



THE PROVINCIAL COURT
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Effective Date: 04 January 2022

FAM 11

PRACTICE DIRECTION

DEFAULT METHOD OF ATTENDANCE FOR CERTAIN COURT APPEARANCES UNDER THE PROVINCIAL COURT FAMILY RULES

Purpose

The purpose of this practice direction is to set out the default method for certain court appearances under the *Provincial Court Family Rules*, B.C. Reg. 120/2020.

Application

This practice direction applies to all [court registries](#) in the Province.

Directions

Rule 163.1(1) of the *Provincial Court Family Rules* states that the default method of attendance for court appearances is in person. Rule 163.1(2) notes that despite subrule (1) the Chief Judge may direct that a class of court appearances may or must be attended by telephone, video conference or other means of electronic communication. This practice direction modifies Rule 163.1(1) to facilitate the following direction and procedure.

Default Method of Appearances

1. For the following court appearances the default method of appearance will be by telephone or Microsoft Teams audioconference or videoconference, unless a judge otherwise orders or directs: family management conferences; family settlement conferences; family case conferences; trial preparation conferences; pre trial conferences; and, pre trial applications.
2. Parties will receive, or may request, from the court registry information about how to attend and, if by telephone or Microsoft Teams audioconference or videoconference, how to connect to a court appearance.

3. A party seeking an alternate method of attendance from what they have received from the court registry must make an application to a judge.
4. Parties are encouraged to use Microsoft Teams videoconference when attending remotely where videoconference is available. For every Microsoft Teams proceeding, a dial-in conference number will also be provided so that parties can participate by telephone if they are unable to do so by videoconference or if their video connection fails during the proceeding.
5. Parties and Counsel must read and comply with:
 - a. the Policy on [Use of Electronic Devices in Courtrooms](#) and [Access to Court Proceedings](#) Policy; and
 - b. [NP 21 Virtual Proceedings and Remote Attendance in the Provincial Court](#), including the requirement for Counsel to use their cameras unless there is a technical or other reason why they are unable to do so, in which case they must advise the Court at the commencement of the proceedings.

History of Practice Direction

- Original practice direction effective January 4, 2022.

I make this practice direction pursuant to my authority under the *Provincial Court Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 379, and Rule 160 and Rule 163.1(2) of the *Provincial Court Family Rules*, B.C. Reg. 120/2020.

Melissa Gillespie
Chief Judge
Provincial Court of British Columbia