

**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.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0060748#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 clerk as soon as possible for instructions. The contact information for the courtroom clerk 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 one of the toll-free Zoom teleconference numbers.

Zoomgov.com Resources

Individuals unfamiliar with Zoom may access articles as well as instructional videos at https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0060732 and <https://support.zoom.com/hc/en>.

Participants are to become familiar with Zoom controls well in advance of any scheduled hearing. An overview of the controls can be found at https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0062674.

Instructions for testing video settings may be accessed at https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0061836.

Instructions for testing audio settings may be accessed at https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0062765.

Zoomgov.com Resources

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 and install the Zoom Workplace desktop or mobile app onto your computer or mobile device at

https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0060928.

You may participate in a videoconference hearing, without installing any Zoom software or plugins, using the Zoom web app. Instructions for the Zoom web app can be accessed at https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0064261. The Zoom web app has limited features.

Please note that Zoom interactions (e.g. chat, screen share, reactions, etc.) may be disabled during the hearing. The judge may or may not recognize a “raised hand” in Zoom. You must verbalize any statements or requests etc. for the record. Identify yourself each time you speak and speak clearly 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 Workplace desktop 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.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0063307.
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 are available on the judge’s procedures page at <https://azb.uscourts.gov/procedures>.

Participating in a Videoconference Hearing

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

1. **Zoom Workplace desktop or mobile app**
Sign into the Zoom app on your computer or mobile device.
Navigate to the home screen and click on “Join”.
Enter the hearing ID, click “Join,” and then enter the passcode when prompted.
2. **Hearing Link**
Click on the link for the hearing and then Zoom will automatically launch.

3. **Zoomgov.com**

From a computer

Open an internet browser (e.g. Chrome) and navigate to <https://www.zoomgov.com/join>.

Enter the hearing ID and click “Join”.

Click “Open Zoom Meetings” in the dialog box. If no dialog box appears, then click the “Join from Zoom Workplace app” button. Zoom will then automatically download if not previously installed.

Enter your full name and passcode and then click “Join Meeting”. Zoom will automatically launch.

From a mobile device

Open an internet browser (e.g. Chrome) and navigate to <https://www.zoomgov.com/join>.

If the Zoom app is installed, you will be given the option to “Join Meeting”. Follow the prompts to enter the hearing ID and passcode.

If the Zoom app is not installed, then you will be given the option to download the Zoom Workplace app. Zoom will automatically launch after downloading.

Click “Join Meeting” and follow the prompts to enter the hearing ID and passcode.

Monitoring a Videoconference Hearing

Any interested individuals that wish to monitor a videoconference hearing, without participating in the hearing, may join using one of the methods listed in the previous section. 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.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0062674.

Listening to a Videoconference Hearing

Any interested individuals that wish to listen to a videoconference hearing by telephone, without participating in the hearing, may call one of the toll-free Zoom teleconference numbers, 1.833.568.8864 or 1.833.435.1820. Enter the hearing ID and passcode when prompted. Your phone is to remain muted for the duration of the hearing. Press *6 on your phone’s keypad to mute your microphone.

Some judges may require individuals who are not participating in the proceedings to obtain permission to monitor or listen to proceedings. Consult the judge’s procedures page for additional information.

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 may be reviewed at

https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0060596.

Participating in a Telephonic Hearing

Zoom is also used to conduct hearings 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.

Participants may appear by telephone by calling one of the toll-free Zoom teleconference numbers, 1.833.568.8864 or 1.833.435.1820. Enter the hearing ID and passcode when prompted. Your phone is to remain muted when you are not speaking. Press *6 on your phone’s keypad to mute and unmute your microphone. Additional instructions may be reviewed at

https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0060564.

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 call quality if using a telephone to access the audio of a proceeding.

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.