



SOUTHWEST REGION NOTICE TO THE PROFESSION MODE OF PROCEEDINGS

On January 22, 2024 Chief Justice Morawetz released amended presumptive guidelines governing the Mode of Proceedings in Civil, Family and Criminal matters.

It is important that counsel, and the public, review these Guidelines to determine the presumptive method of hearing. The Guidelines become effective February 1, 2024 and will be strictly enforced.

The guidelines are subject to regional variation. The following variations apply to the Southwest Region in the areas of family and civil law. If a mode of proceeding is not mentioned below, it will be governed by the Chief Justice's Guidelines:

Family

1. Rota courts in Chatham, Sarnia, Stratford, Woodstock and Goderich will hold Family Law Conferences virtually to allow for greater efficiency managing mixed lists.
2. In St. Thomas, Family Law Conferences scheduled for a rota judge on Mondays will be held virtually.
3. In London, Family Law Trial Management Conferences, including those in Child Protection Proceedings (CYFSA), will be held in person.
4. In London & St. Thomas Family Court Branch, all Substantive/Regular Short or Long motions in Child Protection Proceedings (CYFSA), will be held virtually.
5. Regular/Short Family Motions (including Urgent Motions) will be held virtually in all Southwest Region court locations, **except** for Windsor (commencing April 19, 2024) and the London Family Court Branch, where they will be held in person.
6. Long/Special Appointment Family motions will be heard virtually in all Southwest Region court locations.
7. Uncontested trials will be held virtually in all Southwest Region court locations, including St. Thomas & London Family Court Branch.

Civil

1. Long/Special Appointment Motions and Applications will be held virtually.

Once the guidelines become effective, all matters will be heard in a manner consistent with the Guidelines unless a deviation has been granted by a judge. Therefore, please note if your event is presently scheduled in a manner not consistent with the Guidelines as of February 1, 2024, the Updated/Amended Guidelines will prevail.

Should counsel, or the public, desire to deviate from the presumptive manner of hearing, they must make a request of the appropriate trial co-ordinator well in advance of the event. Any proposed deviation, whether on consent or disputed, will require judicial approval.

It should be noted that deviation from the presumptive manner of hearing will be exceptional and only for sound, supporting reasons. This procedure will apply to all matters whether family, criminal or civil.

As directed by the Chief Justice, counsel should be gowned when appearing virtually if the event is one where gowning would be required if held in person.

Thank you, in advance, for your cooperation.

Dated: January 24, 2024

Renee M. Pomerance
Regional Senior Justice
Superior Court (Southwest Region)