



IN THE TERRITORIAL COURT OF YUKON

PRACTICE DIRECTION
CP-7

Conduct of Circuits by Teleconference

Scheduled circuits may be conducted by teleconference at the discretion of the presiding judge where no substantive matters are expected to be heard or where the weather would make travel unsafe. See Practice Direction ADMIN-5 (*Circuit Cancellation Due to Weather*).

In the event that a scheduled court circuit is conducted by teleconference, the court registry will make the necessary arrangements with the circuit community. Any individuals required in court should connect with the teleconference, or attend at the location where court is scheduled to join the teleconference.

For further information, please see the attached “Circuit Courts” and “What to do when Circuit Courts are held by teleconference” documents prepared by the court registry.

Chief Judge P. Chisholm
April 7, 2021

CIRCUIT COURTS

- The circuit court calendar for the following year is sent out in the fall to a distribution list that includes the RCMP, First Nations, CYFN Courtworkers and relevant Yukon government departments among other recipients. The calendar is also posted to, and updated on, the Yukon Courts website:
<http://www.yukoncourts.ca/courts/territorial/calendar.html>

This calendar shows the date, time and location in each community for all planned circuit courts for the year, as well as the dates of pre-circuit conferences.

- Approximately two weeks before each scheduled circuit, a pre-circuit conference is held at which the cases on the docket are discussed. The Court Clerk will send a fax to a community-specific distribution list two weeks before each pre-circuit conference indicating the date and time of the conference and a number to call if people outside Whitehorse want to participate.
- At the pre-circuit conference the Judge decides whether the court party will attend the circuit in person or by teleconference, taking into account a number of considerations including whether any substantive matters (such as trials or sentencing) are on the docket. If there are no cases on the docket for that circuit the Judge will cancel the circuit altogether.
- If a circuit is canceled, or will be done by teleconference, the Trial Coordinator's Office will fax and/or email a notice to all parties on the community distribution list.
- If a circuit is canceled, the Supervisor, Court Clerks will cancel the reservation for the venue either by phone or by email.
- When a circuit court is to be held by teleconference, the Supervisor, Court Clerks will contact the community RCMP detachment and/or a community member to arrange for a RCMP and/or community member to attend at the venue, and will also contact a representative of the venue to confirm that a phone will be available on the day of Court.
- One day before the circuit is to happen, whether it is by teleconference or in person, a Clerk of the Court will fax out the most up-to-date docket to the community distribution list.

See the instruction sheet "What To Do When Circuit Courts Are Held By Teleconference" for details on what community and RCMP members can do to help make circuit courts held by teleconference go smoothly.

WHAT TO DO WHEN CIRCUIT COURTS ARE HELD BY TELECONFERENCE

For circuit courts held by teleconference to run smoothly, the help of community and RCMP members is needed. Someone designated by the community, or an alternate, must:

- attend the venue to unlock the door 15 minutes before court is to start;
- set up a speaker phone and dial the teleconference line; and
- post the docket so the public can see it (for example, tape it on the door to the courtroom).

Before court starts, the RCMP or community member in attendance will advise those present that the court party will not be attending the community in person, but that court will be held by teleconference instead, and will provide those in attendance with the teleconference information.

Someone in the community will have to dial the teleconference line. The Clerk from Whitehorse will identify the people who are on the teleconference, including defendants, and then call the matters on the docket. The RCMP or community member will let Whitehorse know who on the docket is present. If a person on the docket is present, the RCMP or community member will ask them to come forward when their matter is called so they can be heard on the line.

Once court is finished, someone from the community will have to disconnect from the teleconference line, put tables and chairs away (if required), and close and lock the venue (if required).

If there are to be any changes to the circuit court venue, availability of a phone, or other details that might impact the court, someone in the community must advise the Supervisor, Court Clerks as soon as possible by phoning 1-800-661-0408 ext. 3429 or by emailing clerksupervisor@yukon.ca.

The Court very much appreciates the assistance of community and RCMP members in carrying out these important functions. Should you have any questions about what needs to be done to prepare for circuit courts held by teleconference, please contact the Supervisor, Court Clerks at 1-800-661-0408 ext. 3429 or at clerksupervisor@yukon.ca.