

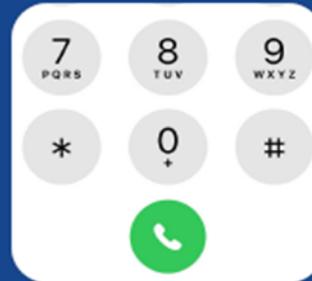
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# Connecticut Guide to Remote Hearings

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For Attorneys and Self-Represented Parties

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July 17, 2020

## Table of Contents

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Welcome by the Chief Court Administrator .....	3
Purpose and Overview .....	4
Remote Justice Virtual Courtroom: Getting Started .....	5
I. Downloading <i>Microsoft Teams</i> .....	5
II. Technical Requirements .....	5
III. Testing the Technology .....	6
IV. Planning Effective Participation .....	6
Participating in a Remote Virtual Courtroom Hearing .....	8
I. <i>Microsoft Teams</i> Invitation .....	8
II. Joining the <i>Microsoft Teams</i> Meeting .....	8
III. <i>Microsoft Teams</i> Sign In and Settings .....	11
A. Signing In .....	11
B. Teams Floating Toolbar .....	12
IV. Preparing for the Hearing .....	13
A. Test <i>Microsoft Teams</i> .....	13
B. Pre-Hearing Consultation .....	13
C. Client’s Attendance at Hearing .....	13
D. Documents and Evidence .....	13
E. Witnesses .....	15
F. Subpoenas .....	16
G. Accessing Your Case Electronically/E-Services .....	16
H. Limited English Proficiency (LEP)/Requests for an Interpreter .....	16
I. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodations .....	17
V. During the Hearing .....	17
A. Virtual Courtroom Etiquette and Protocol .....	17
B. Arriving Early and Waiting for the Hearing to Begin .....	18
C. Courtroom Procedure .....	18
D. Communication with Clients and/or Co-Counsel .....	19
E. Recording the Hearing .....	19
F. Screen Sharing .....	19
G. Use of Other <i>Microsoft Teams</i> Features: Hand Raise and Chat .....	20
H. Technical Difficulties and Other Challenges .....	20
VI. After the Hearing .....	20

Checklist for Participating in a Remote Hearing ..... 21

Additional Resources ..... 23

    I. Virtual Courtroom Hearing Resources ..... 23

    II. Information for Self-Represented Parties ..... 23

    III. Court Service Centers ..... 23

    IV. Law Libraries ..... 23

    V. Connecticut General Statutes ..... 23

    VI. Practice Book and Code of Evidence ..... 24

    VII. Frequently Asked Questions ..... 24

## *Welcome by the Chief Court Administrator*

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Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the Connecticut Judicial Branch has concentrated its efforts on mitigating the spread of the virus. Key to our effort has been balancing our constitutional responsibilities with our overarching goal of keeping members of the public, the bar, and our workforce safe and healthy. As such, we initially focused on processing what are referred to as “Priority 1” functions under the Branch’s Continuity of Operations Plan. As our response to conducting business in a COVID-19 environment has evolved, so too has the work we are doing evolved and grown. With input from our Chief Administrative Judges and under the leadership of Deputy Chief Court Administrator Elizabeth A. Bozzuto, we are now processing cases and performing functions beyond and in addition to those Priority 1 functions. It is our intention to continue to incrementally increase the volume of court work that will be handled by Judges and court staff.

Key to this initiative is the ability to process, review, and/or resolve criminal, family, civil, and juvenile matters remotely. We are committed to continuing this expansion so litigants may have their cases resolved in a fair, timely, efficient, and open manner. In addition, we fully expect that the use of remote proceedings will not only respond to the challenges caused by the pandemic, but will transform our courts for the foreseeable future.

We hope that you find this guidebook helpful.

Hon. Patrick L. Carroll III  
Chief Court Administrator

## Purpose and Overview

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The purpose of this guidebook is to assist anyone who is preparing to participate in a remote court hearing through Connecticut’s “Remote Justice Virtual Courtroom.” This includes counsel, self-represented parties, and other necessary hearing participants, such as witnesses.

The Remote Justice Virtual Courtroom will permit the court to hold on-the-record remote hearings by videoconference, using the *Microsoft Teams* platform. As more individuals have access to modern personal computers and handheld devices, this will provide many benefits to the participants, such as reducing cost, saving time (e.g., travel), and decreasing delay.

In order to ensure effective participation in remote court hearings, this guide includes “best practices” (or “tips”) for participants. While participants are encouraged to follow and/or implement these practices, they may not be appropriate or practicable in every situation, depending on the complexity of the case and the technological capacities of the participants. The court may use its discretion to determine how best to proceed with each hearing.

This guide contains the following helpful features:

### **Bookmarks**

Bookmarks have been included on the left-hand side of the document for navigational purposes. The bookmarks are both expandable and collapsible, are clickable, and list all of the guide’s sections.

### **Hyperlinked Table of Contents**

The “Table of Contents” are linked to the main text of the guide.

### **References to Quick Cards and Videos**

References and links to quick cards and videos are provided throughout the guide and are accompanied by a notepad icon. *NOTE: In order to return to the previously viewed page after clicking on a link, please select Alt + Left Arrow.*



### **Cross-references and Hyperlinks to Appendix and Internet Sources**

The guide contains cross-references to other relevant parts of the guide, links to the Appendix, and links to certain electronic sources, e.g., information on the Connecticut Judicial Branch website. These cross-references and links are provided in **BLUE** font and are clickable. *NOTE: In order to return to the previously viewed page after clicking on an internal link, please select Alt + Left Arrow.*

***The best practices and tips are current as of the time of this guide’s publication. The Judicial Branch will review and update the guide periodically to ensure it reflects new developments and processes. Additional resources are available to participants and continue to be posted on the Judicial Branch [website](#). Please refer to the website for latest information and resources.***

The Judicial Branch of the State of Connecticut complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need a reasonable accommodation in accordance with the ADA, contact a court clerk or an ADA contact person listed at <https://www.jud.ct.gov/ADA/>.

## Remote Justice Virtual Courtroom: Getting Started

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Virtual courtroom hearings in Connecticut will be conducted via the *Microsoft Teams* platform.<sup>1</sup> *Microsoft Teams* is a collaborative meeting app with video, audio, and screen sharing features. In order to participate, you will need the following:

- A computer (laptop or desktop), tablet, or smart phone (iOS or Android);
- Secure and dependable internet service; *and*
- *Microsoft Teams* installed on your device or the *Microsoft Teams* Web App.



