

November 27, 2020

**COURT OF APPEAL OF ALBERTA
COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH OF ALBERTA
PROVINCIAL COURT OF ALBERTA**

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC AND LEGAL PROFESSION
RESTRICTED ACCESS TO COURTHOUSES**

The Alberta Courts are attempting to balance the open court principle with public health priorities. Given the ongoing public health crisis, the Courts are continuing to take proactive preventative measures to protect justice system participants and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Access to all courthouses in the province of Alberta continues to be restricted until further notice.

Members of the general public will not be permitted to enter a courthouse unless they are:

- (a) Required to be involved in an in person hearing as:
 - a. Parties to the litigation/appeal;
 - b. Counsel to the parties to the litigation/appeal;
 - c. Witnesses;
 - d. Interpreters whose presence is required for a proceeding;
 - e. Parents of young persons who are required to attend court;
 - f. Support persons as set out in s. 486.1(1) and (2) of the *Criminal Code*;
 - g. Support workers authorized by the Courts to assist parties to the litigation/appeal,
 - h. Members of the accredited media,
- (b) Persons paying a criminal fine or restitution order or paying bail or surety applications on behalf of an accused because they are unable to access electronic payment.
- (c) Persons filing documents at a Court registry.
- (d) Persons whose attendance has been approved by a judge or justice of the Court in which a proceeding is being held.

Lawyers are urged to make use of expanded access to email and e-filing where available in order to better manage traffic at courthouse counters. Lawyers, Court Runners and Litigants attending at courthouses to file documents in person are directed to make use of the dropboxes or the other alternative forms of filing that have been made available.

Attendance at all courthouses will also be refused to persons:

- (a) who have been advised to self-isolate by public health officials or their doctor;
- (b) who are self-isolating as a result of travel or contact with individuals with COVID-19; or
- (c) who are experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms.

People who are required to enter a courthouse in Alberta must wear a face mask or face covering, subject to health-related exceptions, including in entrances, lobbies, waiting areas, registries, hallways, stairways, restrooms and elevators. In addition, people are required to wear a face mask or face covering in courtrooms unless the presiding judge, justice, master or registrar directs otherwise. Face masks or face coverings must be worn in a manner that cover a person's nose and mouth. If you do not have a face mask or face covering, Sheriffs will provide one when you enter the courthouse. While wearing a face mask or face covering can reduce the spread of infection, it does not substitute for physical distancing, which must be maintained whenever possible.



Catherine Fraser
Chief Justice
Court of Appeal



Mary Moreau
Chief Justice
Court of Queen's Bench



Derek Redman
Chief Judge
Provincial Court