



THE PROVINCIAL COURT
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Effective date: *30 July 2025*

Notice 36

NOTICE

WITNESS AND INTERPRETER OATH OR AFFIRMATION

Purpose

The purpose of this Notice is to describe the process when a witness or interpreter wishes to swear an oath or make an affirmation using a religious or cultural item other than the Bible.

Notice

1. Before a witness for a party is called to give evidence, they will be required to swear an oath or affirm that the evidence they give is the truth.
2. The party calling the witness or the counsel for the party must find out in advance of the court proceeding whether the witness wishes to swear or affirm, and should inform the court of the witness' preference.
3. A witness may swear or affirm on a religious or cultural item provided that the witness, the party calling the witness, or their counsel, make the arrangements in advance for the appropriate item to be available, and to inform the clerk and the Court of the procedure to be used.
4. Before an interpreter may provide interpretation, they must swear an oath or affirm that they will truly and correctly interpret the evidence and proceedings in court to the best of their skills and ability.
5. An interpreter may swear or affirm on a religious or cultural item provided that the interpreter makes the arrangements in advance for the appropriate item to be available, and informs the clerk and the Court of the procedure to be used.
6. In the event that:

- a) a concern is raised by a party that the religious or cultural item a witness or interpreter intends to use is not compatible with the dignity and decorum of a court proceeding, or
- b) a court clerk or sheriff is of the belief that the religious or cultural item presents a safety concern for the Court, court staff or public,

the party, court clerk or sheriff will notify the presiding judge or judicial justice and seek direction.

History of Notice

- Original notice: July 30, 2025

Melissa Gillespie
Chief Judge
Provincial Court of British Columbia