



COVID-19: PHYSICAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS IN NOVA SCOTIA COURTS

Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021

In light of recent COVID-19 outbreaks in Nova Scotia and the threat of the new Omicron variant, the All Courts COVID-19 Recovery Committee is recommending that physical distancing requirements in all Nova Scotia courthouses and courtrooms return to two metres (six feet), effective Monday, Dec. 20, 2021.

This step is in line with public health guidance and the provincial government's decision to reinstate physical distancing requirements and indoor and outdoor gathering limits.

Further to this, the COVID-19 restrictions that have been in place in the Courts throughout much of the pandemic will remain in place for the foreseeable future.

That means public access to courthouses will continue to be limited to those people who:

- work in the building;
- are directly involved with a court proceeding;
- have an appointment; or
- have approval from a judge to view a court proceeding in person.

To help maintain the open courts principle, members of the media are permitted to attend court in person, provided there is space available in the courtroom. The option to participate remotely by telephone or video will also continue.

As per the [May 27, 2021, Notice](#), masking will continue to be required in all public areas of courthouses. Disposable medical masks, rather than reusable cloth masks, are required for anyone making an in-person appearance in a courtroom, boardroom, jury room, or other enclosed space inside a courthouse.

Anyone attending a courthouse is reminded to monitor the Public Health [list of COVID-19 exposure sites](#) and to practice good hand hygiene, including the use of hand sanitizer, while in the building.

The [Operational Guidelines](#) for court-approved participants from outside Nova Scotia remain in place.

The All Courts COVID-19 Recovery Committee will regularly assess the ongoing situation in Nova Scotia and across the country to determine when these court restrictions can be eased. Any changes will be informed by advice from Public Health.

For more information about COVID-10 directives for each level of Court, please visit https://www.courts.ns.ca/News_of_Courts/COVID19_Preventative_Measures.htm.

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