



May 22, 2020

**Provincial Court of Saskatchewan  
Notice to Court Users and the Public**

This Notice replaces the Court's previous Notice respecting COVID-19 issued on March 22, 2020.

The Court will post further information as it becomes available, so please continue to check the Provincial Court COVID-19 Update on our website for updates.

Effective June 1, 2020, the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan will be easing some of the restrictions on court operations imposed earlier this year. The Court remains mindful of the need to protect the health and safety of all Court users and help contain the spread of COVID-19, while maintaining meaningful access to the Court.

**Access to Court Facilities**

Access to Provincial Court court houses in Saskatchewan continues to be restricted to only those persons necessary to the proceedings before the Court, which includes counsel, litigants, accused, witnesses, support workers, treatment court workers, aboriginal court workers, immediate family members and other support persons, and members of the media. However, depending on the number of people wanting to access a court house, entry may be restricted or delayed to ensure Public Health guidelines can be met. Everyone will be screened before entering a court house.

Counsel are encouraged to connect with witnesses and clients in advance of attending at the court house. Clients should not be present unless there is a substantive purpose for attending. Do not have your client present to ask for an adjournment. Counsel are encouraged to obtain a designation of counsel on all indictable offences.

Counsel should advise court staff of clients, family and other support persons and witnesses who will necessarily be attending Court for a sitting. This will assist with effective management of traffic in and out of the court house.

Efforts are made to provide safe interview rooms; however, in some cases, interviews of clients/witnesses will need to be done before arriving at Court or in an area sufficiently private and where parties can reasonably maintain physical distancing.

### **People showing COVID-19 symptoms**

Anyone experiencing COVID-19-related symptoms or who has been advised to self-isolate should **NOT** attend the court house. Those with a scheduled court appearance, including those who have been subpoenaed for court, must immediately call the [appropriate court office](#) or the local provincial prosecutions office for instruction.

### **Public Health Guidelines**

People wishing to gain entry into a court house shall:

- cooperate during a screening process,
- obey the capacity limits established by the Court,
- obey all Public Health hygiene and physical distancing rules, keeping 2 metres of space between themselves and others, and
- obey all signs and physical indicators while waiting in line to enter the court house.

The use of elevators will be limited to a maximum number of people at one time, based on the size of individual elevators. Access to public washrooms will be limited.

Court users are advised that cleaning protocols have been increased inside courtrooms as well as in secure and common areas of court facilities.

### **Court Offices**

- People who need to communicate information to the Court are asked to use phone or email.
- The public is encouraged to pay fines online and contact the court office by phone or by e-mail.
- People with documents to be provided to the court office are encouraged to utilize the drop boxes in each court house or mail or e-mail documents wherever convenient.

### **Telephone Appearances**

Crown and defense counsel are encouraged to appear by telephone on **all matters EXCEPT trials and preliminary inquiries** until further notice.

Counsel do not need to seek approval from the presiding judge to appear by phone, but must advise the [court office](#) of the telephone number where they may be contacted. The sooner this information is relayed, the more efficient the Court is able to be.

*Defense counsel* must notify the court office of:

- the time of the appearance,
- courtroom,
- phone number,
- name of client, and
- what they anticipate will happen (e.g.: adjournment, show cause proceeding, consent release, attendance requested to be waived, etc.).

*Crown counsel* must notify the court office of:

- the time of the appearance, and
- the courtroom in which they wish to appear.

If Crown counsel is not appearing on all matters on the docket, they must provide the court office with a list of matters on which they are appearing.

### **Electronic adjournments**

The Court is considering a process to allow counsel to adjourn a matter by e-mail. Further information will be provided as the process is developed.

### **Circuit Court Appearances**

**Some** circuit courts may open in June. A list of opened circuit courts will be placed on the Court's website as soon as that information becomes available. You may also contact the local permanent court point to learn when a circuit court will open or how matters from that circuit are being dealt with.

If a circuit court remains closed, matters originally set for that circuit and new matters may be addressed at the local permanent court point. In special circumstances, circuit courts may be opened to hear a trial, preliminary inquiry or other hearing.

### **Permanent Court Locations**

All 13 permanent Provincial Court locations remain open.

### **CRIMINAL MATTERS – IN-CUSTODY ACCUSED**

The scheduling and hearing of in-custody *criminal trials, preliminary inquiries, sentencings, and bail hearings* will proceed unless adjourned by the Court on its own motion or on application by the accused or the Crown.

*Bail and sentencing hearings* for in-custody accused will proceed by telephone and/or video unless the Court orders otherwise.

## CRIMINAL MATTERS – NON-CUSTODY ACCUSED

*Non-custody docket matters* will be spoken to on the scheduled date and time unless the matter is brought forward. Counsel are reminded to arrange any telephone appearances within the notice period identified by the Court point.

