

Notice to the Profession and the Public re: Delay in Resuming Criminal Trials and Preliminary Inquiries in the Ontario Court of Justice at College Park and Guelph

(Published July 4, 2020)

On June 17, 2020 the Ontario Court of Justice announced it would resume hearing criminal trials and preliminary inquiries on July 6, 2020 at certain locations: see [Notice to the Profession and the Public re: Resumption of Criminal Trials and Preliminary Hearings as of July 6, 2020](#). This resumption of hearings was the first phase (Phase One) of an incremental plan established by the Ministry of the Attorney General, which is responsible for courts administration and courthouse facilities, to facilitate the return to full court operations across Ontario.

As part of the return to operations plan, the Ministry has committed to implementing health and safety measures in each courthouse. For the Phase One locations, the Ministry undertook that site assessments would be completed, and that all necessary health and safety precautions, based on public health expert advice, would be implemented for the protection of all court users, including judicial officers, lawyers, litigants, witnesses, staff and members of the public.

More information about the precautionary health and safety measures at courthouses implemented by the Ministry is available on the following website: [COVID-19: Reopening courtrooms](#).

The Ministry advised that it would not re-open a Phase One site on July 6, 2020 unless it was satisfied that the health and safety of courthouse participants would be adequately protected.

The Ministry has advised that it is not satisfied that all of the necessary health and safety measures are in place in the following courthouses to allow in-person proceedings to resume as of July 6, 2020: College Park (Toronto) and Guelph. **As a result, the Court will not resume hearing in-person trials and preliminary inquiries in College Park and Guelph on July 6, 2020.**

This notice sets out the procedure that will apply until further notice to criminal trials and preliminary inquiries scheduled to be heard in the College Park and Guelph courthouses on or after July 6, 2020.

1) Trials and Preliminary Inquiries at College Park and Guelph

Trials and preliminary inquiries will not resume at College Park and Guelph on July 6, 2020 unless they are able to proceed using remote technology, as described in section 2.

a. Trials and preliminary inquiries scheduled for the week of July 6 –10

All cases scheduled for a trial or preliminary inquiry at College Park and Guelph the week of July 6 – July 10 will be addressed in their location's COVID-19 Trial Readiness Court on Monday July 6, 2020. All counsel and accused persons will appear by videoconference or audioconference.

that the Court can confirm if the necessary technology is available and so that the matter can be brought forward to be addressed, if necessary.

3) Plan for Resumption of Trials and Preliminary Inquiries in College Park and Guelph

Notice will be given advising when College Park and Guelph will be opening so that counsel and parties can prepare for the resumption of trials or preliminary inquiries. Please check back on the Ontario Court of Justice website for updates.

4) Other Court Proceedings will Continue to be Conducted as Remote Proceedings

All criminal proceedings other than trials and preliminary inquiries at College Park and Guelph will continue to be conducted by audioconference and/or videoconference, unless otherwise directed by a judicial official. This includes bail proceedings, resolutions (including guilty pleas) involving accused persons who are in and out of custody, remand (case management) appearances for accused persons who are in custody.