

# Doug Parker & Associates

## Lawyers



12 August 2020

### **COVID – 19 (CORONAVIRUS) PANDEMIC RESPONSE**

We want to take this opportunity to give our clients some basic information about how the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic is impacting upon our service delivery to our clients.

Above all else it is vitally important to take whatever steps we can to safeguard the health and welfare of our clients and ourselves while continuing to effectively represent the interests of our clients and comply with our legal, social and moral obligations. This is a challenge. What it requires from us may change from day to day in order to meet our obligations imposed by any current restrictions.

Along with many other businesses, law firms are having to undertake the unprecedented step of shutting down their offices while they have their staff operate “remotely” from their homes during the COVID-19 lockdown.

We are fortunate that even before the pandemic, Doug Parker & Associates was operating from a home-based office. From the beginning five years ago, it was just one lawyer, Doug Parker. Doug was later joined by his wife Robyn attending to reception, conveyancing, administration and clerical assistance. So, we both live in the office anyway!

At this time, even during Stage 4 Lockdown, we will continue to operate much as usual with only some minor modifications.

Essentially, we will simply cease seeing any of you “face to face” unless absolutely unavoidable.

We will conduct conferences and communication by telephone, email, SMS and, if need be, video conferencing.

Almost all legal documents can now be signed remotely, even wills. Even statutory declarations and affidavits can be witnessed remotely using video conferencing. We will have documents signed remotely and/or electronically wherever possible.

There are still a couple of exceptions – enduring powers of attorney and appointments of medical treatment decisions makers and some documents which cannot be completed without being witnessed face to face and some of those in the presence of a lawyer or other suitably qualified person. Certification of documents still requires us to sight the original, so these need to be delivered to us to be sighted and certified and returned.

If you are a client who simply does not have access to the necessary technology, or you require witnessing of one of the few documents which cannot be done remotely, then exceptions may allow you to see us in person, or for us to visit you in person, especially if the need has some urgency about it. If you are in this situation, we can discuss this further with you.

In those rare instances where we conduct in person meetings, we will follow strict protocols. Documents will be reviewed and discussed before you come to sign them. Then, when you attend, masks will be worn and cleaning and social distancing requirements will be complied with. We will have you attend only for the minimum time needed to have your documents signed, using an unused disposable pen (which you can keep!). After you leave, copies can be prepared and forwarded to by email or post as you require.

As always, we remain ready, willing and able to assist you, adjusting and adapting as required. Please call us with any questions or concerns you may have.

We hope you and your families remain safe and well during these very uncertain and challenging times ahead for all of us.