



COVID-19: SUPREME COURT SUSPENDS FILING DEADLINES FOR CIVIL AND FAMILY MATTERS IN THE GENERAL DIVISION

Saturday, March 28, 2020 (Halifax, NS) – Due to the ongoing situation with COVID-19, the Chief Justice of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court has directed that, unless a judge indicates otherwise, filing deadlines outlined in the Civil Procedure Rules, for civil and family matters in the General Division only, are suspended until further notice. The suspension period is retroactive to March 19, 2020.

This directive includes, but is not limited to, filing a Notice of Defence in an action, a Notice of Contest in an application, and a Notice of Judicial Review or Notice of Appeal under Civil Procedure Rule 7.

This directive does not apply to criminal matters, proceedings in the Supreme Court (Family Division) or proceedings in the Court of Appeal.

It also does not affect filing deadlines established by legislation, such as the deadlines contained in the *Limitations of Action Act* or the *Probate Act*. Deadlines created under a statute can only be amended by the Nova Scotia Legislature.

Until further notice, the Supreme Court has adopted an essential services model. Only urgent or essential matters, as determined by a judge, are proceeding at this time. As such, this directive does not apply to any matters that a judge has deemed to be urgent or essential.

This directive is further to, and should be read in conjunction with, the [March 26 Supreme Court directive on the electronic filing of documents](#). Counsel and self-represented individuals should not file documents unless they are related to an urgent or essential matter. Documents related to matters not proceeding in the immediate future should be held until the court has resumed normal operations.

These measures will help reduce the number of new filings at courthouses, so staff can focus on processing documents related to the urgent and essential matters that are proceeding.

The suspension of these filing deadlines is a temporary measure that will remain in effect until such time that the Supreme Court stops operating under an essential services model. When the Court resumes normal operations, counsel and the public will be advised via a notice on the [Courts of Nova Scotia website](#).

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