



COVID-19: PROBATE COURT EXPANDING SERVICES AVAILABLE DURING THE PANDEMIC

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Effective immediately, the Probate Court is expanding its essential services model to allow new applications for Grants of Probate and Grants of Administration to be filed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Registrars of Probate will also offer new dates for passing accounts.

This directive replaces the Probate Court directive issued on April 9, 2020.

Original wills and applications for grants must be filed as paper copies. Unless otherwise noted in legislation, all other probate documents should be filed electronically, as outlined in the [March 26, 2020, e-filing directive](#) of the Supreme Court.

Until further notice, and unless the *Probate Act* Regulations indicate otherwise, the Probate Court will permit personal service to be effected by email during the pandemic, as outlined in the [April 17, 2020, directive](#) of the Supreme Court. The Probate Court will also allow accommodations for the commissioning of affidavits in circumstances where it is not possible or is medically unsafe for the deponent to physically attend before a commissioner. The directions on preparing virtual affidavits are outlined in the [April 2, 2020, directive](#) of the Supreme Court.

Like many sectors right now, the judicial system continues to operate with significantly reduced staff. With that in mind, counsel and self-represented individuals should expect some delays in the processing of probate documents, especially in the Halifax region where the volume of filings is often greater. Your patience is appreciated.

All estates filed with the Registry will be processed in the order received. All hearings in the Probate Court will be conducted by telephone, unless cross-examination of a witness is required.

Whenever possible, counsel and the parties are asked to use a secure landline for these appearances, however, the Court recognizes that may not always be possible. If you must use a cell phone, please do so in a stable location with good cellular reception.

Any additional questions on the filing of probate documents or the hearing of probate matters during the pandemic should be directed to the Registrar of Probate in your area. Contact information for all Registrars is available online [here](#).

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Media Contact:

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