



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

**SUPREME COURT OPERATIONS IN ST. JOHN'S FAMILY DIVISION
BEGINNING APRIL 1, 2021**

On February 18 and March 4, 2021, the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador issued Notices to the Profession and General Public outlining changes to its operations in its judicial centres for the months of February and March 2021. The changes were implemented as a result of the Special Measures Order issued on February 12, 2021, which moved the Province to COVID-19 Alert Level 5, and the Special Measures Order issued February 26, 2021, which kept the Avalon Peninsula at Alert Level 5 but moved the rest of the Province to Alert Level 4.

On March 13, 2021, the Chief Medical Officer of Health issued two Special Measures Orders lowering the COVID-19 Alert Level to Level 4 on the Avalon Peninsula and to Level 3 in all other areas of the Province. As a result of this new guidance, the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador will be making changes to its operations beginning on April 1, 2021. This Notice outlines the changes for the **Family Division in St. John's**.

OPERATIONS BEGINNING APRIL 1, 2021

Beginning on April 1, 2021, all matters scheduled to be heard in the Family Division in St. John's will be held in-person, unless counsel and/or the parties have been instructed by the Court to appear virtually. Counsel are also encouraged to identify matters that might be heard by tele/videoconference and to apply to appear virtually under the applicable legislation or rules of court (see Rule F41 of the [Supreme Court Family Rules](#)).

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. Parties attending at the Court in-person should arrive at the Court ten minutes prior to their appearance for Covid-19 and point of entry screening.

FILING AND PROCESSING DOCUMENTS

Beginning April 1, 2021, the registry in the St. John's Family Division will re-open to the public. **Attendance at the registry will be by appointment only.** Appointments may be made [online](#).

Drop boxes will remain available at the front of the courthouse to permit contactless drop-off and pick-up of documents. The drop boxes will be accessible (for pick-up and drop off) during the registry's normal business hours.

Email filings will no longer be accepted (with the exception of email filings permitted in accordance with [Practice Note P.N. 2020-03](#)).

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.

Please note that 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