current appointment by searching the JP register at the website.

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