



# What does a Justice of the Peace do?

Prepared by the ACT Justices of the Peace Association Inc

*I will well  
and truly  
serve in the  
office of  
Justice of the  
Peace in the  
Australian  
Capital  
Territory*

*JP Oath of Office*

## Our role

In the ACT, our Justices of the Peace deal mostly with administrative issues, such as:

- administering oaths or affirmations, witnessing statutory declarations and taking affidavits;
- witnessing signatures; and
- attesting and certifying documents.

A JP will spend most of their JP-time certifying true copies of documents, or administering statutory declarations. JPs will get to witness a few affidavits, Powers of Attorney, Enduring Powers of Attorney, wills, declarations that the client is still alive, divorce papers, authorisation for visitations and so on, maybe some adoption papers.

They won't, as a JP in the ACT, issue search warrants, sit on a court bench or marry people.

## Is being a JP hard work?

No. It can be busy, but few would find it intrusive. JPs who volunteer their time at the signing centres across Canberra will almost certainly have a busier time than those who don't, but it is clear they don't begrudge it.

## Are JPs paid?

No. Appointment as a JP is entirely honorary. The legislated Guidelines on the role of a JP in the ACT state that *a Justice of the Peace must not charge or accept any payment, reward or any form of compensation or gift for acting in the capacity of Justice of the Peace.*

A JP should neither seek nor accept payment or reward for service. The efforts of JPs as a whole are rarely publicly recognised; JPs neither seek nor crave such attention, but it is always welcome.

## Why become a JP?

There are many reasons why a person would want to become a JP.

Some people become a JP to help out at work. Others are inspired by a family member or friend.

JPs are volunteers and the same motivations that drive the millions of volunteers in Australia drive people to become and stay JPs. They want to help others or the community, and gain personal satisfaction from doing something worthwhile.

Basically, it is a spirit of generosity.

## Want to know more?

Contact us at [info@actjpa.org.au](mailto:info@actjpa.org.au)



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