



COVID-19: PROVINCIAL COURT EXTENDS SUSPENSION OF IN-PERSON PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2022

Due to the ongoing situation with COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, the Provincial Court of Nova Scotia is extending the suspension of most in-person proceedings until Friday, Feb. 11, 2022.

This suspension applies to all in-person proceedings in the Provincial Court, the Youth Justice Court, Night Court and Wellness Court Programs, with the exception of trials for individuals in custody and any matter deemed urgent or exceptional by the presiding judge, in consultation with the Chief Judge. These matters may proceed in person, as operational requirements allow.

Counsel and other court participants are reminded that mandatory masking and physical distancing measures are in effect for any matter that proceeds in person. Strict adherence to personal protective equipment (PPE) is essential to help reduce the spread of the virus.

The situation will be reassessed prior to Feb. 11 to determine whether it is safe to resume hearing more matters in person.

All new and scheduled Provincial Court matters that can be done remotely by telephone or Microsoft Teams will proceed, provided there is sufficient staff and equipment to do so. Counsel are expected to appear virtually, either with or on behalf of their client, unless the presiding judge orders otherwise. Any in-person proceedings that cannot be held virtually will continue to be adjourned and rescheduled.

The resolution of non-urgent matters remains a priority for the Provincial Court and the Youth Justice Court. Counsel are encouraged to continue reviewing their matters to see what can be resolved without an in-person hearing. The full process to request the resolution of a non-urgent matter is outlined in [here](#).

Self-Represented Individuals

If you are not in custody and you have a court appearance by telephone or video in the Provincial Court, unless the Court contacts you directly, your matter will go ahead, and you are expected to participate. If you are unsure of the status of your matter, please [contact the courthouse](#) where your matter is scheduled to be heard.

If you are not in custody and you have an upcoming in-person appearance in the Provincial Court, you should not come to the courthouse. Instead, you should contact the courthouse where your matter is scheduled to be heard or contact duty counsel at Nova Scotia Legal Aid to assist with adjourning your matter. You can apply online using the Legal Aid Adjournment Request form or call 902-420-7800.

You will be required to attend court in person on the new date you are provided.

Bail Hearings

All bail hearings will proceed virtually by video on Microsoft Teams, whenever possible.

Please note that during the suspension of in-person proceedings, Provincial Court judges in certain locations may require in-person attendance of local counsel for contested bail hearings. Counsel involved in contested proceedings should check with the judge presiding in that jurisdiction for direction.

For more information on the COVID-19 measures in the Provincial Court and the Youth Justice Court, please refer to the Consolidated Directive.

-30-

Media Contact:

Jennifer Stairs
Communications Director
Nova Scotia Judiciary
902-221-5257
stairsjl@courts.ns.ca