*If you do not have a phone or device to videoconference or access to the internet, let the court know as soon as possible. The court may be able to help you find a way to participate, or your hearing may be postponed until everyone can participate.*

### I. Downloading *Microsoft Teams*

You may download *Microsoft Teams* free of charge. For a computer, you may download the App from the [Microsoft Teams website](#). If you prefer to access *Teams* with a smartphone or tablet, you may download the App through the App Store for iOS and the Google Play Store for Android. You may also download the App from the [Judicial Branch Remote Justice](#) webpage.

Make sure there are no restrictions, e.g., firewall or security settings, on your device preventing the use and launch of *Microsoft Teams*.

### II. Technical Requirements

In order to use the *Microsoft Teams* desktop app and the *Teams* Web app, certain hardware requirements must be met. You may find a list of all hardware requirements on the [Microsoft Teams website](#).

When using *Microsoft Teams* on your computer, please use a web browser other than Internet Explorer due to possible compatibility issues. The Judicial Branch recommends using the Google Chrome browser. For more information on the compatibility of other web browsers, see the [Microsoft Teams website](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Videoconference court events can be conducted “on the record” or “off the record.” (The record is an audio recording of the court proceeding, which can be used to create a transcript or audio file, if required at a later date.) “Off the record” matters, such as status conferences and pre-trials, use a *Microsoft Teams* meeting. “On the record” remote hearings use the “Remote Justice Virtual Courtroom,” which also utilizes *Microsoft Teams*. The means for joining “on the record” or “off the record” events are essentially the same, e.g., an e-mail invitation to join a *Microsoft Teams* meeting. The court will determine which type of event your matter requires and will send an electronic invitation to the e-mail address you provide to the court, when requested.

### III. Testing the Technology

After downloading *Microsoft Teams*, it is important that you test your technology before participating in a virtual courtroom proceeding, as technology does not always cooperate and run smoothly. All participants should test and prepare their computer, screens, microphone, camera, and cellphone ahead of time to ensure that they are functioning properly. All devices should be fully charged or plugged in.

Participants should test their internet connection at least once from the location at which they plan to participate in the remote hearing in order to ensure that they have a strong enough connection. If possible, participants should use a hard-wired internet connection instead of Wi-Fi. If using Wi-Fi, participants should find a location as close as possible to the router or modem. Participants should avoid using public Wi-Fi because connection speeds are slow and security is unknown. If participants are sharing an internet connection with others in their household, the connection may be improved if they are the only ones using the internet during the hearing. Participants may need to turn off the Wi-Fi connection on other devices in their household. Do not use other audio and video streaming unrelated to the hearing. Most mobile phones have a tethering option (linking of a computer to a smartphone to connect to the internet) that can be used, but additional data rates may apply. (Note, however, that tethering could also result in a slow connection and should be tested prior to the hearing). A Wi-Fi dongle (a device that allows internet access) can also be used.

### IV. Planning Effective Participation

Testing your technology is one way of ensuring effective participation in the virtual courtroom hearing. However, there are several additional considerations to keep in mind. It is recommended that you begin thinking of these *even before your hearing is scheduled* so that you have ample time to set up, make arrangements, and obtain proper equipment, if necessary. These include:

- **Minimizing background noise and distractions.** You are expected to have a quiet location with minimal background distractions. Ensure that there is no television, radio, or music playing in the background, and that there are no conversations taking place in adjoining rooms that may be overheard during the hearing. Also ensure that there will be no interruptions or distractions, such as children or pets.
- **Using an appropriate background.** Find a place that has a blank or solid color wall. Avoid using a virtual background as it may affect the quality of your video. If you decide to use a virtual background, choose a professional one. You may also blur your background.
- **Ensuring adequate lighting and visual.** Improve your lighting by using natural light in front of the computer or to the side of the computer, or overhead lighting to add light beside the computer. Avoid sitting in front of a window and having natural light directly behind you, as it may affect your camera's ability to provide a proper image of you to other participants. Be familiar with how to dim the screen brightness on your computer screen. Extremely bright screens can affect the way you are shown and can cause reflections in eyeglasses.
- **Proper positioning of your device.** If using a laptop, position your camera by setting the laptop on a few books or a box so other participants may see you at eye level. Others should see your head, shoulders, and the top half of your torso. If using a tablet or smartphone, mount your device on a stable surface so that you may be viewed in a stationary position.

- **Using a headset with a microphone.** If you do not have one, try using one from your smartphone with a built-in microphone and mute button, which may reduce echo and provide the clearest sound quality.
- **Avoid using speakerphone.** This may decrease audio quality and pick up more background noise.
- **Using a landline.** If you plan to participate telephonically with a conference ID, use a land line where possible. See option three in [§ II. \*Joining the Microsoft Teams Meeting\*](#).
- **Ensuring simultaneous access to documents.** You should ensure that you have the ability to be connected to the video and audio stream of the hearing, and view documents needed during the hearing. You may choose to use two screens: one screen to view and participate in the hearing, and a second screen to view documents. Another option is to use a second device (computer or tablet) to view documents.
- **Identifying the technology support contact.** Identify who will be the support contact within your organization in the event something goes wrong before or during the virtual hearing. Create a contingency plan if the laptop malfunctions, such as using a smart phone or tablet, or dialing in via a conference ID.
- **Giving yourself enough time.** Provide yourself with more time than you believe the hearing will take. You, other participants, and the court may run into technical difficulties during your hearing, which may take time to address and correct. Moreover, if there are other hearings scheduled before yours, they may also run into technical issues, which may delay the start of your hearing. See also [§ V.B \*Arriving Early and Waiting for the Hearing to Begin\*](#).



*For an additional resource, see Connecticut Judicial Branch’s quick card, “[Top Ten Virtual Conference Tech Tips](#).” (Appendix A).*

# Participating in a Remote Virtual Courtroom Hearing

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*Microsoft releases updates to the Microsoft Teams software on an ongoing basis. Participants are encouraged to refer to the [Microsoft Teams website](#) and the [Microsoft Teams blog](#) for the most recent announcements and up-to-date information on using Microsoft Teams and its features.*

## I. Microsoft Teams Invitation

A virtual courtroom hearing will be conducted via *Microsoft Teams*. When a hearing is scheduled, court staff will send you an e-mail invitation to join a *Microsoft Teams* meeting. The invitation will contain a link that you will click on to join the hearing at the scheduled date and time. (If an expected e-mail invitation is not in your Inbox, check your Junk E-mail folder.)

In order to receive this e-mail invitation, you must respond to the notice you receive from the court that asks for your e-mail address and phone number. If you do not have an e-mail address, you may obtain one for free from websites such as Google, Apple iCloud, etc.

Please check your e-mail regularly. Information about your case (date and time of the hearing, rescheduling, and cancellations) may be sent at any time and may require a prompt response.



