



COVID-19: SMALL CLAIMS COURT EXPANDING SERVICES

Wednesday, July 8, 2020 (Halifax, NS) – Effective today, the Nova Scotia Small Claims Court will begin expanding the services available during the COVID-19 pandemic, including accepting non-urgent filings and hearing more matters by telephone.

Counsel and parties will be able to file Notices of Claim, Taxations and Residential Tenancy Appeals documents by mail or in-person via drop boxes set up in the courthouses. Mailing addresses for all courthouses are available online [here](#). All documents will be date-stamped the day they are delivered to the Court. Counsel and parties should expect some delays with processing this paperwork.

Public access to courthouses continues to be restricted. Only those who work in the building, who are involved in a hearing or those who have an appointment will be permitted inside. Sheriffs are conducting screening at all courthouses to ensure a visitor's presence is required and that it is safe for them to attend.

To further reduce the number of people coming to court, adjudicators will hear all small claims matters by telephone. The preliminary teleconference with the parties and the adjudicator will proceed on its initial hearing date. The adjudicator will then determine if the matter can proceed by telephone or if it will need to be adjourned until it can be heard in person. Among other things, adjudicators will consider the complexity of the case, the number of witnesses, and the type of evidence and documentation involved. Any in-person hearings will be rescheduled to dates in September.

Any new claims issued that were not served prior to March 19, 2020, will need to be re-issued at the Court of Jurisdiction.

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

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Media Contact:

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