

Justice and Community Safety Directorate

ACT Courts

Updated: Wed, 17 Apr 2013 12:25:11 +1000

Printed: Thu, 21 Jun 2018 10:27:07 +1000

Revision: 20

Canberra, as the Nation's capital, is home to many of the national institutions that service the federal system of government and legislation. The ACT is serviced by its own courts.

The ACT operates the following courts:

The [Supreme Court](#) which hears the most serious criminal cases, including murder and serious drug offences and civil matters involving amounts of more than \$250,000. It also hears appeals from the Magistrates Court and the Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Criminal matters in the Supreme Court may be heard by a judge alone or by a judge with a jury. Civil matters are heard by a judge alone. The Supreme Court also includes the Court of Appeal which hears appeals from decisions of single judges of the Supreme Court. The Court of Appeal generally consists of three judges.

The [Magistrates Court](#) deals with less serious criminal cases and civil matters involving amounts of less than \$250,000. It also has a number of other jurisdictions such as workers compensation and fair trading matters. The Magistrates Court is presided over by a single magistrate in both criminal and civil matters.

The **Childrens Court** deals with criminal cases involving defendants under 18 years of age and matters relating to the care of children and young people under the age of 18 years. The Childrens Court is part of the Magistrates Court.

The [Coroners Court](#) is responsible for inquiring into the cause and manner of a person's death where a person dies in certain specified circumstances, such as where a person dies by drowning and where there are suspicious circumstances. It also inquires into the cause of fires that destroy or damage property and, if requested to do so by the Attorney-General, it inquires into the cause and origins of a disaster. It operates as part of the Magistrates Court.

The [Galambany Court](#) is a specialised court for Aboriginal offenders, within the ACT Magistrates Court.

ACT Courts are administered by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate. Other courts operating in the ACT are administered by the Commonwealth Government.

To find out what happens before, during and after court, visit the Courts' websites.