

MEMO TO BAR

PHASED IN APPROACH TO RE RE-OPENING: July 6, 2020

Commencing July 6, 2020, the court will begin the process of a return to operation. It will be gradual and not as quick as most would want. The primary determining factors are safety for all justice users and the availability of resources. There will be two speak to courts running each day for two consecutive weeks. Additionally, we will have available another judge to deal with emergencies such as apprehensions and urgent motions to the extent they can be scheduled.

Family Court has been allocated one court room (#19) in this first phase, which will be retrofitted to ensure the safe conduct of proceedings. While the government is hopeful that it will be ready for July 6, as of today it has been unable to guarantee it will be available for that date.

The speak to courts will be virtual, to handle the numbers safely. There will be no ability to have in person attendances if the courtroom is not operational. Even with the courtroom, the ability will be very limited.

As a result, speak to proceedings will be conducted virtually via Zoom. Counsel will be advised shortly of the log in information to participate. As the ability to access physical files is limited, **it is expected that counsel will inform any self represented litigants on their respective files of the date & time of attendance and the Zoom log in information (this includes the Children's Aid Society).**

These matters are going to be heard on only a check in basis. They will then be adjourned to running dates in September at which time specific dates will be set if needed.

***** IMPORTANT NOTE *****

Should for any reason your scheduled matter NOT be proceeding (i.e. the matter has settled or been withdrawn) counsel is to advise the Assistant Trial Coordinator **Michele Diccico** by email to: michele.diccico@ontario.ca

Case conferences, settlement conferences and conferences arising from motions to change will not be heard during the month of July, except those already scheduled for July 7. Additionally, any matter otherwise scheduled during July & August will be put over to a date to be fixed in September.

In September, it is anticipated that the matters adjourned due to COVID-19 will receive priority scheduling and we will have a plan for the use of the single courtroom that we have been allotted. At that time, we should also have a better idea of available resources including any additional court rooms. Additionally, in that context, we will have a plan to start accepting new work.