



**Paquette
Travers**

...one impressive commitment to service

REAL ESTATE: COVID-19

Frequently Asked
Questions and Answers



1. I have a real estate transaction closing during the provincial closure of all “non-essential businesses.” Can I still close my transaction?

Lawyers have been deemed “essential services” by the Government of Ontario. Therefore, our firm is fully operational and continuing to close real estate transactions as smoothly and seamlessly as possible. Other industries, such as insurance companies, banks and movers have also been deemed “essential.”

As the Land Registration system is now web-based and registrations occur electronically, we do not foresee any issues with respect to the transfer and registration of property for closings.

2. I have recently travelled abroad/been in contact with someone who has travelled abroad, am experiencing symptoms and/or am uncomfortable meeting the lawyer in person. How can I sign my closing documents?

During this unfamiliar time, we are mandating that all our client appointments and signings move to a virtual video appointment. Our lawyers will be meeting with clients face-to-face via video conferencing applications such as Skype and Zoom. The Law Society of Ontario has approved this method of document signing during the pandemic and to better protect our clients and ourselves, we have taken the necessary steps to mandate this in our practice. Each appointment will be made individually, on a case-by-case basis.

Clients have the option of video conferencing from the comfort of their own homes. Our legal team will send you the documents prior to your video appointment, in which you will be required to print them out for signing. The lawyer will then contact you via video chat at the time of your scheduled appointment and will witness your signature on all necessary documents. Following the appointment, you will simply be required to email the signed documents and scanned copies of your two pieces of valid identification back to our legal team prior to closing. Please note that we will require the original signed documents later; keep them in a safe and secure place for easy access.

Should you not have the necessary means to video conference from home, we have established video conferencing capabilities at our Head Office in Waterloo. By attending to our office, we will have you video conference with a lawyer from a disinfected and sanitized boardroom. The documentation will be provided to you upon your arrival, and you will simply review and sign the closing paperwork in front of the lawyer virtually.

3. How do I get my new home keys or sale proceeds on closing day?

Upon the completion of your purchase transaction, under normal circumstances, you would attend to one of our four offices to obtain the keys to your new home. With the strict call for social distancing, we are working with realtors to ensure lockboxes are left on the property for closing day and codes are provided at the time the transaction is completed.

If you are selling your home and are to receive proceeds from the sale, our goal is to provide convenience to you and direct deposit your funds into your bank account upon completion of the transaction. Please note, direct deposit is only available for the five major Canadian banks (TD, CIBC, RBC, BMO and Scotiabank). Alternative arrangements can be made by contacting our office directly.

4. What is your firm doing to be proactive against the COVID-19 virus?

This is an unprecedented time in our world. As the situation progresses and new information is announced daily, Paquette Travers is actively monitoring the situation and ensuring both our team and clients are safe and comfortable during this time.

To protect our staff and those entering our office, we have hired a designated team member who disinfects, sanitizes and cleans our workspace after every client appointment and the office on an hourly basis. This reduces and minimizes the spread of germs and bacteria. Hand sanitizer and disinfecting products are available at all entry points to our offices, and we ask clients to diligently use these upon their arrival and exit.

To practice social distancing and put the safety of our staff at the forefront of our operations, we have successfully established options to work remotely and complete real estate transactions. We have a unique capability and the technology to ensure all work required can be completed securely from outside of our physical office building. Rest assured, our Main Office will never be left unattended or closed; teams of staff members will be in the office during regular business hours to ensure the physical operation of the firm.

Updates on our firm's operations and any changes to the way in which we practice will be communicated directly with clients and realtors via email, telephone and social media. We understand this is a stressful time and will continue to be here every step of the way for your real estate needs. Our goal is to continue to provide exceptional customer service and ensure our clients are safe and comfortable during their real estate transactions with our firm.

Should you have any questions or concerns about your upcoming or future real estate transactions, please don't hesitate to contact our office directly at 877-744-2281.

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