



**Alberta Court of Justice
Edmonton Criminal Division**

Practice Note: Common Law Peace Bonds

Effective: June 16, 2025

Common law peace bonds are a form of preventative justice, which impose conditions upon an individual to keep the peace. They will typically contain conditions that are directed to maintaining the peace, including treatment conditions, reporting conditions and conditions prohibiting or restricting contact with one or more named persons.

Peace bonds are often used to resolve criminal charges without a trial. In such a bond, the accused is not required to enter a plea of guilty or make any admission of criminal conduct but is required to acknowledge that a peace bond is necessary to prevent a breach of the peace. In these circumstances, the Crown will agree to withdraw the outstanding criminal charges in exchange for the admission and acceptance of peace bond conditions. The entry into the peace bond is achieved when the accused presents himself and signs the peace bond. It is then that the Crown withdraws the charges.

When an accused person is directed to enter into a common law peace bond, but does not attend to sign the peace bond, the peace bond is not in force. The Crown has thus not withdrawn the charges. This practice note addresses these circumstances, where a peace bond is ordered by the Court, but not signed by an accused person.

1. When a peace bond is ordered and the accused does not attend to sign it, the original Information will be remitted to Courtroom 356 to speak to process.
2. The presiding Justice will consider whether a summons should issue and be personally served upon the Accused pursuant to section 485(2) of the Criminal Code of Canada. Personal service of the summons will permit the Court to reacquire jurisdiction over the accused. If ordered, the summons will be returnable in court in the next four to six weeks. The presiding Justice will determine the returnable court based on the nature of the original allegations.
3. On the returnable date, should the accused person appear in response to the summons, the process will start anew. If the accused person does not appear, or cannot be served, the presiding Justice will consider the options of a warrant in the public interest, pursuant to either sections 485(2) or s. 512 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

Dated this 23rd day of May, 2025

The Honourable Joyce Lester
Assistant Chief Justice
Alberta Court of Justice
Edmonton Criminal Division