

## What is the Downtown Community Court?

Launched in 2008, Vancouver's Downtown Community Court is a criminal court that is part of the Provincial Court of British Columbia and a new justice initiative.

Many offenders in downtown Vancouver are caught in a cycle of crime by issues that include alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, homelessness and lack of job skills. By combining justice, health and social services, the Downtown Community Court makes sure offenders take responsibility for their actions, and that those who need it receive support to change their lives for the better.

The Downtown Community Court will deal in a timely way with most offences committed in downtown Vancouver, such as shoplifting, theft from auto, mischief, assault and drug possession.

### Downtown Community Court

211 Gore Avenue  
Vancouver, B.C. V6A 0B6

Telephone 604 660-9722

E-mail [communitycourt@gov.bc.ca](mailto:communitycourt@gov.bc.ca)

[www.communitycourt.bc.ca](http://www.communitycourt.bc.ca)

downtown  
**COMMUNITYCOURT**

A new approach  
to **addressing crime**  
in our community



**RESPONSIVE.  
CONNECTED.  
COLLABORATIVE.**

## RESPONSIVE

**Provides timely and fair sentencing to better meet the needs of victims, offenders and the community.**

The Downtown Community Court is a problem-solving court that aims to provide earlier, fair resolution to criminal cases, benefiting offenders, victims and the wider community. A more timely court process results in a better use of resources and a more proactive approach to changing criminal behaviour.

The court is able to handle cases more quickly than a traditional court because it has early access to relevant information about the accused, and because there are justice, social and health services working together in one location. Early resolution minimizes inconvenience to victims and witnesses, and increases community confidence.

Offenders are assessed and will have an opportunity to be connected to services they may need, such as housing, income assistance, addiction treatment or health care. This approach will reduce the likelihood that they will re-offend and help them become contributing members of the community.



## CONNECTED

**Works with the community to improve public safety.**

The court was developed with input from area residents, business owners, community agencies and many others. The court will continue to foster these connections, allowing the community to identify the kinds of community service that will be of most benefit.

At its core, the community court is about partnership and problem solving. It's about creating new relationships, both within the justice system and with health and social services, community organizations, area residents, merchants, faith communities and schools. These relationships help connect everyone to the task of finding solutions to the problem of crime.

## COLLABORATIVE

**Engages community and social services to address the underlying causes of crime.**

The new community court is an integrated justice model that addresses the complex factors that cause a person to commit a crime.

The Downtown Community Court brings health, income assistance, housing staff, together under one roof, alongside Crown counsel, defence counsel, police and probation officers, victim services, native courtworkers and others. Working with the community, this interdisciplinary approach ensures the most effective use of available resources and services.

By co-ordinating sentencing with support, the court gives offenders a chance to address the causes of their behaviour and become contributing members of the community.

The Downtown Community Court serves the whole of downtown Vancouver, consisting of the Central Business District (including the entertainment district), Chinatown, Coal Harbour, Downtown Eastside, Gastown, Strathcona, Yaletown, and the West End, including Stanley Park. This area has one of the highest rates of property crime of any Canadian city. These crimes affect everyone in the community—residents and businesses alike.