*Please pay particular attention to the intended recipients of the Microsoft Teams meeting invitation. The court will provide hearing information only to the parties who are required to attend. Counsel and self-represented parties should ensure the hearing information is forwarded to witnesses who will be testifying in the hearing. Hearing information should not be forward to any other nonparticipating individuals.*

## II. Joining the Microsoft Teams Meeting

You have three options as to how you would like to participate:

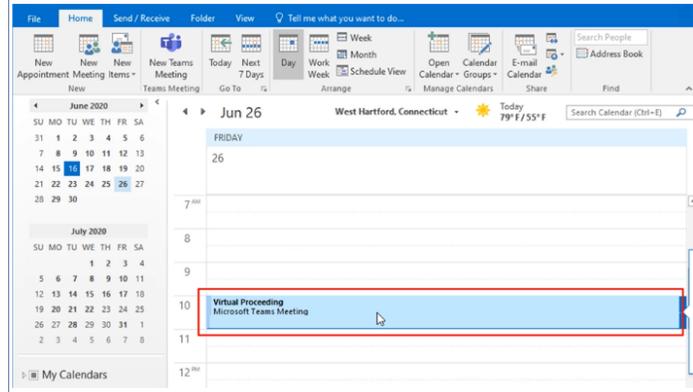
1. Join the *Microsoft Teams* meeting using the **Teams App** installed on your computer or mobile device;
2. Join the *Microsoft Teams* meeting through your web browser with the **Teams Web App**; or
3. Join the *Microsoft Teams* meeting using a **telephone number** with **conference ID**.



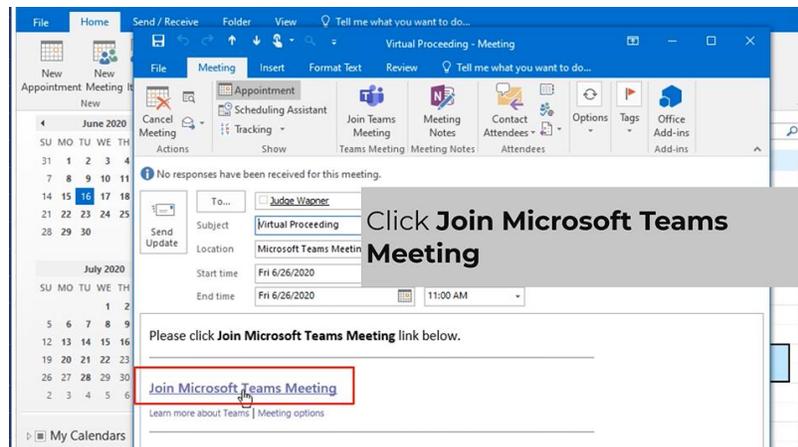
*For an overview on joining a Microsoft Teams meeting, see Connecticut Judicial Branch's quick card, "[Teams: Join a Scheduled Meeting for Judges and Attorneys from an Invitation](#)." (Appendix B). You may also view the video "[Welcome to Attending Teams Meeting or Virtual Proceeding](#)," available on the Judicial Branch website, and "[Join a Teams Meeting](#)," available on the Microsoft website.*

In order to join using the first two options:

1. Open the *Teams* meeting invitation from your e-mail mailbox or Outlook calendar. (To open the invitation from your Outlook calendar, double click the meeting time slot on your calendar.)



2. Within the meeting details, locate and select “Join Microsoft Teams Meeting.”



After you click “Join Microsoft Teams Meeting,” if you have the *Teams App* installed on your computer or mobile device, *Microsoft Teams* will automatically open. (Note, you may need to click “Launch it now” if another window opens asking you to download the app.) If you do not have the *Teams App* installed on your computer or mobile device, another screen will open if you would like to install the app or if you would like to proceed using your web browser (*Teams Web App*). You may choose to download the *Teams App*, or you may proceed using your web browser. Please see § III. *Microsoft Teams Sign In and Settings* below for next steps.

In order to join using a telephone number and conference ID (recommended for participants who are having internet connection issues):

1. Open the *Teams* meeting invitation from your e-mail mailbox or Outlook calendar. (To open the invitation from your Outlook calendar, double click the meeting time slot on your calendar.)
2. Within the meeting details, locate and dial the telephone number.
3. Enter the conference ID when prompted.
4. Answer questions when prompted.





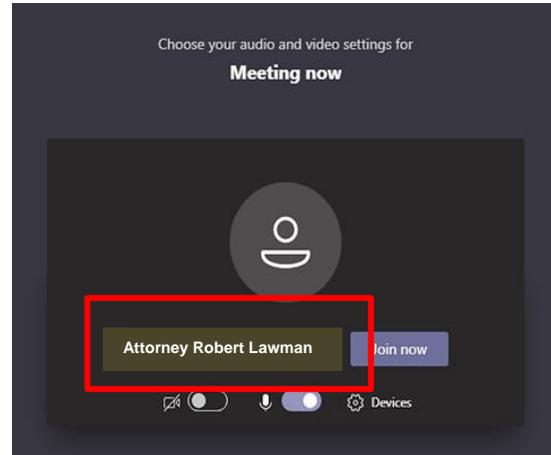
*While joining via telephone is allowed, video participation is strongly preferred. Telephone participation should only be used as a last resort when there is no other reasonable means of video participation. Hearings can be conducted much more effectively when participants are able to see one another.*

### III. Microsoft Teams Sign In and Settings

#### A. Signing In

After selecting “Join Microsoft Teams Meeting” from the e-mail invitation, type your **Title** followed by your **First** name then your **Last** name.

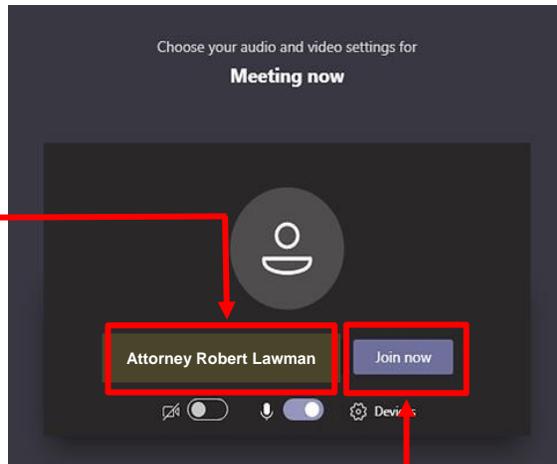
*Example: Attorney Robert Lawman, Hon. Joseph Wapner*



Next, choose your video/audio settings.

