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St. John's archdiocese granted more time as talks continue on who else should pay abuse victims

Confidential discussions underway with other parties that may also be liable for decades of harm at Mount Cashel and elsewhere

By **Tara Bradbury**
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The Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador courthouse in St. John's. PHOTO BY THE TELEGRAM/FILE PHOTO

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The St. John's Roman Catholic archdiocese has received another extension of its creditor protection, as lawyers for clergy abuse survivors meet with other organizations who may also be liable for the historic harms.

The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation of St. John's (RCECSJ) has been in creditor protection since December 2021 as it sells its assets to compensate more than 300 survivors of historic abuse by Christian Brothers at Mount Cashel orphanage and other locations.

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The courts found the archdiocese vicariously liable for the abuse, and an independent claims adjudication awarded the victims $121.3 million.

So far, the claimants have received just over 30 per cent of what they're due, and the archdiocese continues its efforts to collect the funds needed. It requested and was granted a 60-day extension of its protection against

creditors in the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador this week. According to court-appointed monitor Ernst and Young, the RCECSJ — which expects to have about $4.4 million left at the end of February 2026 — needs more time to finalize the sale of some properties and continue its efforts to sell others. As well, it's working with the claimants' lawyers on the details of a counselling fund.

The lawyers are in the midst of discussions with other potentially liable parties, the monitor indicated.

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"Representative counsel has advised the monitor that its confidential discussions concerning future potential recoveries for abuse claimants have continued to progress and that the continuation of these (creditor protection proceedings) will facilitate their efforts," Ernst and Young senior vice-president

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He didn't name the other parties, but it's expected they may include the Newfoundland and Labrador government, and various other Roman Catholic organizations with which some of the abusers were affiliated.

The archdiocese's extension request was also based on its appeal of a court ruling over its insurance coverage.

The RCECSJ had hoped Guardian Insurance Company of Canada would cover some of the settlement, but the court ruled a year ago that the insurance policy was void due to the archdiocese's failure to disclose sexual abuse claims to the company.

That appeal is set to be heard later this month.