



## **COVID-19: FURTHER RESTRICTIONS IN PROVINCIAL COURTS**

Wednesday, March 18, 2020 (Halifax, NS) – Starting Thursday, March 19, members of the public who have a matter before the Provincial Court, Night Court, or the provincial Family Court, will be advised they should not attend court in person unless the matter is in relation to an in-custody or urgent criminal matter, or an urgent family law or child/adult protection matter.

This further restriction was put in place to help slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. There are now three confirmed cases and nine presumptive cases of the virus in Nova Scotia.

Members of the public who have travelled internationally within the last two weeks, who are experiencing symptoms of the coronavirus, or who have been directed by public health officials, 811 or their doctor to self-isolate, **should not visit a courthouse anywhere in Nova Scotia.**

As well, access to Provincial Courts continues to be restricted for members of the general public. Only those persons required for the court proceedings will be permitted. This includes counsel, litigants, accused individuals, witnesses, support workers, and members of the media.

The Provincial Court will remain open, subject to the following:

### **Criminal and Youth Criminal Cases**

If you are not in custody and you have a criminal court appearance in the Provincial Court between March 19 and May 31, 2020, you should not attend court. Court staff will be in touch with counsel and self-represented individuals about rescheduling in June. If you feel your matter is urgent, please contact the courthouse by telephone.

Please note that the Court will adjourn your matter without you needing to be present. You will be required to attend court in person on the new date you are provided.

Urgent matters include peace bond applications and hearings, as well as in-custody proceedings, including:

- Bail hearings
- Sentencings

- Preliminary inquiries and trials
- Youth criminal sentence reviews

Wherever possible, the Court will make full use of video and audio technology to effectively address criminal matters involving accused persons in custody.

The Provincial Court and the Justice of the Peace Centre will continue to be available to process warrants and judicial authorizations.

-30-

**Media Contact:**

Jennifer Stairs  
Communications Director  
Nova Scotia Judiciary  
902-221-5257  
[stairsjl@courts.ns.ca](mailto:stairsjl@courts.ns.ca)

**Court Contact:**

Contact Information for all Provincial Court locations in Nova Scotia is available online at [https://www.courts.ns.ca/Courthouse\\_Locations/Courthouse\\_Locations\\_Map.htm/](https://www.courts.ns.ca/Courthouse_Locations/Courthouse_Locations_Map.htm/).