



## **COVID-19: PROVINCIAL COURT INTRODUCES PILOT PROJECT FOR FAXING NEW CRIMINAL INFORMATIONS IN HALIFAX & DARTMOUTH**

**Monday, Jan. 25, 2021**

The Provincial Court is launching a pilot project that permits law enforcement agencies to securely submit Informations to the Halifax and Dartmouth Provincial Courts by fax.

Before the pandemic, police had to visit a courthouse in person to have an Information sworn. In March, when COVID-19 forced courthouses to limit public access, the Provincial Court developed a process for electronic filing. Law enforcement agencies could fax Informations to the Justice of the Peace Centre for matters in the Halifax Regional Municipality, or to the Court Administration Office for courthouses elsewhere in the province. This helped reduce in-person contact for court staff and officers.

This was meant to be a temporary solution in an emergency situation. The process has since been reviewed and the revised process outlined below will be piloted at the Halifax and Dartmouth Provincial Courts.

Effective Feb. 1, 2021, all new Informations to be laid in Halifax and Dartmouth (including release documents to be confirmed) will be received by fax in the Court Administration Office in Dartmouth, pursuant to Sec. 508.1(1) of the Criminal Code. When submitting these documents, law enforcement agencies are expected to use the new fillable PDF [fax cover sheet](#). The fax number for the Court Administration Office is included in the cover sheet.

***The exception will be for any daily Cells matters.*** Informations for Cells will continue to be received by fax through the Justice of the Peace Centre and exempt from the pilot project.

Under the new process, law enforcement agencies will no longer need to courier copies of the faxed documents to the Halifax or Dartmouth courthouses. Law enforcement agencies and the Public Prosecution offices for the Halifax Regional Municipality, the Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada will receive a scanned copy of the original Information (with included confirmed release documents) from the Court Administration Office after it has been entered in the JEIN system.

The pilot project will run until July 31, 2021. At that time, the judiciary, staff and stakeholders will evaluate its success and consider expansion to other Provincial Courts in the province.

For information on the various Provincial Court directives related to COVID-19, please visit [https://www.courts.ns.ca/News\\_of\\_Courts/COVID19\\_Preventative\\_Measures.htm](https://www.courts.ns.ca/News_of_Courts/COVID19_Preventative_Measures.htm).

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