**Courtroom Participants**

Judge: must act impartially when deciding a case. The judge has full control of the courtroom and can decide whether evidence or questioning are admissible. In trials without juries, it is the judge who decides whether to convict the accused or not. In trials with juries, it is the judge who instructs the jury on the law and the jury’s role.

Crown Prosecutor: Crown lawyers prosecute accused people on the behalf of the government and society. They are responsible to see that justice is done and must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the accused committed the offence.

Defense Counsel: represents the accused to ensure that their legal rights are protected, including their right to legal defense.

Court Clerk: reads out the charge against the accused, swears in witnesses, handles evidence and other courtroom paperwork.

Sheriff: makes sure the accused appears in court, finds prospective jurors, and carries out court orders.

Accused: The person who is charged with an offence. The accused is present during the court proceedings.

Witness: May be present to give eyewitness, expert, or character testimony.

Observers - Law courts are open to the public. This is an important principle of a public court system - public access ensures visibility, integrity and transparency. In rare cases, access to courts is restricted (usually in situations that involve children and other vulnerable persons.

Jury: A criminal jury has 12 participants who must unanimously decide whether the accused is guilty or not guilty. Generally, accused people charged with “indictable” offences (generally considered more serious offences) can choose whether to have their trial heard by a judge and jury or a judge alone. .