

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
DISTRICT OF ARIZONA**

Videoconference Hearing Guidelines

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Persons participating in court proceedings are reminded that photographing, recording, and rebroadcasting court proceedings in any way, for any purpose, including, but not limited to, “screen shots” and streaming, is absolutely prohibited. Violation of these prohibitions may result in sanctions as deemed necessary by the Court. The Clerk of the Court maintains an audio recording of all proceedings which constitutes the official record.

Required Equipment for Participation in Videoconference Hearings

Attorneys, parties, witnesses, and any other interested individuals who wish to enter an appearance or address the Court (“Participants”) may appear at videoconference hearings via the Zoom for Government videoconference platform. In order to participate in a videoconference hearing, each Participant must use a computer or an internet-enabled mobile device (e.g. smartphone, iPad, or tablet) equipped with the following:

1. camera capable of sending and receiving video via Zoom; and
2. either a microphone and speakers capable of sending and receiving clear audio via Zoom or a telephone; and
3. an internet browser that will accommodate Zoom; and
4. a stable internet connection with bandwidth sufficient to support Zoom.

More information regarding equipment and system requirements can be found at https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-requirements-for-Windows-macOS-and-Linux#h_a79491c9-bcd0-4ce5-97a2-3739971edf59. Due to functionality limitations of mobile devices (e.g. smartphones, iPads, or tablets), it is strongly recommended that videoconference appearances be made via a computer.

Participants who lack the required equipment are to contact their attorney as soon as possible for instructions. Participants who lack the required equipment and are not represented by an attorney, are to contact the judge’s courtroom deputy as soon as possible for instructions. The contact information for the courtroom deputy can be found on the judge’s procedures page at <https://azb.uscourts.gov/procedures>.

Participants who have a computer or mobile device with an adequate camera but lack a microphone and speakers capable of sending and receiving clear audio via Zoom, may access the audio portion of the hearing via a telephone by calling the judge’s AT&T teleconference line. Alternatively, Participants may call the Zoom teleconference line, but long-distance charges may apply.

Zoomgov.com Resources

Individuals unfamiliar with Zoom may access articles as well as instructional videos at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Zoom-meeting> and <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>. Participants are to become familiar with Zoom controls for attendees well in advance of any scheduled hearing. An overview of attendee controls can be found at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/200941109-Attendee-controls-in-a-meeting>.

Instructions for testing video settings can be accessed at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362313-Testing-your-video>. Instructions for testing audio settings can be accessed at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362283-Testing-audio-before-Zoom-Meetings>.

It is not necessary to establish an account with Zoom in order to participate in videoconference hearings. If you have not participated in a Zoom hearing/meeting before, then download the Zoom desktop client onto your computer or the Zoom mobile app onto your mobile device well in advance of any hearing.

1. Download and install the Zoom desktop client for Windows or Mac at <https://zoom.us/download>.
2. Download and install the Zoom mobile app at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/4415294177549-Downloading-the-Zoom-desktop-client-and-mobile-app>.

You may participate in a videoconference hearing, without installing any Zoom software or plugins, using the Zoom web client. Instructions for the Zoom web client can be accessed at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/214629443-Zoom-web-client>. Participants using the Zoom web client may be required to sign up for a Zoom account and functionality may be limited.

Please note that Zoom interactions (e.g. chat, screen share, reactions, etc.) may be disabled during the hearing. You must verbalize any statements or requests etc. for the record. Identify yourself each time you speak and speak audibly to maintain the quality of the official recording of the proceeding.

Before Every Videoconference Hearing

1. Connect your computer/mobile device to power.
2. Turn off all potential disruptions in the room (phones, messaging alerts, email alerts, etc.).
3. Adjust the settings of your camera, speakers, and microphone.
4. Adjust settings to ensure that your first and last name will be displayed during the hearing. Individuals who do not display their full name may not be admitted to the hearing. If you are joining the hearing via the Zoom desktop client or mobile app, then the automatically generated display name is your profile name. If you are joining the hearing via any other method, then the automatically generated display name may be the name of your computer/mobile device.
5. Verify that your camera, speakers, and microphone are functioning, and your full name is displayed by joining a test meeting at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115002262083-Joining-a-Zoom-test-meeting>.
6. Verify that you have the ability to mute and unmute your microphone before leaving the test meeting. Microphones are to remain muted unless you are addressing the Court.
7. Obtain the hearing ID, passcode, and/or hearing link. The hearing ID, passcode, and/or hearing link may be found in the document that set the hearing (e.g. order setting hearing, notice of hearing, minute entry etc.). In some instances, the hearing ID, passcode, and/or hearing link will have been emailed to you.

Participation in a Videoconference Hearing

Participants are to join the videoconference hearing using one of the following options.