- To turn your camera off, slide the Camera button to the left. To turn your camera on, slide the Camera button to the right
- To mute sound, slide the Mic button to the left. (Always mute the Mic when not talking.) To unmute sound, slide the Mic button to the right.

*Note: A slash (/) over the camera or audio icon indicates that the setting is off, while no slash indicates the setting is on. The default setting may be camera off and mute.*



Select the “Join now” button to enter the meeting.

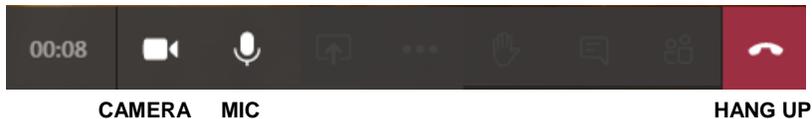


*After selecting “Join now,” the hearing may not begin right away. Please be patient. For more information, see [§ V.B. Arriving Early and Waiting for the Hearing to Begin.](#)*

## B. Teams Floating Toolbar

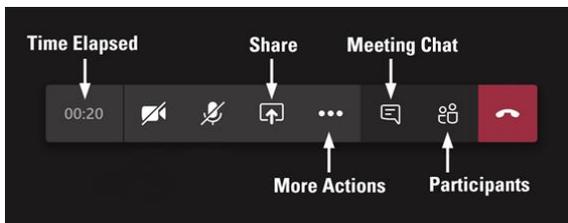
The *Teams* toolbar will appear briefly when entering the meeting; however, it will fade away after a set amount of time.<sup>2</sup> To activate the toolbar, please move your mouse cursor anywhere on the screen. There are three main features used during a meeting:

- Camera;
- Mic; and
- Hang up (to end the meeting).



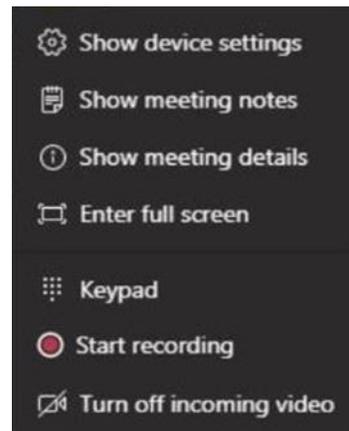
Additional features include:

- **Time Elapsed.** Tracks the duration of the meeting.
- **Share.** Allows an individual to share their screen with other meeting participants.
- **Meeting Chat.** Displays participants' meeting text chats.
- **Participants.** Shows a list of everyone who is currently in the meeting.
- **More Actions.** (See below.)



“More Actions” include:

- Show device settings: review/adjust your video source, audio source, etc.
- Show meeting notes: notes area where you can take notes to review later.
- Show meeting details: date/time of meeting, call a phone, copy link to join.
- Enter full screen: removes the tabs for chat, teams, and fills entire screen.
- Keypad: allows you to dial numbers for entering conference rooms.
- Start recording: allows you to start and stop recording of the meeting. See § V.E. *Recording the Hearing*.
- Turn off incoming video: force all participants to enter meeting with video off.



*Additional actions may be displayed and are determined by the method used to sign in to Teams, e.g., installed Teams App or Teams Web App.*

<sup>2</sup> In the near future, the toolbar may become fixed on your screen instead of it fading away. See the [Microsoft Teams website](#) and the [Microsoft Teams blog](#) for latest information regarding updates to *Microsoft Teams*.

## IV. Preparing for the Hearing

In addition to the information provided below, please review § III. *Testing the Technology* and § IV. *Planning Effective Participation*.

### A. Test Microsoft Teams

Before your virtual court hearing, you should test *Microsoft Teams* to ensure it is working properly and that you are familiar with its basic features, such as muting and unmuting your microphone. You can test *Teams* by clicking the following link: “[Teams Hearing Test Meeting](#).” It is strongly recommended that you test *Teams* again on the day of your virtual court hearing, and give yourself enough time between the testing and your hearing in case you need to have any technical issues addressed.

For more information about the features and basic features of *Microsoft Teams*, please see the previous sections: § II. *Joining the Microsoft Teams Meeting* and § III. *Microsoft Teams Sign in and Settings*.

### B. Pre-Hearing Consultation

Counsel and self-represented parties should consult with one another before each hearing and attempt to reach an agreement regarding how to conduct the hearing. Consideration should also be given to:

- Whether parties can agree on entering into stipulations of fact;
- Narrowing the issues to be decided at the hearing;
- Pre-marking and exchanging all proposed exhibits; and
- Stipulating as to the authenticity and admissibility of the exhibits.

### C. Client’s Attendance at Hearing

If a client wishes to attend a remote hearing, the client should download *Microsoft Teams* onto his or device, and be familiar with the technology and *Microsoft Teams* before the hearing. The client should conduct a test run on his or her own with another person, e.g., a friend or family member, and then conduct a test run with counsel. If circumstances permit, counsel may arrange for the client to be present at the law office, or the location from which counsel will be joining, for the hearing.

Counsel must instruct and prepare their clients as to appropriate behavior and etiquette in a remote hearing. For more information, see § V. *During the Hearing*.

### D. Documents and Evidence

All participants, including the court, should have copies of all documents and evidence in advance of the remote hearing. Practice Book § 23-68<sup>3</sup> makes this a requirement for audiovisual proceedings in civil and

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<sup>3</sup> Practice Book § 23-68 states in part: “(d) Unless otherwise required by law or unless otherwise ordered by the judicial authority, prior to any proceeding in which a person appears by means of an interactive audiovisual device, copies of all documents which may be offered at the proceeding shall be provided to all counsel and self-represented parties in advance of the proceeding.”

family cases, as does Practice Book § 13-30<sup>4</sup> for depositions. In the context of criminal proceedings where the defendant may appear by audiovisual means, Practice Book § 44-10A<sup>5</sup> contains a similar requirement. These provisions should be followed.

Prior to the hearing, parties should exchange copies all of the exhibits they intend to introduce into evidence to ensure all participants have an adequate opportunity to examine the evidence and to address authentication. Depending on the complexity of the proceeding and the type and number of exhibits, it is recommended parties have a remote status conference or pretrial ahead of time to establish a plan and schedule for sharing evidence and documents. In cases with physical evidence that needs to be shared, arrangements will need to be made for each party to examine the evidence. Thereafter, the parties should consult with one another to identify which exhibits can be entered into evidence. See § IV.B. *Pre-Hearing Consultation*.



