



**SUPREME COURT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
NOTICE TO THE PROFESSION AND GENERAL PUBLIC**

**SUPREME COURT OPERATIONS FOR ALL JUDICIAL CENTRES OUTSIDE  
THE AVALON PENINSULA  
MARCH 2021**

On February 18, 2021, the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador issued a Notice to the Profession and General Public outlining Province-wide changes to its operations for the months of February and March 2021. The changes were implemented as a result of the Special Measures Order (General – Alert Level 5), issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health on February 12, 2021, which moved the Province to Alert Level 5.

On February 26, 2021, the Chief Medical Officer of Health issued the Special Measures Order (Alert Level 4 – Newfoundland and Labrador except Avalon Peninsula), which moved all areas of the Province other than the Avalon Peninsula to Alert Level 4. As a result of this new guidance, the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador has issued this updated Notice to the Profession and General Public for **all judicial centres located outside of the Avalon Peninsula**.

Two other Notices, issued concurrently with this Notice, deal with the planned operations for March 2021 in the St. John's Family Division and the St. John's General Division, respectively.

**OPERATIONS FOR WEEK OF MARCH 8-12, 2021**

For the week of March 8-12, 2021, the Supreme Court's General Division and Family Division **judicial centres outside of the Avalon Peninsula** will remain in a virtual services model. During this period, these Court locations will hear matters virtually, as further discussed below. These Court locations will also continue to hear any urgent or emergency matter that arises. Those matters will also be held virtually, unless a judge determines that the urgent or emergency matter must be held in-person. Additional details of the Supreme Court's operations outside of the Avalon Peninsula for the week of March 8-12, 2021 are provided below.

**Trials (Jury/Judge Alone)**

- All criminal jury trials set to begin in March 2021 have been postponed.
- All criminal, civil and family judge-alone trials set to begin the week of March 8-12, 2021, will be postponed, unless the judge, in accordance with the applicable legislation and court rules, directs that the trial will proceed

by videoconference. This is also contingent on the availability of videoconferencing equipment.

- All postponed trials will be rescheduled as soon as possible. Court staff members will be in contact with parties to provide a rescheduled date.

### **Hearings and Conferences**

- The following criminal matters are considered urgent and will be proceeding by videoconference or audioconference, in accordance with s. 515(2.2) of the *Criminal Code*, or, where necessary, in-person: bail hearings, bail review applications where the accused is in custody, and detention reviews.
- The following family proceedings will be considered urgent and will be proceeding by videoconference or audioconference, or, where necessary, in-person: requests for urgent relief relating to the safety of a child or parent; applications relating to medical decisions or wrongful removal of a child; applications to preserve property or assets; warrants under the *Children, Youth and Families Act*; and new applications under the *Adult Protection Act*.
- Any hearing or conference that was already scheduled to be held by teleconference and videoconference during the week of March 8-12, 2021, will be proceeding.
- The Court will also, subject to the availability of teleconferencing or videoconferencing equipment, resume hearing the following types of appearances by teleconference or videoconference. **Parties will be contacted as soon as possible with arrangements for attending virtually.**
  - ***Criminal Proceedings***: pre-trial conferences; case management conferences; resolution conferences; applications to set a date; and any other application that a judge determines may proceed virtually.
  - ***Civil Proceedings***: case management meetings; pre-trial conferences; settlement conferences; appeals; applications to set a date; and any other application that a judge determines may proceed virtually.
  - ***Family Proceedings***: case management hearings; interim application hearings; default summons; objection to recalculation hearings; trial readiness conferences; and settlement conferences.
- The Supreme Court General Division and Family Division judicial centres outside of the Avalon Peninsula will continue to hear urgent and emergency matters during the week of March 8-12, 2021.

- If you are seeking an urgent hearing, please contact the applicable Registry using the contact information below:

**Corner Brook General Division and Family Division**

[inquiryCB@supreme.court.nl.ca](mailto:inquiryCB@supreme.court.nl.ca)

709-637-2633

**Gander General Division**

[inquiryGander@supreme.court.nl.ca](mailto:inquiryGander@supreme.court.nl.ca)

709-256-1115

**Grand Bank General Division**

[inquiryGB@supreme.court.nl.ca](mailto:inquiryGB@supreme.court.nl.ca)

709-832-1720

**Grand Falls-Windsor General Division**

[inquiryGFW@supreme.court.nl.ca](mailto:inquiryGFW@supreme.court.nl.ca)

709-292-4260

**Happy Valley-Goose Bay General Division**

[inquiryHVGB@supreme.court.nl.ca](mailto:inquiryHVGB@supreme.court.nl.ca)

709-896-7892

- All urgent requests and filings will be assessed by a judge to determine if they may proceed.
  - The Court will provide directions to the parties regarding how and when an urgent hearing will be conducted.
  - If a judge directs that a matter will proceed in-person, the matter will be held in accordance with the [COVID-19 Guidelines](#) issued by the Court. Note that everyone permitted to enter a courthouse is required to wear a mask, keep appropriate distance from others, and sanitize their hands frequently.
- All other appearances will be postponed or adjourned. These matters will be rescheduled as soon as possible. Court staff members will be in contact with parties to provide a rescheduled date.

