



## THE PROVINCIAL COURT OF ALBERTA

### COVID-19 PANDEMIC PLANNING FOR THE SCHEDULING OF MATTERS

Alberta Health Services has recommended that measures be taken to reduce the amount of time individuals spend in large crowds or in crowded spaces to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in the community.

To protect the health and safety of all court users while ensuring respect for the legal rights of accused persons and civil litigants, the Provincial Court of Alberta is limiting all regular operations, effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, until further notice.

The court will post further information as it becomes available, so please continue to check the Provincial Court website <https://www.albertacourts.ca/pc/home> for updates.

**As of Tuesday March 17, 2020, if you have a family, civil, criminal court or a Provincial Offences/traffic court appearance in the Alberta Provincial Court, you do not need to attend unless the matter is an in-custody or urgent criminal matter, or an urgent family or child protection matter.**

**No members of the public will be permitted in court rooms unless they are required for a court matter (parties, witnesses, media). Legal counsel are permitted access to the Court house for urgent court-related business.**

**Do not come into a courthouse in person if you have been advised to self-isolate by public health officials, your doctor or the Alberta Health Services website; or you are self-isolating as a result of travel or contact with individuals with COVID-19.**

The Provincial Court will remain open, subject to the following:

#### **CRIMINAL and YOUTH CRIMINAL MATTERS**

If you are not in custody and you have a criminal court appearance in the Alberta Provincial Court between Tuesday March 17 and Friday, May 22, 2020 you **do not need to attend court**. The Court website will be updated regularly to provide information regarding rescheduling, which will be 10 weeks from the date of your scheduled court appearance or the next court date thereafter.

All **in-custody** matters will proceed including:

- Bail hearings
- Sentencings with a priority given to those facing a time served situation
- Preliminary inquiries and trials
- Youth criminal sentence reviews

The Court will hear urgent out of custody criminal matters with leave of a judge.

The Court will be available to process urgent warrants and judicial authorizations.

Witnesses under subpoena are directed to contact the Officer in Charge of the matter (if known) or the local Crown Prosecution Service responsible for the issuance of the Subpoena.

### **CIVIL MATTERS**

Civil matters, with the exception of pretrial conferences and case management that are set to proceed before May 22, 2020 will be adjourned indefinitely and parties will be contacted by the local trial coordinator or the Court about rescheduled dates.

Urgent landlord and tenant matters and other urgent matters will proceed with leave of the Court.

Civil Pre-Trial Conferences and Case Management will be conducted by telephone.

Desk assessments and desk applications will continue.

Parties may contact the Civil Division regarding scheduling by calling their local courthouse, or in Edmonton at 780-644-7638; and in Calgary at 403 297-7219.

### **FAMILY AND CHILD PROTECTION**

Non-urgent family matters set to be heard after March 17, 2020 will be adjourned for ten weeks from the scheduled court date. The Court website will be updated regularly to provide information regarding rescheduling, which will be 10 weeks from the date of your scheduled court appearance or the next court date thereafter.

The following matters are considered **urgent** and will be heard by the court:

- matters with statutory limitations or deadlines;
- where there is the risk of violence or immediate harm to one of the parties or the child;
- where there is risk of removal of a child;
- apprehension orders;
- Initial Custody Hearings,
- first appearance after apprehension, and
- mandatory reviews or show causes under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, *Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act*, ***Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act***, *Mandatory Drug Testing and Disclosure Act*, and *Mental Health Act*;
- warrants, and
- emergency protection orders.

Family Pre-Trial Conferences, Child Protection Case Management Meetings and Judicial Dispute Resolutions will be conducted by telephone unless adjourned.

Any Child Protection Hearing where the parties have consented to a return, Supervision order, Temporary Guardianship Order or Permanent Guardianship Order will occur on an as-needed basis.

### **TRAFFIC COURT**

See March 17 Announcement - [Traffic Court Pandemic Scheduling Updated](#)