

AR 41624

October 20, 2020

Dear Stakeholders:

The agreement between the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees includes a provision for Christmas closure. Government offices will be closed between December 24, 2020 and January 1, 2021, inclusive.

The courts will ensure that Albertans are able to deal with urgent matters during this time. The Chiefs of the Alberta Courts have provided the following information:

- The Provincial Court of Alberta will open docket courtrooms in each of Edmonton and Calgary on December 29, 2020 to hear urgent Family and Youth matters.
- The Calgary and Edmonton Hearing Offices will continue to hear regular bail matters in the same manner as other statutory holidays. Justices of the Peace will also be available on December 29, 2020 to hear scheduled bail matters.
- The Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta will have a justice at the Edmonton Law Courts December 29, 30, and 31, 2020. The justice will hear matters for the entire province, hearing emergency applications from centres outside of Calgary remotely. Only emergency applications will be heard.
- The Court of Appeal of Alberta will have a justice available for emergencies on December 29, 30, and 31, 2020.

For additional detail, please consult the attached protocols for each court.

Yours sincerely,



Mary MacDonald
Assistant Deputy Minister

Attachments

cc: Honourable Catherine A. Fraser, Chief Justice of Alberta, Court of Appeal of Alberta
Honourable Mary T. Moreau, Chief Justice, Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta
Honourable Derek G. Redman, Chief Judge, Provincial Court of Alberta

Court of Appeal of Alberta Christmas Closure Protocol

The current agreement between the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees includes a provision for Christmas closure. The Court of Appeal of Alberta will be closed on December 24, 2020 through January 1, 2021. On December 29, 30 and 31, 2020 the Court of Appeal will hear only emergency applications. Any material that would ordinarily be filed on those days can be filed on January 4, 2021.

Should an emergency matter need to be heard, parties may contact 780-643-1137 and the appropriate arrangements will be made to hear the matter.

Court of Queen's Bench Christmas Closure Protocol

The current agreement between the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees includes a provision for Christmas closure. The Court of Queen's Bench will be closed on December 24, 2020 through January 1, 2021. On December 29, 30 and 31, 2020 a justice will be available in Edmonton to hear any emergency matters during this time.

An announcement to this effect will be made to the public and the Bar, and signage will be posted at all Court of Queen's Bench locations. Anyone with an emergency application will be directed to contact the Court of Queen's Bench in Edmonton, at 780-643-1137, where staff will be on hand to assist the justice in determining whether the application is truly an emergency and to provide directions on filing documents.

Should an emergency matter need to be heard, a clerk will be on stand-by in each Court of Queen's Bench location. If required, the clerk in Edmonton will contact the local stand-by clerk, who will arrange to open the courthouse, file the necessary documents and facilitate the hearing via telephone or video conference.

Please note that only emergency matters will be heard. This decision will be made at the discretion of the justice.

The Court of Queen's Bench will resume normal operations on January 4, 2021.

Provincial Court Christmas Closure Protocol

The current agreement between the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees includes a provision for Christmas closure. The Provincial Court of Alberta will be closed on December 24, 2020 through January 1, 2021, with the exception of the operations described below.

Provincial Court Family and Youth will be open on December 29, 2020 in Edmonton and Calgary to hear urgent Family, Youth and *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* matters requiring judicial attention.

Justices of the Peace will be available at the Hearing Offices in Calgary and Edmonton on December 29, 2020 for scheduled bail hearings.

The Calgary and Edmonton Hearing Offices will continue to hear matters in the same manner as other statutory holidays. The Calgary Hearing Office will be operational 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The Edmonton Hearing Office will be operational from 8:00 a.m. to midnight, seven days per week.

An announcement to this effect will be made to the public and the Bar, and signage will be posted at all Provincial Court locations. Anyone with an emergency application will be directed to contact either the Calgary or Edmonton Hearing Office, where staff will be on hand to assist and if necessary provide contact information and re-direct the call based on the type of application, location of the applicant, and urgency.

Contact Numbers:

Calgary Hearing Office – 403-297-4444

Edmonton Hearing Office – 780-422-3699

Should an emergency matter need to be heard before a provincial court judge, the Hearing Office clerk will contact the designated on-call judge and arrange for the application to be heard.

The Provincial Court will resume normal operations on January 4, 2021.