

## Message from the Chief Judge (May 14, 2020)



Our court is working hard to expand our use of technology so that we can hold more remote hearings and case conferences during this challenging time. We are working with the government to expand audioconference and videoconference capacity and to enhance bandwidth. Our team has been engaged with a number of our judges as we start using MS Teams for some criminal pre-trial conferences and bail hearings. We have also issued [NP 21 Guide to Remote Proceedings](#) which provides guidelines for anyone who will appear before the Provincial Court for a hearing or case conference conducted by audioconference (including telephone or Microsoft Teams) or videoconference (including Microsoft Teams); and a step-by-step guide to appearing in a Microsoft Teams audioconference or videoconference proceeding.

While we are committed to the use of technology, we recognize that expanded use of technology can only occur when we are able to ensure that we maintain the public's confidence in our ability to manage and hold fair hearings using new technology. We also have to take into account the fact that many of the parties who appear in Provincial Court do not have access to devices or internet plans that would permit them to access the courts remotely. We thank everyone for their patience as we move forward in a way that ensures equal access to the court and enhances confidence in the administration of justice.

Chief Judge Melissa Gillespie  
Provincial Court of British Columbia

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<https://www.provincialcourt.bc.ca/COVID19> (Provincial Court COVID-19 information)

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