



Action Committee on Modernizing Court Operations

NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2023

The Action Committee on Modernizing Court Operations – formerly known as the Action Committee on Court Operations in Response to COVID-19 – is pleased to launch its new quarterly newsletter.

WHO WE ARE

The [Action Committee on Modernizing Court Operations](#) is a national leadership body that supports Canada's courts in their modernization efforts. The Committee provides non-prescriptive, practical guidance for addressing challenges, and highlights opportunities and innovative practices to modernize court operations and improve access to justice for court users at all levels of Canadian courts, in all types of court matters. It also identifies areas of further study that may interest policy-makers, academics, and training providers in the field of court operations.

The Action Committee is co-chaired by the Chief Justice of Canada, the Right Honourable Richard Wagner, and the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, the Honourable Arif Virani. Its members include senior representatives of the judiciary and ministries responsible for Justice from various Canadian jurisdictions. The Committee is supported by an Indigenous Advisory Group to ensure that Indigenous perspectives are adequately reflected in the Action Committee's work and a Technical Working Group to ensure that national perspectives are reflected.

The Action Committee welcomes feedback, and relies upon collaborative information sharing, to inform its work on relevant topics. Contact us at AC-secretariat-CA@fja-cmf.gc.ca.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- [Progress Report 2022-2023](#): The Action Committee tabled its third progress report outlining activities and achievements from April 2022 to March 2023, including
 - Revised [Terms of Reference](#) with a forward-looking focus on court modernization and addressing legacy impacts of the pandemic on the courts
 - The creation of an [Indigenous Advisory Group](#) composed of Indigenous judges, court workers and legal service providers to inform the Action Committee's work
 - Published guidance on virtual hearings, virtual bail, reducing court delays, and mental health and wellness in the courts
- [Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration](#): Engaging with a wide range of justice system actors allows courts to improve both their decision-making and service delivery for end-users. This tip sheet highlights operational tools, best practices and lessons learned across the country on how to collaborate effectively while safeguarding judicial independence.
- [Virtual and Hybrid Hearings in Family Matters – Best Interests of the Child](#): In addition to guiding substantive decisions on parenting responsibilities, the best interests of the child are relevant to procedural decisions throughout a family law proceeding, including whether, and how, to use virtual or hybrid hearings. Through the lens of the best interests of the child, this publication outlines considerations for selecting a mode of hearing and tips for improving the virtual hearing experience.



- **Understanding User-Centred Justice**: It is important to understand and incorporate the needs of court users in both day-to-day court services and broader modernization efforts. This publication sets out orienting principles and core phases and includes a checklist to help courts incorporate a user-centred approach to delivering services and designing and implementing court processes.
- **Gathering User Perspectives to Support Effective Court Operations**: Engaging with court users and those who support them through the court process is key to understanding and incorporating user needs into court services and modernization efforts. As a companion piece to *Understanding User-Centred Justice*, this tip sheet outlines methods and practice tips to gather user perspectives, includes practical examples from various courts, and highlights considerations relating to Indigenous communities and marginalized court users.

