



April 23, 2021

Via email: GPratte@blg.com

Guy Pratte
President
The Advocates' Society
250 Yonge Street, Suite 2700
Toronto, ON. M5B 2L

Dear Mr. Pratte:

Thank you for your call regarding the Court's Notice to the Profession of April 20, 2021 restricting the number of proceedings over the next few weeks until May 7, 2021.

As discussed, my intent in taking this action was to respond quickly to a very concerning and dynamic situation with the third wave of the pandemic.

By reducing hearings, our aim was to reduce the number of people, including court staff, coming into courthouses. Many virtual hearings require court staff to be physically present in a court room.

I understand that the way the Notice has been implemented may be causing confusion. Please know that I regret this, however, I do believe in all the circumstances, it was necessary. The Court will do its very best to minimize the inconvenience to the parties and counsel.

We are very much aware that the decisions we make affect the bar and litigants. But as I am sure you can appreciate, we are living through a very dynamic situation where decisions must be made quickly. There is not always time to consult with the civil, family and criminal bars.

A scheduling decision such as this causes a chain reaction involving a whole host of court administration staff, trial scheduling staff and Regional Senior Judges. It is a massive effort. Consequently, changing course over the short interval between now and May 7, 2021 is not feasible.

Moving forward, however, if bar organizations have suggestions, we would be very open to hearing them through our Working Groups, consultation tables, or direct communications to the Office of the Chief Justice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Geoffrey B. Morawetz". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a large initial "G" and "M".

Geoffrey B. Morawetz,
Chief Justice.

GBM/nn