

Procedures and Guidelines for Remote Appearances using ZoomGov

Important: Any recording of a court proceeding held by video or teleconference, including “screen-shots” or other visual copying of a hearing, is absolutely prohibited. Violation of these prohibitions may result in sanctions deemed necessary by the court.

If you will be a participant or attendee in a ZoomGov video conference, hearing, or trial with the Court (attorney, witness, case party, etc.), preparing properly will ensure all involved will have a good experience using this system. Please note that some proceedings may provide phone-only connectivity via ZoomGov or another vendor. In that scenario, the Court will provide instructions on how to connect telephonically.

For security and enforcement of Court standards, the Court may disable ZoomGov interactions and features (such as chat, screen share, whiteboard, Q&A, raise hand, react, etc.).

The Court will not provide technical support on ZoomGov or Zoom for participants or attendees. Please see the [ZoomGov Support](#) web page, contact your local IT support, or other online guidance.

ZoomGov Account and Software

Participants: A Zoom or ZoomGov account is not required but will provide users with personalized use of the platform, like pre-saving their on-screen display name and default settings for video, audio, or virtual backgrounds. Setting up an account is free and occurs at <https://zoom.us> or <https://www.zoomgov.com/>. Again, a Zoom or ZoomGov account (free or paid account) is not necessary for any remote hearing interaction with the Court.

If you elect to open an account with Zoom or ZoomGov, save your name, phone, and email. Including a photo will help identify you when connecting. Reminder that participants and attendees are not required to have a Zoom or ZoomGov profile, to provide any identity information, or pay for a premium Zoom or ZoomGov account.

Install the latest Zoom Client for Meetings at <https://www.zoomgov.com/download>. Although ZoomGov can be used with a browser plugin, it is very limited. The full Zoom or ZoomGov client (app or software) will provide the best functionality and best experience during the hearing or conference.

Always keep your software up to date! The ZoomGov and Zoom Clients automatically update upon launching the software, but you can also update it manually.

Settings

Below are a few settings (under General and Video categories) within ZoomGov and Zoom recommended by the Court to improve your video conference.

General: "Ask me to confirm when I leave a meeting": ON (Helps prevent unintended departures)

Video: "Enable HD": OFF (Helps prevent poor video performance, and usually looks just as good as HD)

Video: "Always display participant names on their video": ON

Video: "Always show video preview dialog when joining a video meeting": ON (Final check before your video displays to others)

Learning

The Court will only be using the audio and video functionality of ZoomGov. Other functions like text chat, screen sharing, etc., may not be used, and will likely be disabled for your session, so you only need to learn the basics of using ZoomGov for audio and video. Learn how to select the correct source for both, and how to mute/unmute your audio, and Start/Stop your video:

Video: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/200521865-Video>

Audio: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/200319096-Audio>

Learn how to easily mute/unmute with Push to talk: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360000510003-Push-to-Talk>

Hot Keys and Keyboard Shortcuts to start/stop video, mute your microphone, etc.:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/205683899-Hot-Keys-and-Keybaord-Shortcuts-for-Zoom>

Court Test Sessions

The Court will be hosting three free online, one hour, instructor-led training sessions on the basic usage of ZoomGov for courtroom video conferencing. Please click [here](#) for more details.

Before Every Court Session using ZoomGov

Connect your device to power.

Make sure your internet connection is good: <https://www.pcworld.com/article/2048594/how-to-test-your-home-internet-speed.html>

Test your video <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362313-Testing-your-video>.

Test your audio <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362283-Testing-audio-before-Zoom-Meetings>.

Run a quick test to connect with another Zoom user, or use the Zoom test:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115002262083-Joining-a-test-meeting>

Before entering the virtual courtroom:

On the Zoom computer, visit this web page. <https://zoom.us/test> This is a Zoom test meeting, where users will be the only participant and can hear for themselves how their audio sounds.

On that page click “join”.

It will start playing a sound and ask you “Do you hear a ring tone”. Click ‘yes’ if you can, otherwise check/adjust your equipment.

It will then ask you to speak and pause to hear the playback. This is where you can hear what you sound like to other Zoom participants. If the recording is garbled or quiet, you need to adjust your equipment, get closer to the mic, etc.

Review this carefully. Click ‘yes’ when you can hear it well.

At this point, you are connecting to a 1 person Zoom session, which will only last about 1 minute.

Many of the participants in our Zoom hearings would benefit from doing this before they join court, since they can eliminate the more common problems ahead of time.

Recommendations/Best Practice while Appearing Remotely

Avoid using a mobile device if possible. Although tablets (iPads) and smartphones can be used, they are very limited, and the performance is inferior to a computer or laptop.

Avoid using battery power only (laptops, etc.). Plug into a good power source while in a ZoomGov meeting

Unless you’ve confirmed the quality is sufficient, avoid using an open microphone and speakers (such as are built-into laptops, or a webcam mic). Using a good quality headset (headphones with mic) will often help ensure you can hear and be heard with maximum quality.

Avoid noisy and echoing locations. Use of a headset will improve audio quality when this is unavoidable.

Avoid distracting real or virtual backgrounds.

Check the lighting. Light from a window behind you might blind the camera, making you look dark. Light above you in the center of a room might also cast shadows. Ideally, position a lamp, or sit facing a window, where light is directly on your face

Avoid bad camera positioning (if possible) and remember to look directly at the webcam, not at the screen.

Avoid using WiFi if possible. Connection via a hard-wire Ethernet cable will always be faster and more reliable than WiFi.