Future docket sizes will be adjusted to ensure that Public Health guidelines can be followed.

Counsel who have reached *pleas or other resolutions* on matters that have been adjourned, may request that the matter be brought forward and dealt with by phone and at the discretion of the presiding judge. Accused are encouraged to appear by phone for purposes of sentencing if approved by the presiding judge and if prior arrangements are made.

All *non-custody trials and preliminary inquiries* that were adjourned since March 23, 2020 due to COVID-19 can now be rescheduled. Effective June 1, 2020, *trials and preliminary inquiries* will be heard if social distancing and proper hygiene practices can be followed.

*Counsel case management conferences* may proceed by telephone or in-person at the discretion of the judge. They may be initiated by the Court on its own with notice to the parties, or at the request of either party. Case management is vital to ensuring the Court is prepared to manage the backlog when regular operations resume.

### **Unrepresented Individuals**

If you do not have a lawyer helping you with your criminal matter and you require information, please contact the court office where your matter is set. If your matter was set at a circuit court location, please contact the permanent court responsible for that circuit court. You can find that information on the Court's website at [sasklawcourts.ca](http://sasklawcourts.ca). Staff will assist you.

If you want to apply for assistance from a Legal Aid lawyer, call the Application Centre at 1-800-667-3764 or visit [www.legalaid.sk.ca](http://www.legalaid.sk.ca) to request a phone application.

### **Child Protection Matters**

Applications with respect to urgent Child Protection matters can proceed at Provincial Court permanent locations. Local judges will determine whether and how hearings will take place.

## **Provincial Ticket Appearances**

Anyone who has received a ticket for a first appearance on June 1st or later at a permanent court point, other than Saskatoon, Regina, Estevan, and Prince Albert, must follow the instructions on the ticket.

Also, if your ticket had been set for a docket appearance or trial between March 23<sup>rd</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup>, please check [sasklawcourts.ca](http://sasklawcourts.ca) for the date to which it was adjourned.

### *Saskatoon and Regina*

#### Trials

Provincial tickets are dealt with at Traffic Safety Court in Saskatoon and Regina. Trials scheduled for June 1 or later will proceed on those dates.

#### Dockets

Persons who have tickets instructing them to attend court for a first appearance from June 1 to June 12 inclusive or have tickets that have been adjourned to June 1 to June 12 inclusive, should **NOT** attend the Traffic Safety Court. Those matters will be adjourned to dates in September and October that will be posted on the court house doors and published on [sasklawcourts.ca](http://sasklawcourts.ca). If you are required to appear after June 12 please watch the Court's website for updates.

### *Estevan*

Provincial ticket trials set for June and later in Estevan will proceed on their scheduled dates. Dockets are not resuming at this time.

### *Prince Albert*

Provincial ticket dockets and trials in Prince Albert will not be proceeding in-person on June 1. All Provincial ticket matters will be addressed on the scheduled dates at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 5. Individuals are discouraged from attending the court house and can instead make arrangements to appear by phone by contacting the Provincial Court at (306) 953-2640.

## **Provincial Ticket Payments**

- You may be able to make a voluntary payment. [\*Payments can be made online\*](#), by mail to the Fine Collection Branch, Box 5030, Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3T9, or by telephone at (306) 787-7821 or toll-free at 1-888-935-5555.
- Contact the [local court office](#) by phone for time to pay extensions and time to pay requests.

If you have any questions regarding your ticket please call the relevant [Provincial Court office](#).

**Small Claims**

Small Claims trials and case management conferences can now be scheduled. Parties will be contacted by the court office and new dates will be provided for your Small Claims proceeding. Matters set to proceed after June 1, 2020 can be heard where social distancing and proper hygiene practices can be followed.

Small Claims documents can be filed with the Court by mail or by placing them in a drop box provided in the lobby of the court house for this purpose. You will need to provide full contact information. After your documents have been reviewed a clerk will contact you and advise of the next steps or whether revisions are required.

**Bylaw Courts**

Beginning on June 1<sup>st</sup>, the following locations will resume Bylaw docket and trial proceedings as scheduled:

- Saskatoon
- Regina
- Lloydminster
- Moose Jaw

Prince Albert Parking Bylaw Court inquiries must be made to the City of Prince Albert. Other types of Bylaw matters in Prince Albert will not be proceeding in-person on June 1 but will be addressed on the scheduled dates at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 5. Individuals are discouraged from attending the court house and can instead make arrangements to appear by phone by contacting the Provincial Court at (306) 953-2640.

Please contact the local municipal office if you wish to discuss the rescheduling of your Bylaw matter.

*Chief Judge J.A. Plemel*