

**SUPREME COURT  
OF THE  
NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA**

**PRACTICE DIRECTION  
No 6 of 2017**

**COURT ATTIRE FOR COUNSEL**

1. This practice direction consolidates existing practice directions in relation to court attire for counsel, and formalises those matters concerning court attire for counsel which are not presently subject to direction. It does not make any change to existing practices.
2. This practice direction has application where relevant to proceedings before an Associate Judge.
3. The following Practice Directions are revoked:
  - *Practice Direction No 2 of 1999 – Court Attire – Wigs*
  - *Practice Direction No 1 of 2002 – Pre-Trial hearings – Crime*
  - *Practice Direction No 3 of 2008 – Court Dress*
  - *Practice Direction No 2 of 2013 – Court of Criminal Appeal Attire.*
4. In ceremonial sittings (including admission ceremonies, installations, farewells and memorial sittings) robes and wigs shall be worn.
5. In Full Court sittings court attire shall be as follows:
  - proceedings concerning the admission or discipline of legal practitioners – robes and wigs
  - other substantive hearings and decisions – robes and no wigs
  - directions hearings – no robes or wigs.
6. In Court of Appeal and Court of Criminal Appeal sittings court attire shall be as follows:
  - substantive hearings and decisions – robes and no wigs
  - directions hearings – no robes or wigs.
7. In criminal matters before a single judge, court attire shall be as follows:
  - trials (including pre-recording of evidence and *voir dire* hearings), pleas, mentions, arraignments and any other proceedings in which the accused is present – robes and wigs
  - hearings in relation to mental impairment and fitness to plead – robes and wigs
  - bail applications and reviews (technically civil proceedings) – robes and no wigs
  - all other matters – no robes or wigs.

8. In civil matters before a single judge, court attire shall be as follows:
- trials and decisions – robes and no wigs
  - Local Court Appeal hearings – robes and no wigs
  - interlocutory/directions hearings – no robes or wigs
  - judge constituting a tribunal (e.g. Motor Accident Compensation Tribunal) – no robes or wigs.
9. While this practice direction prescribes the general practice in relation to court attire for counsel, the conduct of proceedings within a courtroom is within the control of the presiding judge. The provisions in relation to court attire in this practice direction are subject to the qualifications that:
- the judge or judges constituting the court may in particular circumstances vary the usual practice in relation to court attire as the nature of the proceedings may dictate
  - if counsel find themselves robed and wigged when the judge is not, they should remove their wigs
  - if counsel find themselves unrobed and unwigged when the judge is robed and wigged, they should formally seek leave to appear that way.

Dated: 12 December 2017

**Michael Grant**  
**Chief Justice**