*If a party fails to comply with the exchange of exhibits as ordered by the court, the court may, in its discretion, deny the introduction of that party's exhibits.*

Physical copies (hardcopies) of documentary evidence should be provided to the court in advance of the hearing. The following format is encouraged:

- Each exhibit should be separate and labeled in accordance with the party offering it and the exhibit number.
- An index of all exhibits should be included that states the number of pages in each exhibit.
- Exhibits should be paginated by exhibit number and page number.
- Exhibits should be grouped into two categories: 1) exhibits that remain for identification only, unless and until admitted into evidence, and 2) exhibits that the parties have stipulated may become full exhibits.

Copies of documentary evidence must be submitted with a stipulation that parties agree to the admissibility of the copy, the copy has been compared to the original, and the copy is true and accurate. If there is a dispute regarding the accuracy of the copy, the party offering the document should send a copy to the court, without a stipulation. The issue will then need to be addressed at the hearing.

Parties should also be mindful of privacy issues and ensure that all personal identifying information is redacted from sensitive documents, such as financial affidavits and statements, before submitting the documents to the court. For filing documents under seal, see Practice Book §§ 11-20A, § 25-59A and § 42-49A.

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<sup>4</sup> Practice Book § 13-30 (g) states in part: “(2) Any exhibits or other demonstrative evidence to be presented to the deponent by any party at the deposition shall be provided to the officer administering the oath and all other parties prior to the deposition.”

<sup>5</sup> Practice Book § 44-10A states in part: “(c) Unless otherwise required by law or ordered by the judicial authority, prior to any proceeding in which a person appears by means of an interactive audiovisual device, copies of all documents which may be offered at the proceeding shall be provided to all counsel and self-represented parties in advance of the proceeding. . . . (e) Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to preclude the Judicial Branch, at the discretion of the Chief Court Administrator, from handling any matter remotely.”

Before the hearing, participants should familiarize themselves with all relevant documents and exhibits. During the hearing, participants should refer to documents clearly, by exhibit number, for the record and to allow all participants to follow along.

## E. Witnesses

It is the responsibility of counsel and self-represented parties to confirm whether witnesses have the capability of participating in the hearing remotely. Counsel and self-represented parties should ensure that the *Microsoft Teams* meeting invitation for the hearing has been forwarded to the witnesses and that the witnesses have downloaded *Microsoft Teams* onto their devices. Counsel and self-represented parties should also ensure that the witnesses are familiar with the technology and *Microsoft Teams* before the hearing. Witnesses should conduct a test run with another person, e.g., a friend or family member, before the hearing. If represented by counsel, the witness should conduct a test run with his or her counsel.

Where circumstances permit, parties may arrange for their witnesses to be present at the law office, or the location from which they will be joining, for the hearing. Witnesses should be informed of the appropriate behavior and etiquette in a remote hearing.

Witnesses should appear via audiovisual means, not just telephonically. This is recommended for the following reasons:

- **Oath or Affirmation.** Remote virtual administration of a witness oath is permissible pursuant to Practice Book § 23-68.<sup>6</sup>
- **Evidentiary Issues.** A witness will need to have available all documents that will be referred to during the course of his or her testimony. All participants will need to be able to see what the witness is looking at during his or her testimony.

Witnesses must familiarize themselves with all of the documents to which they will refer and identify them by the exhibit numbers on the copies that were filed with the court. This is not mandatory, however, for materials to be used in cross-examination or in the examination of an adverse witness.

Parties should discuss with their witnesses a method of communicating during the hearing in order to keep witnesses informed of the anticipated timing of their testimony.

Witnesses who are not represented by counsel should be alone in a secure room and make all reasonable efforts to prevent interruptions or distractions. Witnesses should not communicate with anyone outside the remote hearing during their testimony. Witnesses may be asked to use their camera to scan the room before and after testimony to ensure there is no one else in the room. This may be noted in the record.

Witnesses shall not use notes, cell phones, laptops, or other devices during their testimony.

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<sup>6</sup> Practice Book § 23-68 permits appearance by means of an interactive audiovisual device at any proceeding in any civil matter, including all proceedings within the jurisdiction of the small claims section, or any family matter, including all proceedings within the jurisdiction of the family support magistrate division. The statute states, in part: “(e) An officer, as identified in General Statutes § 1-24, may administer an oath by means of an interactive audiovisual device to any party, witness or other participant in a proceeding who appears pursuant to this section, provided such officer can see, hear and clearly identify the participant to whom the oath is to be administered via the audiovisual device. . . . (g) Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to preclude the Judicial Branch, at the discretion of the Chief Court Administrator, from handling any matter remotely.”

A status conference or pretrial is advisable to discuss where and how witnesses will testify. Testimony from a law office may alleviate some of the above concerns but, of course, will not be feasible in all instances.

## F. Subpoenas

The subpoena shall include information that the hearing will be conducted remotely via *Microsoft Teams*. If the hearing has been scheduled and the meeting information has been e-mailed to the parties, instructions for participating in the hearing and a copy of the *Microsoft Teams* meeting invitation should be attached to the subpoena. If the hearing has not yet been scheduled, the subpoena should state that information for participating in the hearing will be provided once the hearing is scheduled. The person issuing the subpoena should provide contact information so that the information can be e-mailed.

For persons subject to a subpoena, the failure to appear for a remote hearing can result in the same penalties as failure to appear for an in-person hearing.

## G. Accessing Your Case Electronically/E-Services

Online access to cases is available on the Judicial Branch website through [Case Look-up](#) for appellate, civil, family, criminal, housing, and small claims cases. Of note:

- Disclosable documents in civil cases are available online.
- Limited case information regarding family cases is available online; however, disclosable documents in family cases are only publicly available from computers located in Judicial Branch courthouses.
- Basic information about criminal cases may be found online, e.g., charges and continuance dates in disclosable pending cases. However, documents in criminal cases are not posted online. Documents that are disclosable in a criminal case file may be obtained through the clerk's office in the courthouse where the case is pending.

You may view disclosable documents at the clerk's office where your case is pending, or access them through computers at any of the Judicial Branch's Court Service Centers.

Additionally, you may access your case electronically by enrolling in E-Services. Self-represented parties may choose to enroll in E-Services at any time. E-Services allows you to: (1) file documents in your case online; (2) look at documents in your case online; or (3) mark short calendar matters in your case online.



*For additional resources on E-Services, please see [Self Represented Party E-Service Guides](#) and [“How Do I” Guides](#) on the Judicial Branch Website, and the [“Self-Represented Party E-Services Enrollment, Account Activation and Access” Quick Card](#). (Appendix C).*

## H. Limited English Proficiency (LEP)/Requests for an Interpreter

The Connecticut Judicial Branch is committed to providing meaningful access to the court system and its programs and services. The Branch prohibits discrimination on the basis of national origin, which includes discrimination against limited English proficient (LEP) persons. Limited English proficient (LEP) persons are individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, speak,

write, or understand English. If English is not your primary language and you have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English, you fall within the definition of a Limited English Proficient (LEP) person and can receive language assistance provided by the Judicial Branch.

