

THE PROVINCIAL COURT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

NOTICE TO THE PROFESSION AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

REVISED COVID-19 OPERATIONAL PLAN

ISSUED JUNE 12, 2020

COURTHOUSES RE-OPENING

The Provincial Court continues to monitor information communicated by public health officials and reassess its Operational Plan accordingly, taking a cautious and measured approach in re-opening its courthouses.

Effective June 29, 2020 the Provincial Court of Newfoundland and Labrador will expand Court operations. However, access to the Court will be restricted to those persons who are participants in the proceedings before it. These will include counsel, parties, witnesses, victims, support workers, probation officers, victim services workers, parents of a young person, members of the media and any person authorized in advance by a Judge. The presiding Judge may limit access to the courtroom.

Peace officers may attend the courthouses with applications for judicial authorizations and other services as required.

Front Counter Service

Front counter service may be restricted in some areas. Please call your local courthouse in advance. See below for contact information.

Criminal and Youth Criminal Cases, Family Matters, Protection Applications and Peace Bonds

All matters will proceed as scheduled unless otherwise notified. For matters which were rescheduled due to the pandemic, please refer to the Provincial Court Docket at <https://docket.court.nl.ca/> for instructions on how to access your new Court date.

Applications for peace bonds will now be accepted and hearings will be scheduled.

In-Custody Accused

Arraignments, judicial interim release (bail) hearings and sentencings will be conducted using audio and video technology unless otherwise directed by the Judge.

The Accused will attend their trials or preliminary inquiries in-person unless otherwise ordered by a Judge.

Persons Not in Custody

If you are scheduled to appear in Court (first appearance, trial, preliminary inquiry, sentencing hearing or other hearing, or to vary an existing order), and you are not represented by counsel, you must appear in Court on your scheduled date. For matters which were rescheduled due to the pandemic, please refer to the Provincial Court Docket at <https://docket.court.nl.ca/> for instructions on how to access your new court date.

Parties Represented by Counsel

Counsel requesting an adjournment of a matter are to file an application for a postponement in advance of the court date. Applications can be filed electronically to the relevant court centre as follows:

stjohns@provincial.court.nl.ca
harbourgrace@provincial.court.nl.ca
grandbank@provincial.court.nl.ca
clareville@provincial.court.nl.ca
gander@provincial.court.nl.ca
grandfallswindsor@provincial.court.nl.ca
cornerbrook@provincial.court.nl.ca
stephenville@provincial.court.nl.ca
happyvalleygoosebay@provincial.court.nl.ca
wabush@provincial.court.nl.ca

Counsel are encouraged to file electronically but in-person applications will also be accepted.

Counsel are also encouraged to file designations of counsel where applicable.

For individual appearances by counsel, CourtCall will be employed.

Virtual Court

The Court will maintain its capacity to conduct virtual court. Parties are required to make an application for use of virtual court.

Specialty Courts

Drug Treatment Court, Mental Health Court, and Family Violence Intervention Court will be fully reinstated. Audio and video technology including virtual court may be used where practicable.

Traffic Court, Contraventions Act Cases, and Civil Matters (Small Claims Settlement Conferences, and Small Claims Trials)

These cases will continue to be adjourned *sine die*. Parties will be contacted by the Court regarding rescheduled dates.

- Fine payments can be made to Fines Administration by phone, online at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/pay-online/> or by mail (see back of ticket). Payments may also be made to the Provincial Court by mail only. Do not mail cash.
- Time to pay extensions, adjournment requests and not guilty pleas can be made by contacting the local courthouse by mail, e-mail or fax.
- If you fail to notify the requisite court location of your intention to contest a matter by mail, e-mail or fax you will be convicted in your absence.

Small Claims filings may be made *via* mail, fax or online (e-filing) at <https://provincial.efile.court.nl.ca>

Circuit Courts

Most Court circuits remain suspended until further notice. Where exceptions apply, the parties will be notified accordingly. Any party, upon application, can request a case conference for any outstanding matter on the Court circuit docket.

Weekend And Statutory Holiday Court (WASH)

Current WASH court procedures remain unchanged. The general public will not be permitted to attend. All parties, including the Accused, will appear by audio or video technology.

Public Health Guidelines

If you are experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms do not attend Court. You must contact the local court by telephone in advance of your scheduled appearance. (The numbers are listed below.) You will be required to provide your contact information.

To help protect the public, stakeholders, judges and staff, all individuals attending Court must wear a face covering over the mouth and nose, at all times. This requirement does not apply to children under the age of two or to individuals who are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition. If you attend Court without a mask, a disposable mask will be provided along with instruction on how to properly and safely use the mask.

Please visit <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/> for the most recent and up-to-date information relating to COVID-19, including the self-assessment tool.

Courthouse Contact Information

Enquiries can be made to the local Courthouse, as follows:

St. John's	(709) 729-1539
Harbour Grace	(709) 596-6141
Grand Bank	(709) 832-1450
Clarenville	(709) 466-2635
Gander	(709) 256-1100
Grand Falls-Windsor	(709) 292-4212
Corner Brook	(709) 637-2323
Stephenville	(709) 643-2966
Happy Valley-Goose Bay	(709) 896-7870
Wabush	(709) 282-6617