



THE PROVINCIAL COURT
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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NM 01

NOTICE TO ACCREDITED MEDIA

MEDIA ACCESS TO COURT PROCEEDINGS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Provincial Court of British Columbia recognizes the critical importance of the open courts principle, including in the exceptional circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Court proceedings have temporarily been limited and modified, but they must remain open to public scrutiny and media plays a special role in that regard.

The Provincial Court is taking the steps below to ensure that accredited media continue to have options for observing and reporting on court proceedings during this exceptional time, while protecting the health and safety of everyone involved. These temporary processes will remain in place until further notice.

1. Access to Court Proceedings

Members of the accredited media should watch the [hearing lists](#), and, if they wish to observe, contact the applicable [court registry](#) for more information about how they can participate (e.g. by attending in person or by dialing into a teleconference). Media participation in court proceedings taking place by teleconference may be subject to limits on the number of callers that can be connected through a single teleconference number.

Participation by members of the accredited media in court proceedings remotely by telephone, is subject to the following conditions:

- Cellphones must be on mute during the proceedings; if using a landline, accredited media must be in a quiet room, so as not to disrupt the proceedings;
- As per the Joint Courts [Policy on Use of Electronic Devices in Courtrooms](#), accredited media may record the proceedings for verifying their notes only; and
- If accredited media do not call in at the set time or if the call is lost, the Court will not disrupt the proceedings to connect them.

2. Access to Audio of Court Proceedings

Access to audio of court proceedings by DARS CD or at listening stations at court registries are temporarily unavailable as court registries are not providing in-person registry services during the suspension of the Court's regular operations.

Requests for court audio by accredited media can be made by completing the [Undertaking of Accredited Media](#) (Digital Audio Recording - File Transfer Protocol) (ADM864b)¹ and emailing (a) a signed copy of the Undertaking to the designated [Hub Court location](#), and (b) a copy of their Accredited Media Identification, addressed to the attention of a Court Services Branch Justice of the Peace.

REGION	DESIGNATED HUB COURT LOCATION	EMAIL ADDRESS
Fraser	Surrey	SurreyCourtRegistry@gov.bc.ca
Interior	Kelowna	KelownaCourtRegistry@gov.bc.ca
Northern	Prince George	Office15214@gov.bc.ca
Vancouver – Urgent Family and Civil and Youth	Robson Square	CSBRCS@gov.bc.ca
Vancouver – Criminal	222 Main Street	222MainCS@gov.bc.ca
Vancouver Island	Victoria	Victoria.CourtScheduling@gov.bc.ca

The goal is for the Court to return to regular operations as soon as possible. However, that will depend on the advice of public health officials on when it may be safe to do so.

Melissa Gillespie
Chief Judge
Provincial Court of British Columbia

¹ The Undertaking of Accredited Media (ADM864b) is available at the following Government of BC webpage: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/courthouse-services/documents-forms-records/court-forms/criminal-court-forms>.