

NOTICE

PROVINCIAL COURT OF MANITOBA (Winnipeg Court Centre)

RE: COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS - VIRTUAL ASSIGNMENT COURT- WINNIPEG

January 28, 2021

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic all levels of Court have taken proactive preventative measures to protect the health and safety of all court users to help contain the spread of COVID-19. Due to the on going pandemic situation in Manitoba, and in line with public health directives, in order to reduce the number of counsel required to appear in court in person, beginning February 1, 2021 counsel will not be permitted to attend Assignment Court in person, unless paged to do so by the presiding judge.

Both counsel on each matter are required to contact the court by email between 9:15 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. at VirtualTrialAssignCourt@gov.mb.ca to advise the Assignment Court Judge and court clerk whether their matter is proceeding to trial or preliminary hearing or whether it will be resolved in another manner. If a matter is proceeding it will be expected to proceed at 10:00 a.m. Once the Assignment Court Judge has been advised the matter is ready to proceed, counsel will be advised by return email what courtroom they are being transferred to. It is expected counsel will attend immediately to the assigned courtroom.

Prior to 10:00 a.m. counsel may request the court clerk page a witness or accused via the same mailbox. Counsel may also request to attend Assignment Court for the purposes of addressing warrants, stays of proceedings or other matters not requiring transfer to another courtroom. Once counsel has emailed the mailbox with this request, they must wait until they are paged to attend to the designated Assignment Court courtroom. Counsel will only be permitted to enter this courtroom one matter at a time, when paged, to address such matters commencing at 10:00 a.m. Only counsel or self representing accuseds will be permitted to enter the designated Assignment Court, unless permission is otherwise granted by the presiding judge.

If the Assignment Court Judge has not been contacted by counsel by 10:00 a.m., counsel will be paged to attend the designated Assignment Court in person to explain the non communication and update the court as to the status of their matter. Again, only counsel and self-representing accuseds will be permitted to enter the courtroom one matter at a time and only when paged.

These measures are being taken to reduce the number of people congregating in the vicinity of Assignment Court and within the courtroom itself. Counsel are strongly

encouraged to arrange to meet with their clients and witnesses in an area away from the Assignment Court or any other busy area of the courthouse. Counsel including the Crown are expected to have contacted all witnesses in advance of the hearing to determine if the matter is proceeding. If a matter is not proceeding the court is to be advised at the earliest opportunity to further reduce the number of people attending to the courthouse.

ISSUED BY:

“Original signed by:”

The Honourable Chief Judge Margaret Wiebe
Provincial Court of Manitoba

DATE: January 28, 2021