



COVID-19: JURY TRIALS IN NOVA SCOTIA CONTINUE TO BE SUSPENDED

Monday, May 11, 2020 (Halifax, NS) – To help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the Chief Justice of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court has extended the suspension of all jury trials in the province until Sept. 8, 2020.

Last week, the Chief Justices and Chief Judge met with public health officials, including Dr. Robert Strang, the province’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, to discuss when it may be safe for the Courts to start returning to normal operations.

Based on the advice of public health officials to continue social distancing, it would be unsafe to have hundreds of people gather for jury selections at this time. The Supreme Court will re-evaluate the situation again at the beginning of September.

The Supreme Court has been operating under an essential services model since March 19, 2020. The Court has made advances in recent weeks to expand the services available under that model, where it is safe to do so. Virtual hearings and judicial settlement conferences are now available for some non-urgent civil matters in Halifax. Virtual hearings are possible because all the participants, including court staff and the judge, are participating remotely. That service will be expanded to the Family Division and General Division in the districts in the coming weeks.

For more information on how the Nova Scotia Courts are operating during the pandemic, go to https://www.courts.ns.ca/News_of_Courts/COVID19_Preventative_Measures.htm.

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