If you need language assistance, please inform the clerk as soon as your hearing is scheduled for an interpreter to be available remotely on the day of the hearing.

## I. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodations

The Connecticut Judicial Branch is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities have equal and full access to the Connecticut judicial system. Access to the judicial system can mean physical access to enter or move about the Branch's buildings, or the ability to participate fully in the Branch's programs and services. Any person who has a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activity, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment may request an accommodation. The procedure to request an accommodation is available on the [Judicial Branch website](#).

## V. During the Hearing

### A. Virtual Courtroom Etiquette and Protocol

Given the obstacles the court system currently faces in adjudicating pending matters, it is more important than ever that counsel and parties approach their roles with civility and flexibility. Participants must appreciate the distinction between appropriate adversarial behavior involving substantive issues, and inappropriate adversarial behavior regarding procedure that interferes with the court's ability to decide cases on their merits. Counsel should remain mindful that they are still subject to the Rules of Professional Conduct, regardless of whether they are in a physical or virtual courtroom.

Generally, a virtual courtroom requires the same formal etiquette and protocol of a physical courtroom, with certain additions. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Counsel and parties are to dress professionally as if they were attending an in-person hearing in a courtroom.
- Read all the documentation prior to the virtual proceeding and be prepared.
- Participants are not permitted to use or access their phones while participating (other than for the purpose of participating in the hearing and/or communicating with parties/counsel), unless told to do so by the judge. For more information, see [§ V.D. Communication with Clients and/or Co-Counsel](#).
- Turn off or silence mobile device notifications such as e-mail, text messages, social media, and news/weather alerts. The same applies for notifications on your laptop or desktop.
- Do not speak unless you are asked to speak. Do not interrupt other participants when they are speaking or attempt to speak over them. Be mindful that there may be a lag in the audio; ensure that a participant is finished speaking before you begin.
- Mute your microphone when you are not speaking in order to limit distractions, background noise, and feedback. This is particularly important if more than one person is participating in the hearing from the same room using different devices. For information on muting and unmuting your microphone, see [§ III.A. Signing In](#).

- Speak clearly, slowly, and concisely. When you do speak, speak directly into the microphone. Avoid turning your head side to side, as it will cause your voice to fade in and out. If you were on mute, there might be a slight delay when you unmute your mic. Please make sure that your mic has unmuted before beginning to speak.
- When speaking, look straight into the camera lens and not at your screen. This ensures that other participants will have direct eye contact with you. Refrain from tilting your head up or down.
- Do not get up and move away from your camera during the hearing, even if you are not speaking. Do not move around with your device while you are participating in the hearing, as it will be distracting to other participants and may interfere with the sound quality.
- Minimize use of your keyboard. Avoid typing on the keyboard while the microphone is unmuted, as the sounds can be distracting. For information on muting and unmuting your microphone, see § [III.A. Signing In](#).
- No eating or drinking (with the exception of water).



For an additional resource, see Connecticut Judicial Branch’s quick card, “[Etiquette Tips for the Virtual Courtroom Process](#).” (Appendix D).

## B. Arriving Early and Waiting for the Hearing to Begin

On the day of your hearing, sign in to the Remote Justice Virtual Courtroom via *Microsoft Teams* 10-15 minutes early, and be prepared to start promptly at your scheduled time. See § [III.A. Signing In](#). All participants to the remote hearing (other than nonparty witnesses) should join before the judge.

Please be aware that like physical court, your case may be one of many being heard that day. When you sign in, your hearing may not begin right away and you may need to wait. Please be patient and stay signed in to the remote hearing. The hearing before your hearing may be running into technical difficulties.

Please try your best to observe the hearing’s time limits, as others may be waiting in turn for their hearings. When scheduling your hearing, be realistic about how long you think it will take. Always err on the side of caution and allot yourself more time than you believe is necessary. Shorter hearings will not necessarily be docketed more quickly.

If you are having any technological difficulties, bring them to the attention of the court as soon as possible.

## C. Courtroom Procedure

In each hearing, the court will set the ground rules and review the remote hearing procedures with the participants at the start of the hearing, including any agreements that may have been reached about the hearing. The court may:

- Begin by announcing the case number prior to the start of the proceeding and require all parties to announce themselves for purposes of the court record.
- Inform participants that the hearing is open to the public.
- Inquire whether the participants are alone.

- Assure that all sides will be heard, but because of technological issues that may arise, inform participants to speak one at a time and be mindful of a lag in audio.
- Inform participants that recording the hearing is strictly prohibited. See § V.E. *Recording the Hearing*.

During this introductory phase, please inform the court if you:

- Are having technical difficulties or anticipate you may have technical difficulties;
- Were not able to submit your evidence in the manner requested;
- Anticipate any distractions or interruptions, e.g., children;
- Require any Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations; and/or
- Need an interpreter.

For more information on ADA and interpreter requests, see § IV.H. *Limited English Proficiency (LEP)/Requests for an Interpreter* and § IV.I. *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodations*.

#### D. Communication with Clients and/or Co-Counsel

With the exception of when a client is testifying, counsel should arrange a way to communicate with clients and co-counsel privately during the hearing (e.g., e-mail, text messages, messenger app) in a manner that is not disruptive to the hearing, ensures confidentiality, is separate from communication channels with opposing parties, and allows counsel to keep a record of client instructions. Remember, there is to be no coaching of a client when he or she is testifying. Counsel should be extremely cautious of this.

Participants should also avoid using the chat function of *Microsoft Teams* for such communications because they may be recorded or viewed by the court or other participants in the hearing.

#### E. Recording the Hearing

Participants to the hearing are strictly prohibited from recording the proceedings, the same as if they were in a physical courtroom. This includes audio recording, video recording through a cellphone, screen capture, screen shot, print screen, or any other recording types. You may order a transcript of the remote hearing. Any recording will subject the participant to sanctions.

#### F. Screen Sharing

As stated in § IV.D. *Documents and Evidence*, it is important that all documents are provided to the court before the hearing. However, there may be situations in which participants will need to refer to a document that has not been previously submitted to the court. In such situations, you may receive permission from the court to share information on your screen during the hearing. For information on how to screen share, please see the video “[Show Your Screen During a Meeting](#),” available on the Microsoft website.



*For an additional resource on sharing your screen, see Connecticut Judicial Branch’s quick card, “[Share Content VCP – Single Matter Hearings](#).” (Appendix E).*

## G. Use of Other *Microsoft Teams* Features: Hand Raise and Chat

Please do not use the Hand Raise feature available in the Remote Justice Virtual Courtroom, unless asked to do so by the court. Please use the Chat feature only if you need to inform the court that you are having technical difficulties during the hearing (e.g., the sound is not working or your device is not connecting properly).

