

Instructions and Tips for Zoom Hearings/Trials in Division A

Please read these instructions carefully. Following this guideline and adequate preparation and testing of the system will help ensure a good experience for everyone involved.

Important: Just as the recording of audio and video and the taking of photographs is prohibited in the courtroom, it is prohibited when proceedings are conducted using Zoom or any other form of videoconference or teleconference platform. Any audio or video recording of a court proceeding held by video or teleconference, including screenshots, still photography, or any other means of visual or auditory copying, is absolutely prohibited. Any violation of this may result in sanctions.

Zoom Account and Software:

- If you do not already have Zoom installed, go to <https://zoom.us> and click "Sign Up, It's Free" and follow the prompts. It is not necessary to purchase a plan in order to join a Zoom hearing. You can select the Basic version that is free.
- You do not have to have an account, but it does make it easier to use. If you choose to not create an account, when you join the meeting, please sign in using your full name.
- To be able to use all of the features, you should install the app or download Zoom Client for Meetings at <https://zoom.us/download>. To ensure you have the latest security enhancements and features, make sure you download any updates.
- You can find video tutorials, webinars, and other resources at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>. The court will not provide technical support for Zoom participants or attendees.
- You can join a test Zoom meeting to familiarize yourself with Zoom and test your microphone/speakers before joining a Zoom meeting by going to <http://zoom.us/test>.

Zoom Settings:

Here are some recommended settings for your Zoom account:

- General: Ask me to confirm when I leave a meeting: Checked.
- Video: Enable HD: Unchecked.
- Video: Always display participant names on their video: Checked.
- Video: Always show video preview dialog when joining a video meeting: Checked.
- Audio: Automatically adjust volume: Checked.
- Audio: Press and hold SPACE key to temporarily unmute yourself.

Technical Recommendations:

- Avoid using an open microphone and speakers such as those that are built into your laptop or web camera. To ensure you can be heard and can hear others, the optimum hardware recommendation is a headset with a microphone. If you do not have a headset/mic, using earphones will ensure there is no audio loop feedback or echo. For the same reason, if you are joining using the phone audio, please use the handset and not the speakerphone.
- A hard-wired ethernet connection provides a faster, more reliable Internet connection than Wi-Fi.
- You can check your Internet bandwidth by doing an online speed test at <http://www.speedtest.net>. Zoom requires an Internet bandwidth of 1.5Mbps/1.5Mbps (up/down).
- If your Internet service is slow, have all other devices offline. No streaming videos or music, playing online games, and uploading or downloading files by anyone on your network. Do not run other programs or apps on your computer or surf the web while using Zoom.
- Avoid using battery power only. Plug your computer/device into a reliable power source while using Zoom.
- If you have audio feedback or an echo, there are a few possible causes:
 - A participant is using both the computer and the telephone audio at the same time. (If joining audio by phone, be sure to check "Leave Computer Audio" under the options by the microphone icon.)
 - There are multiple computers with Zoom in the same room.
 - There are participants with computer speakers that are too close together.
 - The audio is being played through speakers and is too loud.

Registration:

- Please register for the hearing by clicking the link provided in the invitation. After registering and approval to join, you will receive a confirmation email containing the meeting ID and password. Every participant must register by the provided deadline in order to join the Zoom hearing. (Even if you have the meeting ID and password, if you are not registered, Zoom will not permit you to join the meeting. When you join the meeting, you must use the same first name, last name, and email address that you registered with.) The registration information you will be providing is your name; email address; cell phone; bar number, if applicable; the name of the party you represent, if applicable; and whether you are arguing, a witness, or observing.
- Your cell phone number is needed because we will start a group text message before the hearing. If, during the hearing, any participant has technical difficulties and/or is disconnected, please immediately text the group so that we can stop the hearing and wait for you to rejoin. If we are in another hearing and unable to start on time, we will text the group and let them know.

- If someone other than the recipient of this invite will be joining as either a participant, witness, or observer, please reply to this email and provide us with their name and contact information. To prevent any hijacking of the Zoom meeting, or "Zoom-bombing," please do not share the registration link with anyone without first discussing it with court staff.

Before the hearing:

- Please test your audio and video connection on the Zoom test site at <https://zoom.us/test>. Make sure you can hear and that you can be heard. Make sure your video is clear and that you do not appear dark. (If you sit in front of a window or bright light, you will appear dark and indistinct.)
- Please sign in using your full name (not John's iPhone or Jane's iPad).
- All participants who will be speaking or making an appearance must join on their own computer by video. No one else should be in the room with you without notice and approval from the court staff.
- Any participant who is only observing should have their video and microphones off.
- Please join the meeting at least fifteen minutes prior to your scheduled time and wait in the waiting room to start. If you are late and the hearing has started, you will not be able to join the hearing and will remain in the waiting room.
- Using Zoom is new to most of us. To prevent any delays, please allow yourself enough time to join the meeting and adjust any settings or work out any technical issues. Please keep in mind that there may be other hearings set after yours that may be affected by those delays.

