

PRACTICE DIRECTIVE Access to Criminal Appeal Files

Criminal appeal files shall be open to inspection only by the parties to the appeal and their respective counsel, with the following exception.

Members of the public (which includes the media) may have access to the Notice of Appeal or Notice of Application for Leave to Appeal, reasons for judgment and any order on the appeal file. Registry staff are not responsible for determining whether other documents or evidence should be disclosed. If access is sought to any other documents or evidence in a criminal appeal file, the registry should refer that request to the Chief Justice or, at his direction, a judge of the Court. The judge may require the parties to provide their positions on the request.

The governing legal principle is that there is a presumption in favour of public access but that access must be supervised by the Court to ensure that no abuse or harm occurs to innocent parties.

The Honourable Chief Justice Finch
On behalf of the Court of Appeal for British Columbia

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