

# Renee Butler

## Senior Associate



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Wellington

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## Overview

Renee is a senior associate in our employment team. In addition to broad experience across a range of employment law matters, Renee has a particular focus in health and safety and immigration law.

Renee advises a broad range of clients across the business spectrum. She can guide you through, or lead workplace investigations, disciplinary matters, and employment disputes generally. She has participated in numerous mediations and has also appeared as legal counsel in the Employment Relations Authority and the Employment Court.

Renee assists clients to meet their responsibilities and obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act. She has experience in health-related matters, including bullying and harassment, as well as earthquake-prone buildings and asbestos issues.

Renee's knowledge of immigration law makes her particularly valuable to organisations looking to employ or retain skilled people from overseas, and individuals seeking to immigrate to New Zealand.

She is the Chairperson of the New Zealand Association of Immigration Professionals which has a good working relationship with the New Zealand immigration authorities.

## Experience

- **Tourism NZ:** Carried out a major conduct investigation for Tourism New Zealand. Renee interviewed several witnesses and produced a detailed report which provided a clear answer on the question of whether the complaint had been proven.
- **CentrePort:** Advised on its legal responsibilities and duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act. Renee has advised on issues ranging from earthquake-prone buildings to carrying out a major review of the port's oversight of PCBUs (persons conducting a business or undertaking) who use port facilities but are not engaged to provide services to it.
- **NZ Transport Agency:** Advised on a wide range of matters, including appearing for the Agency in the Employment Relations Authority and the Employment Court.

- **Volunteer Service Abroad:** Advised on its health and safety obligations for New Zealand volunteers working in the Pacific region.
- **Emergency services:** Advised one of the emergency services on a range of health and safety issues, including the impact of the Health and Safety at Work Act, and the actions that various entities and individuals should carry out to meet their obligations, having regard to the detailed statutory framework applying to the client.
- **Large government organisation:** Appeared in the Employment Relations Authority and successfully defended a claim of unjustified disadvantage brought by an employee.
- **Large government organisation:** Investigated complaints raised about harassment and bullying in the workplace for a large government organisation.

## Insights

- Co-author, “Changes to temporary work visas,” *Kensington Swan Newsflash*, September 19, 2019

## Activities and Affiliations

- Chair, New Zealand Association of Immigration Professionals
- Member, Immigration and Refugee Law Committee of the New Zealand Law Society

## Community Involvement and Pro Bono

- Volunteer, Wellington Workers’ Rights Services

## Prior and Present Employment

- Dentons Kensington Swan (previously Kensington Swan), 2013-Present
- Secondment, Department of Corrections NZ, 2014-2015
- Statistics New Zealand, 2013-2013
- Shepherds Arms Hotel, 2011-2013

## Areas of focus

### Practices

- Employment and Labour
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Immigration
- Litigation and Dispute Resolution

### Industry sectors

- Infrastructure and PPP

# Education

- Institute of Professional Legal Studies, 2013
- Victoria University of Wellington, Bachelor of Laws (LLB), Bachelor of Arts (BA), Art History and International Relations

# Admissions and qualifications

- New Zealand, 2014