

*The Supreme Court
Belize City
Belize C.A.*



*Telephone No. 227-7377
Fax No. 227-0181*

E-mail: tyoung@belizejudiciary.org

PRESS RELEASE

RESUMPTION OF JURY TRIALS

February 22, 2021

Effective February 22, 2021 jury trials are resuming in the Supreme Court of Belize.

It has been almost a year since the supreme courts have been conducting judge-alone trials only, due to the suspension of jury trials because of Covid-19. The Criminal Division of the Supreme Court has now resumed jury trials on a phased basis, and the first phase commenced on Monday in the Southern Judicial District at the Supreme Court in Dangriga Town.

After careful consideration and wide consultation with the relevant stakeholders, the preparation for the resumption of jury trials started late last year and was recently completed with the retrofitting of the courtrooms to accommodate jurors, while at the same time observing all the safety protocols implemented by the Ministry of Health and Wellness, for the prevention of, and protection from, the spread of the Coronavirus.



Dangriga courtroom with protective dividers at the dock, counsel table, and jury box.

The retrofitting includes providing adequate space for physical distancing, installation of signage and plexiglass-like dividers for jurors, witnesses, counsel and accused, and the implementation of specific guidelines to facilitate the entire process, from empanelling the jurors to jury deliberation at the close of the trial.



Dangriga Town Hall is used to have sufficient space for jury selection.

Because the selection of jurors (empanelling) requires the attendance of a number of persons, the Supreme Court has secured an exemption from the Minister of Health and Wellness to proceed with the process, after presenting all the measures put in place to ensure the safety and protection of all court users. Jurors can be assured that the Supreme Court of Belize will do its utmost best for them to feel safe and comfortable, while they exercise their civic duty to the Country of Belize.

We take this opportunity to thank all those persons who contributed to making this step towards the administration of justice in our country possible. We also wish to remind all court users and members of the public to continue wearing your masks, wash hands often, and maintain physical distance.

**REGISTRAR GENERAL
SUPREME COURT OF BELIZE**