



## **WORK UNDERWAY TO DIGITALLY TRANSFORM THE NOVA SCOTIA COURTS**

**Thursday, Feb. 8, 2021**

Nova Scotians who use the courts have benefited from technological changes introduced during the pandemic and now a new task force will explore further ways to use technology to improve access to justice, increase efficiencies, and create better outcomes for users of the province's courts.

The Nova Scotia Judiciary and the Nova Scotia Department of Justice are collaborating and leading a task force, which will create a road map to digitally transform the courts of Nova Scotia.

The task force will be co-chaired by The Hon. Michael J. Wood, Chief Justice of Nova Scotia, and Candace L. Thomas, Q.C., Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General. Other members of the task force include:

- The Hon. Patrick J. Duncan, Associate Chief Justice, Supreme Court (General Division)
- The Hon. Lawrence I. O'Neil, Associate Chief Justice, Supreme Court (Family Division)
- The Hon. Pamela S. Williams, Chief Judge, Provincial and Family Courts of Nova Scotia
- Lora MacEachern, Q.C., Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Justice
- Natasha Clarke, Associate Deputy Minister and Chief Digital Officer, Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services
- Agnes E. MacNeil, Q.C., Member of the Bar
- Paul Saunders, Member of the Bar
- Anna Manley, Member of the Bar

The task force will be supported by the work of an independent digital consultant who will conduct engagement with court users and others to assess their needs and identify opportunities for modernization.

## QUOTES:

“The pandemic has highlighted the urgency to modernize the courts in this country. With that came the push to start thinking and working differently. We now have a unique opportunity to capitalize on the change already underway and collaborate through the task force on a clear vision for the digital transformation of the Nova Scotia courts.”

- *The Hon. Michael J. Wood, Digital Transformation Task Force Co-chair, Chief Justice of Nova Scotia*

“It is important that our court system is responsive to the needs of its users. Transitioning the courts from a paper based to a digital system will require leadership and vision from those with expertise in justice, technology, and change management, which we clearly have in the individuals represented on this task force.”

- *Candace L. Thomas, Q.C., Digital Transformation Task Force Co-chair, Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General*

“The Courts are a public institution and with that comes an expectation that the services we provide will be accessible, effective and efficient. In leading this task force alongside the judiciary, the province is acknowledging that modern courts are a priority for our citizens. I look forward to seeing the results of this important work.”

- *The Hon. Deborah K. Smith, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia*

“When the pandemic struck, the Provincial Court worked with the Department of Justice, the Bar, law enforcement and other groups involved in the justice system to make changes we previously thought weren’t possible. It has been incredible to see the progress in areas like electronic disclosure, electronic filing of documents and virtual court. This momentum will help the task force bring the Provincial Court into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

- *Pamela S. Williams, Chief Judge of the Provincial and Family Courts of Nova Scotia*