



PROVINCIAL COURT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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In a series of notices issued on June 12, 2020, the Court advised litigants and lawyers that:

1. **Initial Appearance proceedings are recommencing.**

- People having a first appearance on a criminal charge in Provincial Court **on Vancouver Island from June 15 to July 3, 2020** do not need to attend court. It will be put off to a date listed for their court location in [NP 19 Notice - COVID 19: Resumption of Further Court Operations](#) (June 12, 2020) Appendix A. See [Practice Direction CRIM 13 - Initial Appearance Court during COVID-19](#) for more details.
- However, people having a first appearance on a criminal charge in Provincial Court **on Vancouver Island on or after July 6, 2020** must attend court. See [Practice Direction CRIM 13 - Initial Appearance Court during COVID-19](#) for details.
- And people having a first appearance on a criminal charge in Provincial Court **in the rest of British Columbia** (the Fraser, Interior, Northern and Vancouver Regions) **on or after June 15, 2020** must attend court. See [Practice Direction CRIM 13 - Initial Appearance Court during COVID-19](#) for details.
- People who will be hiring a lawyer or applying for Legal Aid may reduce the number of times they need to attend court by doing that before their first appearance, when possible. To reduce the number of people entering court locations, the Court has provided alternatives to attending in person. See [Practice Direction CRIM 13 - Initial Appearance Court during COVID-19](#) for details.

2. As of June 15, 2020 across the Province, 40 in person trial courts are available, in addition to virtual courts. **After July 3, 2020, The Provincial Court of B.C. will resume all previously scheduled in-person proceedings in criminal, family, youth and small claims matters.** Litigants and lawyers should contact witnesses and prepare for their trials to proceed as scheduled.

- Criminal, family, small claims, and youth court trials and hearings scheduled after July 3, 2020 will remain on the trial list on the date scheduled. Lawyers and self-represented litigants should attend court on the date scheduled at 9:00 AM to advise if they are

ready to proceed. After hearing from them, the Court will decide whether to grant any adjournments sought and decide which trials will proceed.

- All witnesses and any parties represented by lawyers are to wait outside the courthouse and be within a 30 minute distance and be prepared to attend and testify in court.
- Any criminal trials, continuations or preliminary inquiries (except summary proceedings set for half a day or less) that are adjourned for lack of court time will be scheduled for a pre-trial conference before a new hearing date is set.
- Family and small claims case conferences will proceed by telephone on their scheduled dates. The Court will provide the parties with telephone details.
- See [NP 19 Notice - COVID 19: Resumption of Further Court Operations](#) (June 12, 2020) for more details.

For more information, see <https://www.provincialcourt.bc.ca/COVID19>.