

Zoom Tips for Attorneys and Parties

Courts have started conducting more proceedings remotely, and remote proceedings will continue to be held when appropriate. Here are some tips for participating in remote proceedings.

Preparing for Your Proceeding:

- Make sure that your laptop or device is fully charged.
- Log into the hearing 5-10 minutes before the scheduled start time to check in with the court clerk and to make sure that you have time to resolve any technology issues.
 - Test your [speaker](#), microphone, and [camera](#) before the hearing; do a [test meeting](#) to test your connection and setup, including any features such as chat, mute and unmute, and raise your hand “virtually.”
- Dress appropriately. Because the proceeding will be recorded, it is best to dress in a soft solid color; if a tie is worn, choose one that is solid rather than one with a pattern.
- Have all paperwork you may need for the hearing with you.
- Find a space that will have as few interruptions as possible. You should be alone in a quiet area where you will not be disturbed or overheard by others. Turn off any televisions, radios, or other devices.
- Do not operate a motor vehicle while participating.
- Keep your device on mute when not speaking. This reduces feedback and limits background noise.
- Place your mobile device on a solid surface with the camera at eye level. Avoid carrying the mobile device in your hand during the proceeding.
- Use only one device if possible. If you use more than one device, please mute one device to reduce feedback.
- Be mindful of what is behind you. Choose a solid neutral wall, if possible, or a professional background.
- If you and your client appear from different locations and you need to speak confidentially with your client during the hearing, the court can put you in a breakout room for a separate video conference that will not be observed or recorded in any way.
- Make sure that your video feed is turned on and that there is good lighting.

In the Virtual Courtroom:

- Even though your hearing is remote, please remember that it is still a court proceeding. You should act professionally, the way you would if you were in the courtroom in person. Court rules and standards apply, and appropriate conduct and attire is required.
- When speaking, remember to look directly at the webcam, not at the screen.
- Speak one at a time and pause prior to speaking in case there is any audio/video lag.
- If you are not speaking, please keep your microphone/phone on mute to prevent any background noise from being heard and placed on the record. It also helps court reporters to discern what was spoken when they prepare transcripts.
- The proceedings are being recorded. Everything said will be captured and made part of the record just as in a physical courtroom.
- Many of these remote proceedings are being livestreamed or will be posted to the Internet to comply with public access requirements for court proceedings. Be careful of any small talk or personal conversations during a recess or between cases because they may end up on the Internet.

- If you are asked to share your screen for any reason, remember that any application, such as your e-mail inbox or a document that you have open, will be shared until you pull up the document/video that you intend to share. Again, this could be livestreamed or posted to the Internet. It is better to minimize or close any application or document that you will not be sharing before the proceeding so that it does not appear in the Zoom recording or livestream.
- If you are sharing a [video or audio recording](#), you must select the “Enable Computer Audio” checkbox in the dialog box for sound to display and share as well.
- If you are disconnected from the proceeding, reconnect immediately with the same meeting information. If possible, limit others in your house from using the same Wi-Fi during the proceeding. Too many Wi-Fi users will make your Zoom connection unstable.

Zoom

- Zoom has an extensive collection of instructional videos for almost all of its features. You may find them at the [Zoom Help Center](#) or Google what you want to do.
- Some common features you should know how to use are:
 - The [chat](#) feature
 - The [share screen](#) feature
 - The [audio and video control features](#), including
 - How to reduce [feedback and audio echoes](#)
 - How to [mute and unmute](#) yourself
 - How to [turn on and turn off the video feed](#)
 - The [waiting room](#) feature
 - The [breakout room](#) feature
 - The [“raise your hand”](#) feature

Not all courts use these features, but you may be asked to use one or more of them during a remote proceeding.

- If you experience issues with frozen screens, poor audio quality, delays, or getting disconnected, there are [several things](#) you can try to improve them.
- Please visit the Judicial Information Systems (JIS) [Virtual Courtrooms webpage](#) for more information and suggestions.