



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

SUPREME COURT OPERATIONS IN ALL GENERAL DIVISION LOCATIONS

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**RETURN TO IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL SERVICES IN GANDER AND GRAND
FALLS-WINDSOR GENERAL DIVISION LOCATIONS ON JUNE 7, 2021**

On March 27, 2021, the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) moved the COVID-19 Alert Level to Level 2 Province-wide. Pursuant to that change, all Supreme Court General Division locations had moved to a hybrid in-person/virtual services model and had resumed providing in-person registry services on April 1, 2021.

Following this, on May 24, 2021, certain towns and communities in the Northeast and Central Region of the Province, including Gander and Grand Falls-Windsor, returned to COVID-19 Alert Level 4. As a result, the General Division locations in Gander and Grand Falls-Windsor returned to a virtual services model and registry services were again restricted.

On June 1, 2021, the CMOH lowered the COVID-19 Alert Level to Level 2 in the Towns of Gander and Grand Falls-Windsor, among others. In light of this most recent change, the General Division locations in Gander and Grand Falls-Windsor will, on June 7, 2021, return to a hybrid in-person/virtual services model like that currently in place in the other General Division locations across the Province.

OPERATIONS IN ALL JUDICIAL CENTRES BEGINNING JUNE 7, 2021

Beginning on June 7, 2021, all Supreme Court General Division locations will again operate under a hybrid in-person/virtual services model and all General Division registries will be open to the public. Certain matters will presumptively proceed in-person and others 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 General 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

Criminal Proceedings

All criminal jury trials will be proceeding *in-person*.

Criminal judge-alone trials and hearings will also 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 any such matters that might be heard by tele/videoconference and to apply to appear virtually in accordance with the *Criminal Code* and the *Criminal Proceedings Rules of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador*.

Conferences in criminal matters, including case management conferences; pre-trial conferences, and resolution conferences will be held *virtually*, unless the Court contacts parties/counsel to inform them that the matter will be held in-person.

Civil Proceedings

All civil hearings that will take more than 5 minutes and civil trials 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 any such matters that might be heard by tele/videoconference and to apply to appear virtually in accordance with Rule 47A of the *Rules of the Supreme Court, 1986*.

The following appearances in civil matters will proceed *virtually*, unless the Court contacts parties/counsel to inform them that the matter will be held in-person.

- Hearings that are expected to take 5 minutes or less;
- Any appearance relating to scheduling;
- Case management meetings;
- Pre-trial conferences; and
- Settlement conferences.

Family Proceedings (for General Division locations that hear family matters)

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.

REGISTRIES

St. John's

The registries in the St. John's General Division are open to the public. *Attendance at the registries is by appointment only.* Appointments may be made [online](#).

Drop boxes and mail hubs remain available at the front of courthouses to permit contactless drop-off and pick-up of documents. The drop boxes and mail hubs are accessible during the Court's normal business hours. *Documents filed before 4:30PM will be date stamped on the day they are filed but documents left in the drop boxes after 4:30PM will be date stamped on the following business day.*

All other General Division Locations

Registries in the Supreme Court General Division judicial centres outside of the Avalon Peninsula are open to the public. No appointment is necessary to attend at these registries.

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](#)).

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