1. **Participation via Zoom desktop client or Zoom mobile app**
Sign into the Zoom desktop client on your computer or the Zoom mobile app on your device.
Navigate to the home screen and click on “Join”.
Enter the hearing ID, click “Join,” and then enter the passcode when prompted.
2. **Participation via Zoomgov.com**
Open an internet browser (e.g. Chrome, Firefox etc.) and navigate to <https://www.zoomgov.com/>.
Click “Join Meeting” and enter the hearing ID.
Click “Open Zoom Meetings” in the dialog box shown by your browser. If you do not see the dialog box, then click the “Launch Meeting” button.
Enter the passcode and click “Join Meeting”. Zoom will then automatically launch.

3. Participation via Hearing Link

Click on the link for the hearing and then Zoom will automatically launch.

Any interested individuals that wish to monitor the videoconference hearing, without entering an appearance or addressing the Court or parties, may join the hearing using one of the options listed in this section. If monitoring a hearing, then your microphone is to be muted and your camera is to be turned off for the duration of the hearing. Instructions for muting the microphone and turning the camera off can be found at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/200941109-Attendee-controls-in-a-meeting>.

Listening to a Videoconference Hearing

Any interested individuals that simply wish to listen to the videoconference hearing, without entering an appearance or addressing the Court or parties, may call the judge's AT&T teleconference line. Enter the access code when prompted. The AT&T teleconference line and access code may be found in the document that set the hearing (e.g. order setting hearing, notice of hearing, minute entry etc.). Some judges list their AT&T conference line and access code on their procedures page at <https://www.azb.uscourts.gov/procedures>.

If the teleconference line and access code are not included in the document that set the hearing, and not available on the judge's procedures page, then contact the judge's courtroom deputy well in advance of any hearing to request the numbers. The contact information for the courtroom deputy is located on the judge's procedures page at <https://www.azb.uscourts.gov/procedures>.

Some judges may permit Participants to appear at a videoconference hearing by telephone. Consult the document that set the hearing and/or the judge's procedures page to confirm the manner in which you may appear for a specific hearing. Contact the judge's courtroom deputy with any questions or concerns.

Presenting Evidence in a Videoconference Hearing

Generally, parties presenting evidence in a videoconference hearing will be sharing their screens with the Court. Instructions for sharing screens can be found at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362153-Sharing-your-screen>.

Recommendations

- Avoid using a mobile device (e.g. smartphone, iPad, or tablet) if possible. Although mobile devices can be used, they offer limited functionality, and the performance is inferior.
- Avoid running any unnecessary applications besides Zoom, in order to conserve your computer's processing power and networking.
- Connection via a hard-wire Ethernet cable is preferred, as it will always be faster and more reliable than Wi-Fi. Avoid using Wi-Fi if possible, however, if you must use Wi-Fi, make sure you are very close to the Wi-Fi router.
- Zoom requires a stable internet connection, with sufficient bandwidth. Avoid sharing your network with others during the hearing if possible.
- If testing equipment prior to a hearing, only test with the same equipment and internet connection that you intend to use on the day of the hearing.
- Avoid distracting real or virtual backgrounds.
- Avoid using an open microphone and speakers (such as are built into laptops or a webcam). Instead, use a good quality headset (headphones with microphone), which will help ensure that you can be heard and can hear others.
- Avoid noisy and echoing locations. Use of a headset will improve audio quality when this is unavoidable.

- Ensure adequate service and good call quality if using a cellular telephone to access the audio portion of a videoconference hearing.

Etiquette for All Videoconference Hearings

Though held remotely, videoconference hearings constitute judicial proceedings. Formalities of a courtroom, including the following, will be observed:

- Participants must dress and conduct themselves as if they are in a physical courtroom.
- During the hearing, every Participant must be located in a quiet, secure room that is free from distractions.
- Participants, as well as anyone monitoring the hearing, must ensure their proper legal name (First and Last Name) is displayed while in Zoom.
- Participants should be cognizant of the lighting in the room where they are located; avoid shadows, sitting in front of a window or having any light source visible on your screen. Use of an appropriate virtual background is acceptable for those not appearing from a business setting.
- During the hearing, Participants must mute their microphones when not speaking.
- Participants may not use speakerphones.
- While testifying, witnesses must situate themselves in such a manner as to be able to both view the video feed and be seen by the Court.
- Participants are to look into the camera when speaking.
- While testifying, witnesses may not participate in or be subject to any direct or indirect communication with anyone other than with the examiner and/or the Court and must not read from documents that have not been admitted into evidence (other than to address foundational questions). Parties and their counsel may communicate privately other than during the parties' examination.

Disclaimer

Please be advised that the judges may add to, modify, or omit any of the instructions listed within these Videoconference Hearing Guidelines at their discretion, at any time.