

**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 which may include, among others, denial of entry to or restricted entry to future hearings.

**Before Every Videoconferencing Court Session**

- Connect your device to power.
- Turn off all audio disruptions on all devices/computers in the room (phones, messaging alerts, email alerts, etc.).

**Zoom Support and Guidance**

It is not necessary to establish an account with Zoom in order to participate in videoconference hearings. Individuals unfamiliar with Zoom may access articles as well as instructional videos at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>. Instructions for video settings can be accessed at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/200521865-Video>. Instructions for audio settings can be accessed at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/200319096-Audio>. The Court recommends that participants 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>.

You can participate in a Zoom videoconference hearing through an internet browser (Chrome is recommended) located on a computer or other internet-connected device (e.g. smartphone or tablet). Due to functionality limitations with smartphones and tablets, the Court strongly suggests that videoconference appearances be made on a computer.

1. You may download and install the Zoom desktop client for Windows or Mac at <https://zoom.us/support/download>.
2. You may download and install the Zoom Mobile App for iPhone/iPads at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362993-Getting-Started-with-iOS>; or for Android devices at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/200942759-Getting-Started-with-Android>.
3. You also have the option to attend a Zoom hearing, without installing any Zoom software, 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 accessing a hearing via the Zoom web client may be required to sign up for a Zoom account.

## Required Equipment for Participation in Zoom Videoconference Hearings

Attorneys, parties, witnesses, and any other interested parties who wish to enter an appearance or address the Court (“Participants”) must appear at Zoom videoconference hearings via the Zoom for Government videoconference platform. In order to participate in a Zoom videoconference hearing (with video and audio), each Participant must have the following:

1. Access to a computer or other internet-enabled device equipped with:
  - a. a camera capable of sending and receiving video via Zoom; and
  - b. a microphone and speakers capable of sending and receiving audio via Zoom or telephone; and
  - c. internet browsing software that will accommodate Zoom; and
  - d. 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](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-requirements-for-Windows-macOS-and-Linux#h_a79491c9-bcd0-4ce5-97a2-3739971edf59).

Participants who do not have a computer or internet-enabled device equipped with a microphone and speakers capable of sending and receiving audio via Zoom, may access the audio via a telephone using the AT&T teleconference line. Participants using cellular telephones are responsible for ensuring adequate service for consistently clear audio during the hearing.

Participants who lack the required equipment are to contact the judge’s courtroom deputy as soon as possible for further instructions. The contact information for the courtroom deputy can be found on the judge’s procedures page at <https://www.azb.uscourts.gov/procedures>.

## Testing your Equipment/Connecting with the Court

You may be required to conduct a test of your audio and video equipment prior to a videoconference hearing. Please consult the Scheduling Order or the Notice of Videoconference Hearing for the date and time of the test.

You can find a short video instructing you on how to join and configure your video and audio at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-s76QHshOnY&feature=youtu.be>. Ensure that your equipment is ready to conduct the test and only test with the same equipment you intend to use on the day of the videoconference hearing.

## Participation in a Videoconference Hearing

Participants may join the videoconference hearing through the Zoom platform, using one of the following options:

1. **Participation via Zoomgov.com:** Participants may join the videoconference hearing by navigating to <https://www.zoomgov.com/>. Click on “Join a meeting,” then enter the hearing ID and passcode. The hearing ID and passcode can be found in the Scheduling Order or the Notice of Videoconference Hearing. You may also receive an email with the hearing ID and passcode. Zoom will then automatically download and launch.
  - a. Ensure that your full name (First & Last Name) is displayed for the record.
  - b. Microphones are to be on mute when not addressing the Court.
2. **Participation via Hearing Link:** Participants may join the videoconference hearing by clicking on the link for the hearing, after which Zoom will automatically download and launch. The

hearing link can be found in the Scheduling Order or in the Notice of Videoconference Hearing. You may also receive an email with the hearing link.

- a. Ensure that your full name (First and Last Name) is displayed for the record.
- b. Microphones are to be on mute when not addressing the Court.

## Monitoring or Listening to a Videoconference Hearing

Interested parties that simply wish to monitor the videoconference hearing, without entering their appearance or addressing the Court or parties in any way, may observe through the Zoom platform or listen only via telephone, using one of the following options:

1. **Monitor via Zoomgov.com:** Any interested party may observe the videoconference hearing by navigating to <https://www.zoomgov.com/>. Click on “Join a meeting,” then enter the hearing ID and passcode. The hearing ID and passcode can be found in the Scheduling Order or the Notice of Videoconference Hearing. You may also receive an email with the hearing ID and passcode. Zoom will then automatically download and launch.
  - a. Thereafter, and for the duration of the hearing, the microphone is to be muted and the video is to be turned off. Instructions for muting the microphone and turning video off can be found at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/200941109-Attendee-controls-in-a-meeting>.
2. **Monitor via Hearing Link:** Any interested party may observe the videoconference hearing by clicking on the hearing link. The hearing link can be found in the Scheduling Order or the Notice of Videoconference Hearing. You may also receive an email with the hearing link. Zoom will then automatically download and launch.
  - a. Thereafter, and for the duration of the hearing, the microphone is to be muted and the video is to be turned off. Instructions for muting the microphone and turning video off can be found at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/200941109-Attendee-controls-in-a-meeting>.
3. **Listen via Telephone:** Any interested party may listen to the videoconference hearing by calling the AT&T teleconference line and entering the access code when prompted. The AT&T teleconference line and access code can be found in the Scheduling Order or the Notice of Videoconference Hearing.
  - a. Thereafter, and for the duration of the hearing, the caller is to mute their phone.

## Presenting Evidence in a Videoconference Hearing

Parties presenting evidence in a Zoom 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

- Plug into a good power source prior to your Zoom hearing. Avoid using battery power only (laptops, etc.), in order to avoid battery shutdown during the hearing.
- Avoid using a mobile device if possible. Although tablets (e.g. iPads) and smartphones can be used, they offer limited functionality, and the performance is inferior.
- 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 in close range to the Wi-Fi router.
- Avoid running any unnecessary applications besides Zoom, in order to conserve your computer’s processing power and networking.

- Zoom requires a stable internet connection, with sufficient bandwidth. Avoid sharing your network with others during the hearing if possible.
- Avoid poor camera positioning and poor lighting. Frame yourself so that you take up most of the screen and the camera is at eye level. Avoid having a bright light source, including windows, behind you.
- Avoid distracting real or virtual backgrounds. An example of a suitable virtual background is: <https://www.cand.uscourts.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ZoomGrey01.jpg>
- Avoid using an open microphone and speakers (such as are built into laptops, or a webcam microphone). 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.

## **Etiquette**

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 audio and visual distractions.
- Participants must ensure their proper legal name (First and Last Name) is shown on the ID screen 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. The best background is a solid background or wall. Use of an *appropriate* virtual background is acceptable for those not appearing from a business setting.
- Participants must mute their microphones when not speaking during the hearing.
- 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.