

NOTICE

PROVINCIAL COURT OF MANITOBA

RE: Courtroom Decorum

There has been a noticeable increase over the past few years in behaviour by some counsel while court is in session that could be perceived as disrespectful and reflect negatively on the public's perception of the administration of justice.

The following shall serve as a reminder as to what is expected in all court appearances.

1. Court Attire:

Proper business attire is expected by counsel for the purposes of all court appearances. This includes, but is not limited to, in-Chambers' meetings and conferences and appearances before the PTC courts.

2. Attendance:

It is expected that counsel will appear on time for all scheduled court appearances.

3. In-Court Discussions:

While court is in session, unnecessary chatter often creates disruption to the Court process. Any discussions between counsel or with clients or witnesses on matters other than the case being specifically addressed by the Court are expected to take place outside of the courtroom.

4. Electronic Devices:

The Court recognizes the importance and efficiency of electronic devices generally and Blackberries and cellular telephones specifically. However, the use of Blackberries or text messaging while matters are proceeding often results in counsel not listening to submissions of opposing counsel or decisions by the judge. Therefore, use of such devices while in Court is to be done discreetly. Further, counsel who are specifically addressing a matter before the Court are not to use said devices unless counsel have the express permission of the judge to do so.

The Provincial Court judiciary expect common courtesy to prevail in its courtrooms. We are vitally aware that public perception in the administration of justice is essential to its efficiency and legitimacy. We must all continue to be vigilant in ensuring that society maintains a high level of confidence in the Justice System.

Your anticipated cooperation in this regard is appreciated.

ISSUED BY:

Original signed by
Chief Judge Ken Champagne
(Manitoba)

DATE: November 18, 2009