## H. Technical Difficulties and Other Challenges

Sometimes, regardless of how many times you have tested the technology and *Microsoft Teams*, you may encounter technical difficulties while joining the hearing or during the hearing. As stated in § IV. *Planning Effective Participation*, participants should have their technology support contact identified and a contingency plan in place. Participants should keep the instructions for any contingency plans, such as joining *Microsoft Teams* using a telephone number with conference ID, nearby throughout the hearing. Participants should also consider installing the relevant software on a secondary device, such as a smart phone or tablet, as a back-up if the primary connection to the hearing is lost. It is important that participants remain flexible and patient during these technical difficulties.

This equally applies to other challenges. As participants are working remotely, there may be other demands, such as child and elder care. Please remain patient during these times.

## VI. After the Hearing

If there are technical issues during the hearing, the court may request additional information from the parties. The parties may also ask the court for permission to provide post-hearing submissions in writing.

## Checklist for Participating in a Remote Hearing

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Below is a summary of the best practices identified throughout this guide and a checklist that you may find useful in preparing for your hearing.

### *Prior to the scheduling of your hearing*

- ✓ Obtain an e-mail address, if you do not already have one.
- ✓ Confirm whether the device you plan to use (computer, smartphone, tablet) meets the hardware requirements for *Microsoft Teams*.
- ✓ Test your internet connection and speed.
- ✓ Download *Microsoft Teams* on your device and, if possible, a secondary device.
- ✓ If using *Microsoft Teams* on your computer (laptop or desktop), download a web browser other than Internet Explorer, such as Google Chrome.
- ✓ Promptly respond to the court's notice asking for your e-mail address and phone number.
- ✓ Identify a quiet location, with minimal distractions, proper lighting, and a neutral background, for you to participate in the hearing. If using Wi-Fi, find a location as close as possible to your router or modem. Arrange for hard-wiring, if possible.
- ✓ Arrange for any other equipment that you may need, e.g., headset, second screen, Wi-Fi dongle.

### *After your hearing is scheduled*

- ✓ Ensure that you, your client(s), and/or witnesses have received the *Microsoft Teams* e-mail invitation. Confirm that there are no scheduling conflicts.
- ✓ Ensure that you, your client(s), and/or witnesses have the proper devices and have *Microsoft Teams* installed. Confirm that the devices are working properly. Schedule a test run.
- ✓ Test *Microsoft Teams* from the location you plan to participate to confirm it is working properly and that you, your client(s), and witness(es) are familiar with its basic features. Make sure there are no security restrictions on your device preventing the use and launch of *Microsoft Teams*.
- ✓ Review the virtual courtroom etiquette and protocol.
- ✓ Instruct and prepare your clients and witness(es) as to the virtual courtroom etiquette and protocol.
- ✓ Consult with the other parties regarding a plan to conduct the hearing, stipulations of fact, and the issues to be decided at the hearing.
- ✓ Exchange all exhibits you intend to introduce into evidence. Determine which may be admitted as full exhibits, and which should be marked for identification only.
- ✓ Redact all personal identifying information from sensitive documents prior to submitting the documents to court.
- ✓ Provide the court with physical copies (hardcopies) of all documentary evidence.
- ✓ Read all relevant case documents before the hearing.
- ✓ Determine whether you, your client(s), and/or your witness(es) require an interpreter or an accommodation under the ADA.
- ✓ Determine a method for privately communicating with your client(s) or co-counsel during the hearing.
- ✓ Identify your technology support contact in the event you run into any technical difficulties, and establish a contingency plan.

### *The day of your hearing*

- ✓ Retest *Microsoft Teams* to confirm it is working properly and that you, your client(s), and your witness(es) are familiar with its basic functions. Refamiliarize yourself with the basic features, if needed. Make sure there are no new security restrictions on your device preventing the use and launch of *Microsoft Teams*.
- ✓ Prepare all your equipment, e.g., computer, screens, microphone, headset, camera, phone, battery chargers, and power adapters, and confirm they are functioning properly.
- ✓ Ensure devices are plugged into power outlets and wireless devices are fully charged.
- ✓ Test your internet speed and connection. If you are sharing internet connection with others in your household, limit their use. Use a hard-wire connection, if possible. Turn off the Wi-Fi connection on other devices.
- ✓ From the location where you will be participating, test your camera to ensure a clear line of sight and test your microphone. Ensure there is proper lighting in the area and minimal distractions/interruptions.
- ✓ Close all programs not needed during the hearing and mute messaging and notifications on your devices.
- ✓ Have your contingency plan (e.g., using a secondary device, joining using a telephone number and conference ID) in front of you in case you run into technical difficulties during the hearing.
- ✓ Confirm that you have downloaded and have access to all of the required documents and exhibits for the hearing.
- ✓ Review, and remind your client(s) and witness(s) of, the virtual courtroom etiquette and protocol.
- ✓ Sign into the Remote Justice Virtual Courtroom via *Microsoft Teams* 10-15 minutes early. Wait patiently for your hearing to begin.

### *During your hearing*

- ✓ Follow virtual courtroom etiquette and protocol.
- ✓ Inform the court at the start of the hearing if you are having, or may experience, any technical difficulties during the hearing.
- ✓ Notify the court at the start of the hearing of any requests for an interpreter or ADA accommodations.
- ✓ Notify the court of any possible interruptions or distractions, e.g., children.
- ✓ Follow the ground rules set by the judge. If you require further clarification, please ask.
- ✓ Do not interrupt other participants when they are speaking or attempt to speak over them. Make sure that a participant is finished speaking before you begin.
- ✓ Check that your microphone is unmuted before beginning to speak. Speak clearly, slowly, and concisely. When you do speak, speak directly into the microphone and look directly into the camera lens.
- ✓ No eating or drinking (with the exception of water).
- ✓ No use of cellphones, unless it is for the purpose of participating in the hearing.
- ✓ No recording of any kind or taking screen shots/pictures of the hearing.
- ✓ Do not use the Screen Share or Hand Raise features of *Microsoft Teams*. Only use the Chat feature to inform the court of any technical difficulties.

### *After your hearing*

- ✓ Submit additional information to the court if required to do so.

## *Additional Resources*

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Many legal resources and reference materials are available to parties via the Connecticut Judicial Branch website. The following provides parties with several in-person and web-based resources to assist with your preparation for a remote hearing.

