



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

**SUPREME COURT OPERATIONS IN FAMILY DIVISION LOCATIONS
BEGINNING APRIL 1, 2021 (REVISED)**

On March 23, 2021, the Supreme Court issued three Notices to the Profession and General Public outlining planned changes to its operations in the Court on April 1, 2021. These changes were made in light of the Chief Medical Officer of Health's (CMOH) orders, issued on March 13, 2021, that lowered the COVID-19 Alert Level to Level 4 on the Avalon Peninsula and to Level 3 in all other areas of the Province.

In light of the CMOH's order lowering the COVID-19 Alert Level to Level 2, the Supreme Court is issuing this Notice to the Profession and General Public to clarify its operations in the two *Family Division locations across the Province (Corner Brook and St. John's)* beginning April 1, 2021.

OPERATIONS BEGINNING APRIL 1, 2021

Beginning on April 1, 2021, the Supreme Court will continue with a hybrid in-person/virtual services model. Certain matters will presumptively proceed in-person and other matters will presumptively proceed virtually, subject to judicial direction otherwise. The Court will set new appearances and the registries will be open for in-person service. Details of the Supreme Court's operations in the Family Division 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. 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.

COURT APPEARANCES

Beginning April 1, 2021, all family appearances, other than settlement conferences, will proceed *in-person*, unless the Court contacts parties/counsel to inform them that the matter will be held virtually. Counsel are also encouraged to identify matters that might be heard by tele/videoconference and to apply to appear virtually under Rule F41 of the [Supreme Court Family Rules](#).

Settlement conferences will proceed *virtually*, unless the Court contacts parties/counsel to inform them that the settlement conference will be held in-person.

Please be advised that the Court has installed clear Lexon dividers in some of its Family Division courtrooms.

REGISTRIES

St. John's

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 and mail hubs 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 court's normal business hours.

Corner Brook

The registry in the Corner Brook Family Division re-opened on March 16, 2021, and will remain open to the public.

Drop boxes and mail hubs will also remain at the front of the courthouse to permit contactless drop-off and pick-up of documents. The drop boxes will be accessible (for drop-off and pick-up) during the Court's normal hours of operation. *Documents filed before 4:00PM will be date stamped on the day they are filed but documents left in the drop boxes after 4:00PM will be date stamped on the following business day.*

General Information about Filing/Processing Documents

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.

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

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