Trials/Hearings with Witness Testimony:

- Clients and/or witnesses may join the Zoom hearing. Every participant who will be arguing or testifying must join via webcam. Observers must turn their webcams off and mute their microphones. Each participant must be in a separate room/location. Attorneys can utilize the chat function or breakout rooms to confer with their clients privately.
- Witnesses that are sequestered will be placed in the waiting room until it is time for them to testify.
- Breakout rooms may be used when attorneys wish to confer with their clients outside of the online courtroom. While in a breakout room, you will not be able to see or hear the proceedings in the main meeting; therefore, you should only utilize this feature while on a break or with the judge's permission. You may not be assigned a breakout room while court is in session. If you want to have a preassigned breakout room, please notify the court staff prior to the hearing.
- It is the responsibility of the attorney who is calling the witness to:

- Make sure the witness has registered for the hearing/trial by the deadline.
- Provide the witness with any equipment needed to participate.
- Familiarize the witness with the technology and software before the hearing. It is highly recommended that you do a test run with the witness before the hearing.
- Ensure that the witness has copies of any exhibits or relevant documents that they might be referred to during their testimony.
- Advise their clients of all policies and procedures regarding court decorum, rules, and etiquette.

Witness Instructions:

- Witnesses must be ready to join the hearing at the designated time.
- Witnesses should be alone in a quiet room that is free of distractions.
- When testifying, witnesses must keep their camera and microphone on at all times unless instructed otherwise by the judge.
- Witnesses are not permitted to communicate with anyone while testifying. This includes verbally, by writing, or electronically.

Court Decorum and Rules:

- Despite not being physically in the courtroom, the proceedings are on the record. Once the judge calls the case and announces we are on the record, everything that is said will be reported and made a part of the record unless the judge says we are off the record.
- Courtroom decorum standards still apply, including demeanor and dress code. Please attend the hearing dressed appropriately.
- All courtroom rules and procedures should still be followed. Turn off or silence all electronic devices, including cellular phones and office or home phones. Mute all sounds for other applications and devices (email notifications, chat messaging, et cetera).
- Distractions must be avoided. Participants should avoid getting up and moving away from the camera during the hearing. Other people (and pets) must not come into the camera's view.

Making a Clear Record:

Here are some guidelines to ensure the proceedings are clear and intelligible so that the court reporter can produce an accurate transcript:

- Make your appearance each time you speak.
- Please wait until you are prompted to speak. If you need to make an objection or speak out of turn, please raise your virtual hand by clicking the "Raise Hand" icon (Click the "Participants" button to access icons) and/or raise your hand the old-fashioned way.
- Speak slowly and pause between speakers. Because there are a few seconds of time delay when using videoconferencing, parties may be more likely to overlap when talking.
- It is imperative that everyone speaks one at a time. Interrupting and simultaneous speaking causes Zoom to cut off speakers and stack sounds, rendering both speakers unintelligible and therefore unreportable. Because of the overlap, you will not be able to hear the court reporter; therefore, in those instances, the court reporter will begin waving her hands to get everyone's attention.
- Sit close to your computer so that the microphone will pick up your voice clearly and your face can be seen clearly. Do not stand up or walk around.
- Check the lighting to ensure that it does not limit visibility. Do not sit in front of a window or where light is coming from behind you. You will appear dark and indistinct on camera.
- When speaking, look into the camera and not down or at the screen. Do not rest your face on your hand or block your mouth.
- Avoid joining from locations that are noisy or rooms that echo.
- To prevent your microphone from picking up any distracting noises, please mute your audio when you are not speaking. All participants will be muted upon joining the meeting. You can mute/unmute your microphone by clicking the microphone icon or pressing the space bar on your keyboard. To mute/unmute yourself when using phone audio, press *6 on your phone. The judge or court staff may mute anyone not speaking if there is any distracting noise or audio feedback.

Documents/Exhibits:

- Any document that you wish to admit into evidence or show the judge or witness should be marked for identification and emailed to the law clerks and all other parties at least one week prior to the hearing. If you plan on admitting it into evidence, you will still have to file it in the record with the clerk's office. The

share-screen function may be used to show exhibits, but permission from the judge must be requested first.

Chats/Breakout Rooms:

- The chat function, if enabled, is a feature that allows participants to type messages with everyone publicly or individuals privately. Please do not send private chats to the judge. Because it can be distracting, unless prompted to by the judge or court staff, do not send messages to everyone in the group. This feature may be used for communication between attorneys and their clients and/or between attorneys.
- Breakout rooms may be used when parties wish to confer outside of the online courtroom. While in a breakout room, you will not be able to see or hear the proceedings in the main meeting; therefore, you should only utilize this feature while on a break or with the judge's permission. You may not be assigned a breakout room while court is in session. If you want to have a preassigned breakout room, please notify the court staff prior to the hearing.