

# Guidelines for court hearings on Zoom

## ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Each participant will need a device with a microphone and camera, with internet access on the same device.
- All participants must have video and sound turned on in their Zoom settings.
- Counsel, parties, and witnesses should include a designation such as “Plaintiff’s counsel,” “Defendant,” or “Witness” in their Zoom profile name for easy identification.
- Participants should attempt to provide adequate lighting and sound for the judge to clearly see and hear them.
- Participants are encouraged to test Zoom before the hearing, including downloading the app at least one day before the hearing if using a tablet or phone.

## SCHEDULING

- The judge or judge’s administrative assistant will serve as the meeting “host.”
- The judge will permit counsel, parties, witnesses, family members, media, and the general public to join the Zoom hearing as participants.
- Participants must request the permission of the judge to join so the judge may protect against security concerns such as hacking.
- The judge’s administrative assistant will schedule the meeting and send an email invitation to counsel that includes the meeting link, meeting ID, and password. Counsel should provide their preferred email.
- Whenever possible, no more than two attorneys for a party should appear.
- The judge’s administrative assistant will coordinate with the assigned court reporter.

## COUNSEL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Counsel will provide the meeting link, meeting ID, and meeting password to clients and witnesses, but are prohibited from distributing it further.
- Counsel should prep their clients and witnesses by phone before the hearing to conduct Zoom rehearsals and explain the hearing protocol.
- **At least two days before hearing:** Counsel must provide the judge all anticipated exhibits by email.
- **At least one hour before hearing:** Counsel must notify the court of the names of all clients and witnesses the judge should expect to join the meeting.

## THE HEARING

- Participants will be placed in a waiting room when they join the meeting. The meeting host will admit participants individually from the waiting room.
- All participants must have video and sound turned on in their Zoom settings.
- The judge will remind all participants of the protocol at the start of the hearing.
- Each participant should ensure there are no distractions during the hearing.
- The judge will ensure the reporter can see and hear clearly before calling the case. The reporter will begin taking the record once instructed by the judge.
- The judge will call the case and call on each party individually to enter their appearance and their geographical location.
- The judge will administer all oaths. Participants placed under oath must be present in the state of Kansas during the hearing.
- Each party shall designate a lead counsel who will speak during the hearing (other counsel may participate, but only one may speak to avoid confusion).
- The share-screen function may be used by participants to display exhibits, but permission must be requested from the judge during the hearing.
- The judge will announce when the hearing is adjourned, instruct the court reporter to go off the record, and end the Zoom meeting.

**Each participant will speak only when called on by the judge.**

## INTEGRITY OF THE PROCEEDINGS

- The meeting will be password-protected.
- The waiting-room function will be utilized to manage attendance.
- The meeting link, meeting ID, and meeting password will be provided only to those with the judge’s permission to join.
- The judge may use the mute function for any participant who disrupts the proceeding.
- The judge and the judge’s administrative assistant will protect their Zoom accounts against internet security issues by frequently updating their password, meeting ID, and host key.