

Question on Notice

No. 379

Asked on 1 May 2018

MR S KING ASKED THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE (HON Y D'ATH) –

QUESTION:

Will the Attorney-General (a) advise how many Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations are currently volunteers in the JPs in the Community program in the Kurwongbah Electorate and (b) outline the importance of this program to the community?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Kurwongbah for his question and interest in the JPs in the Community program.

Justices of the Peace (Qualified) (JP) and Commissioners for Declarations (Cdec) provide an important service to the Queensland Community. JPs and CDecs provide more than 110,000 hours of witnessing services to the Queensland community each year.

I can confirm that there are eight JPs and no Cdec's currently volunteering in the *JPs in the Community Program* within the electorate of Kurwongbah, however there are community signing sites within the electorate.

The current sites operate at Burpengary Library on Monday, Tuesday, Friday 10am-1pm, Saturday 9:30am-12:30pm and Petrie Police Station on Saturday 8:30am-10:30am.

The JPs in the Community Program (the Program) was established to service the Queensland community. The Justices of the Peace Branch currently support teams of volunteers in numerous community sites located in shopping centres, courthouses, hospitals, libraries and other community locations across Queensland.

The three key objectives of the program are to:

1. increase access to witnessing services for the entire Queensland community;
2. ensure consistent witnessing practices are being followed by Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations in the community; and
3. create transparency and equal access to services within the justice system.

The Program also provides an opportunity for newly appointed Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations to volunteer alongside experienced Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations to further develop their practical skills and knowledge of the vital role that they perform in the Queensland community.

This year marks 15 years since the JPs in the Community Program commenced. Established in 2003, the JPs in the Community Program has more than 1,700 JPs volunteering at over 220 community signing sites across the state ranging from Coolangatta in the South, to Mareeba in the North and as far West as Mount Isa.

The volunteers provide the Queensland community with easy access to witnessing services across the state. The sites cater for people seeking to have documents witnessed, such as statutory declarations, affidavits, Enduring Powers of Attorney, Land Title documents and wills. I commend all involved who provide their services to the Queensland community.

Community members of Kurwongbah interested in becoming a Justice of the Peace or Commissioner for Declarations should see the 'How to become a JP' section at: www.qld.gov.au/jps.

I commend all JPs and Cdecs for their service to the administration of justice in Queensland, and particularly the contributions of the volunteers involved in the JPs in the Community Program.