



# LAY MAGISTRATES

## *COMMUNITY AT THE HEART OF JUSTICE*

### **What is a Lay Magistrate?**

What is a lay magistrate? Lay Magistrates are non-legal members of the Judiciary, meaning they are ordinary people, but they also play a key role in our criminal justice system.

Lay Magistrates have three main functions or roles: working in Youth Courts, working in Family Proceedings Courts, and Signatory Duties. In essence, they apply their common sense and life experience to decide facts alongside a legally qualified District Judge.

Lay Magistrates are also not required to hold any formal academic qualifications. Applicants do not need GCSEs, A Levels, a University Degree, or any form of legal training to be eligible.

For more information on the role of a lay magistrate, please visit the Lay Magistrates Hub at [www.nijac.gov.uk/laymagistrateshub](http://www.nijac.gov.uk/laymagistrateshub).