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November 21, 2020

Message re COVID-19

The Ontario Court of Justice is committed to providing meaningful access to justice despite the challenges presented by COVID-19.

The Court recognizes that some counsel, parties, and justice participants may be unable to attend a courthouse in person because of COVID-19. The Court has encouraged all judicial officials, when exercising their authority, to be flexible and to respect why an individual may not be able to attend a court hearing in person, including underlying health conditions, living or caring for someone with underlying health conditions, or other issues arising from the pandemic.

Judicial officials, parties and counsel are encouraged to actively explore whether all, or any portion, of trials or other hearings that would otherwise be in person can be conducted using remote technology. Similarly, the Court encourages counsel and parties to be accommodating when requests for virtual hearings or other arrangements are made by opposing counsel or parties.

The health and safety of all court users remains a top priority for the Court. For those who appear in person, the Ministry of the Attorney General has implemented a broad range of health and safety measures at all courthouses open to the public. The measures are based on the expert advice of Public Health Ontario. *It remains of critical importance that all who attend a courthouse in person be vigilant in maintaining the public health and safety protections in place at the court facility.* For information about the health and safety measures implemented at Ontario's courthouses, please see the [Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General COVID-19](#) website.