

March 13, 2020

Supreme Court of British Columbia Modified Proceedings

As a result of the rapidly evolving situation with COVID-19, the Supreme Court is, effective immediately, instituting the following modifications to its normal operations:

Criminal and Civil Jury Selections

All **jury selections** will be cancelled until the end of May 2020 everywhere in the province.

- For affected **criminal cases**, arrangements may be made for a re-election to trial by judge alone, if the accused wishes to proceed on that basis, and the trial will proceed during the scheduled time period (if there is no other bar to the matter so proceeding). If there is no re-election and the trial must therefore be adjourned until after May 31, the Court will give the case priority for rescheduling once normal operations resume.
- For affected **civil cases**, the party(ies) may agree to proceed without a jury if they wish, and, absent any other bar, the trial will proceed as scheduled.

Ongoing Jury Trials

For jury trials already underway, the presiding judge will consider whether the trial should continue or be stood down for a period of time.

Other Trials and Chambers Matters

The Court requests that lawyers and parties consider agreeing to adjourn matters (criminal, civil or family), scheduled to proceed between now and May 31, 2020 that do not urgently need to proceed.

- For applications to adjourn **criminal proceedings**, whether by consent or contested, the Court will offer a new process by telephone or video appearance. Criminal proceedings adjourned because of Covid-19 will receive priority for re-scheduling.
- For applications to adjourn **civil or family proceedings** (whether trials or chambers applications) some changes will be introduced to the current processes to minimize in-court appearances where possible.

More details will be available early next week about the processes for adjournments and applications to adjourn.