



## Northwest Territories Courts

**Denise Bertolini, Courts Administrator**

13 March 2020

**TO:** All Members of the Law Society of the Northwest Territories  
Public Prosecution Service Canada  
Legal Aid Commission of the NWT  
City of Yellowknife  
Media outlets

### **Changes to Supreme Court sittings due to COVID 19**

Chief Justice Charbonneau has given certain directions, effective immediately, regarding Supreme Court proceedings. While these changes will result in disruption and some delay, it is necessary to be proactive under the circumstances. The situation will be monitored closely and any updates will be sent to this same distribution and posted on the courts website.

#### **Criminal Matters:**

- All sittings outside of Yellowknife, (jury trials, non-jury trials, and sentencings) are cancelled until May 1st.
- Yellowknife Jury trials are cancelled until May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Judge alone trials scheduled in Yellowknife between now and May 1st will remain in place for now. Pre-trial conferences will be convened in the near future to discuss whether consideration should be given to rescheduling any of those trials.
- Pretrial conferences will, until further notice, be held by teleconference.
- Criminal chambers – Decision will be made on Monday after meeting with representatives of the bar before a general decision is made. For this coming Monday, further instructions will follow.
- Supreme Court List scheduling on March 20, 2020 is cancelled. Court of Appeal scheduling will proceed by teleconference only. All counsel and self-represented parties are asked to provide contact information.

## Family and Civil matters

- Family and civil chambers will proceed by teleconference only until May 1st. All counsel and self-represented parties are asked to provide contact information.
- Family and civil hearings requiring a hearing between now and May 1st will be scheduled on a case by case and will proceed by teleconference where possible. Pre-hearing conferences will be arranged to discuss.

These measures will be revisited as the situation evolves.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Denise Bertolini  
Courts Administrator