



To further demonstrate this Court's commitment to consultation, I have decided, after careful contemplation of your letter, to re-institute quarterly Court Users meetings between myself and justice stakeholders. A Notice will be sent out in the coming days to invitees advising of the draft schedule of these meetings and attendance options. It is currently thought that the first Tuesday morning in March, June, September, and December will be the days the meetings will take place.

I hope the above will demonstrate to you my continued commitment to and belief in consultation with the Bar.

When I met with Dr. Patterson last week, shortly after the Government of Nunavut released its phased re-opening plans, Dr. Patterson advised that the

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plan put together was sufficient to move the limited Court operations to the "low-risk" operating classification. With this information in hand, we put out the Notice advising that the NCJ could now accommodate out-of-custody, in-person trials.

The Notice was intended to simply advise that certain, limited trials could take place should counsel be able to proceed. It is incumbent on me, in my capacity as Chief Justice, to ensure the Nunavut Court of Justice operates to its fullest capacity, given the circumstances.

If counsel are able to take advantage of the trial time made available in June, fine. If counsel's operational limitations do not permit trials from being scheduled in June, so be it, they can be scheduled at a later date. The Notice was meant to convey this simple message, obviously it did not. In hindsight, I can appreciate the courtroom protocol detail connected to the proposed opening along with the notion that the NCJ is ready to hear cases might have been off-putting, so to speak, in terms of your own resources and views. The memorandum was not, by any means, meant to illustrate the only way that trials could be conducted and we remain open to any and all suggestions on how In-Person court (IPC) may proceed.

### **To Conclude**

Thank you again for your letter. The COVID situation remains fluid in terms of NCJ operations I look forward to working with the Bar as we navigate the waters ahead and build off-of the lessons learned over the past few months in terms of how our Court is able to operate during this very stressful time.

Yours sincerely,



Chief Justice Neil Sharkey