

## Notice to the profession from the Law Society of BC

### **COVID-19 update: April 29, 2020**

#### **Supreme Court of British Columbia expansion of civil and family matters – applications by written submissions**

Chief Justice Christopher Hinkson has expanded the scope of applications that can proceed by way of written submissions pursuant to [Ministerial Order No. M121](#). To see the order of the Chief Justice, click [here](#). For more details about bringing an application by written submissions, click [here](#). Booking for applications by written submissions will only be available online. The court will announce when online booking is available, expected by May 8, 2020.

#### **Provincial Court commencing recovery of some court functions**

The Provincial Court of British Columbia has issued a Notice to the Profession and Public that sets out its plan to commence court operations that can be done remotely by audioconference (including telephone) or videoconference. The notice provides details of the plan regarding family (including child protection and maintenance enforcement), small claims, criminal (adult and youth), public health emergency matters, traffic ticket or bylaw matters, and circuit courts. Further information may be found in the [full Notice to the Profession and Public](#).

#### **Provincial Court practice direction on pre-trial conferences for criminal files**

The Provincial Court of British Columbia has issued a practice direction mandating pre-trial conferences for criminal files (adult and youth) at all Provincial Court locations in the province, with pre-trial conferences commencing being heard on May 4, 2020. The overarching aim of the practice direction is to reduce inefficiencies in the criminal justice system by employing pre-trial conferences as a tool for the participants to collaborate and conduct cases more efficiently. Using pre-trial conferences to help reduce day of trial collapse rates and trial continuations is an important part of the commitment to upholding an accused's right to trial in a reasonable time. Further information may be found in the [full Provincial Court practice direction](#).