**Filing and Processing Documents**

- The Supreme Court General Division and Family Division has resumed accepting all filings for processing. Registries will remain closed for the week of March 8-12, 2021, but the drop boxes at the entrances of courthouses have reopened to permit contactless drop-off and pick-up of

documents. The drop boxes are only accessible (for drop-off and pick-up) during the following hours:

**Grand Bank General Division**

Monday-Friday 9:00AM-12:30PM and 1:30PM-4:00PM

**Gander General Division**

Monday-Friday 9:00AM-12:30PM and 1:30PM-4:00PM

**Grand Falls-Windsor General Division**

Monday-Friday 9:00AM-12:30PM and 1:30PM-4:00PM

**Corner Brook General Division and Family Division**

Monday-Friday 9:00AM-12:30PM and 1:30PM-4:00PM

**Happy Valley-Goose Bay General Division**

Monday-Friday 9:00AM -12:00PM and 1:00PM-4:00PM

- **Note that all filings for these locations must now be made at the drop boxes – email filings will no longer be accepted (with the exception of email filings permitted in accordance with [Practice Note P.N. 2020-03](#)).**
- Filing fees must be paid in one of the following ways: (1) the filing party may include a cheque enclosed with the document being filed; or (2) the filing party may provide a contact name and number with the document so that the Court can process a credit card payment by phone.
- Forms may be downloaded from the [Court's website](#).
- If the document filed requires the setting of an appearance, such as a return date, **please be advised that the Court may not be able to provide such a date at this time.**
- Further note that if the document that you are filing requires that your signature be witnessed by a commissioner for oaths, you must arrange for this prior to filing the document. **The Court will not be able to witness signatures at the Registry counter at this time.**
- Processing times may be delayed owing to reduced staffing levels.

**OPERATIONS FROM MARCH 15, 2021**

Beginning on March 15, 2021, the Supreme Court's General Division and Family Division **judicial centres outside of the Avalon Peninsula** will resume hearing all matters currently on the docket and will re-open Registries to the public. Matters will be held virtually or, where necessary, in-person. These centres will also continue to hear any urgent or

emergency matters that arise. Additional details of the Supreme Court's operations outside of the Avalon Peninsula beginning March 15, 2021 are provided below.

Note that all matters that are proceeding in-person will be held in accordance with the [COVID-19 Guidelines](#) issued by the Court. Note that everyone permitted to enter a courthouse is required to wear a mask, keep appropriate distance from others, and sanitize their hands frequently.

### **Trials (Judge Alone)**

- Criminal, civil and family judge-alone trials set to begin on or after March 15, 2021, may proceed in-person, but the Court will carefully examine these matters to determine if they may be appropriately held virtually. Counsel are also encouraged to identify any trials which they believe could be held virtually.
- All trials that must be postponed will be rescheduled as soon as possible. Court staff members will be in contact with parties to provide a rescheduled date.

### **Hearings and Conferences**

- The following hearings may, beginning March 15, 2021, proceed in-person, but the Court will carefully examine these matters to determine if they may be appropriately held virtually (counsel are also encouraged to identify any such matters which they believe could be held virtually):
  - Hearings in civil and family matters that are expected to take longer than 5 minutes; and
  - Hearings in criminal matters.
- The following appearances will proceed virtually:
  - Any appearance relating to scheduling;
  - Case management appearances;
  - Pre-trial conferences; and
  - Settlement conferences.
- Any matter that must be postponed or adjourned will be rescheduled as soon as possible. Court staff members will be in contact with parties to provide a rescheduled date.

### **Urgent and Emergency Matters Arising**

- The Supreme Court will not set down any new matters during the month of March, with the exception of urgent and emergency matters.
- The Court will provide directions to the parties regarding how and when an urgent hearing will be conducted.

### **Filing and Processing Documents**

- Beginning March 15, 2021, the Registries in the Supreme Court General Division and Family Division judicial centres outside of the Avalon Peninsula will re-open to the public. Drop boxes will also be available at the front of courthouses to permit contactless drop-off and pick-up of documents. The drop boxes will only be accessible (for drop-off and pick-up) during the hours noted above.
- For documents left in drop boxes, filing fees must be paid in one of the following ways: (1) the filing party may include a cheque enclosed with the document being filed; or (2) the filing party may provide a contact name and number with the document so that the Court can process a credit card payment by phone.
- Forms may be downloaded from the [Court's website](#).
- Processing times may be delayed owing to reduced staffing levels.

### **UPDATES**

The Supreme Court will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation across the province to determine whether any further changes to operations are required. Please continue to consult the [Court's website](#) and Twitter account ([@NLSupremeCourt](#)) for the most up-to-date information.

**RAYMOND P. WHALEN**  
**Chief Justice**