### I. Virtual Courtroom Hearing Resources

The Judicial Branch website has a dedicated webpage on virtual courtroom hearings. Additional information and resources, such as videos and quick cards, are added to the webpage on an ongoing basis. For latest information and resources, please click [here](#).

### II. Information for Self-Represented Parties

The [Judicial Branch website](#) provides numerous resources for self-represented parties.

### III. Court Service Centers

[Court Service Centers](#) provide services for self-represented parties, members of the bar, and the community at large. They are located within Judicial District Courthouses and are staffed by Judicial Branch employees trained to assist all court patrons. Several Court Service Centers have bilingual staff. Court Service Centers can provide statewide calendar and docket information (civil and family cases), [court forms](#), Judicial Publications and [self-help materials](#), public use computers and printers with internet access, and word processing, electronic filing, printers, copiers, fax machines, scanners, and work space.

Locations, hours, and other resources are available on the [Center website](#). Note, however, that due to COVID-19, the Court Service Centers are currently operating remotely. You may submit any questions directly to the Court Service Center staff via e-mail at [Court.ServiceCenter@jud.ct.gov](mailto:Court.ServiceCenter@jud.ct.gov)

### IV. Law Libraries

[Law Libraries](#) serve the Judicial Branch, the bar, and the public by providing professional and experienced guidance and access to comprehensive and current legal materials and resources in an efficient and timely manner. Law librarians provide bibliographic assistance, educational programs, legal reference, and legal research instruction. The [Law Library website](#) includes numerous state and federal legal research resources, including [Law by Subject](#) and [Research Guides](#).

There are twelve Law Libraries located throughout the state. For locations, directions, and hours, please click [here](#). Note, however, that due to COVID-19, the Law Libraries are currently closed. Law Librarians remain available by email at [lawlibrarians@jud.ct.gov](mailto:lawlibrarians@jud.ct.gov) to respond to legal research requests, offering same day service, in most instances.

### V. Connecticut General Statutes

You may browse the [Connecticut General Statutes](#) and the [2020 Supplement](#) online.

## VI. Practice Book and Code of Evidence

Connecticut's [Practice Book](#) & [Code of Evidence](#) can be found on the Judicial Branch website.

## VII. Frequently Asked Questions

The Connecticut Judicial Branch website provides answers to many frequently asked questions concerning the Connecticut court system. [FAQs](#) by subject are available online.



# ITDTU –Virtual Conference Tech Tips

Information Technology Division – Training Unit



## Top 10 Virtual Conference Tech Tips



1.  **Check all connections and accessories:** Is the Wi-Fi working and at highest signal, is the network cable securely inserted into the modem, verify/test/adjust the microphone and video camera settings on the computer and/or device as needed.
2.  **Charge all device batteries:** If using a laptop it is recommended that it be plugged in or fully charged, have a cell phone or mobile device charged as a backup, and keep a charger nearby as video conference session can drain down batteries.
3.  **Check your surroundings:** It is expected that you have a quiet location with minimal background distractions. Improve your lighting by using natural light in front or side of the computer, or overhead lighting to add a light beside the computer. Position your camera by setting the laptop on a few books or a box so others may see you at eye level. Refrain from tilting your head up or down, instead, look straight up to the camera, people should see your head and shoulders almost down to your elbows.
4.  **Prepare and practice:** Before joining a virtual conference, do a test run to ensure you are familiar with features or that everything you set up is working to offset or minimize technical issues.
5.  **Headset with microphone** is recommended. If you don't have one, try using one from your smartphone as it usually provides better sound quality than the one on a laptop. Speak clearly and concisely.
6.  Learn how to **Mute** and **Unmute**: Only turn on mic when it is your turn to speak, Mute when not speaking. Always check the computer/device screen if you clicked the mute button. 
7.  **Keyboard and Apps:** Hands off the keyboard and only keep essential windows and programs open.
8.  **Notifications:** Turn off or silent mobile device notifications such as email, text messages and news/weather alerts.
9.  **Secure Conference:** Make sure you have a reliable antivirus solution installed that provides virus, phishing, and web protection, and always keep operating systems and browsers updated.
10.  **Support:** Identify who will be the support contact within your organization in the event something goes wrong before or during the virtual conference. Create a contingency plan if the laptop malfunctions such as using a smart phone or tablet.



## Teams: Join a Scheduled Meeting for Judges and Attorneys from an invitation

Information Technology Division – Training Unit



### About Microsoft Teams

*Microsoft Teams* is a collaborative meeting app with video, audio and screen sharing features. This guide will provide instructions on how to join a scheduled *Teams* meeting from an email message or *Outlook* calendar.

### Getting Started

What is needed to participate in a *Teams* scheduled meeting?

- ✓ Received a *Teams* invitation or activity in Outlook calendar
- ✓ PC, iOS or Android device
- ✓ Secure and dependable internet service provider
- ✓ *Teams* installed on your device or the *Teams* Web App

Please click to view a short video: [Join a Teams meeting video.](#)



### Recommendations

- A list of hardware requirements for *Teams* can be viewed by visiting the [Microsoft Teams website](#).
- If possible, use a web browser other than *Internet Explorer* due to possible compatibility issues.
- The *Teams* App is available for **iOS** (App Store) and **Android** (Google Store) devices and suitable for individuals who prefer to access *Teams* with a smartphone or tablet, however, features may be limited.
- *Teams* App can also be downloaded for PCs from the [Microsoft product website](#).
- Test *Teams* any time prior to meetings using "[Teams Hearing Test Meeting](#)"

### Join a Microsoft Teams Meeting from an invitation

You will be invited to participate by email message or as an activity in your Outlook Calendar.

*Note: If email invitation is not in your Inbox, please open your Junk Email folder.*

There are three participation options:

- I. Join meeting using **Teams App** Installed on PC or Mobile Device
- II. Join meeting with **Teams Web App**
- III. Join meeting using **Telephone number** with **Conference ID**

Test *Teams* any time prior to meetings using "[Teams Hearing Test Meeting](#)"

#### I. Join meeting using **Teams App** installed on PC or mobile device:

1. From your email mailbox or *Outlook* calendar, **Open** the *Teams* meeting invitation
2. Within the meeting details locate and select [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)
3. Go to **Microsoft Teams Sign In and Settings** instructions below

#### II. Join meeting using **Team Web App**:

1. From your email mailbox or *Outlook* calendar, **Open** the *Teams* meeting invitation
2. Within the meeting details locate and select [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)
3. Go to **Microsoft Teams Sign In and Settings** instructions below

#### III. Join Meeting using **Telephone and Conference ID**:

Recommended for participants who are having Internet connection issues.

1. From your email mailbox or Outlook Calendar, **Open** the *Teams* invitation
2. Within the meeting details **dial** the telephone number
3. Enter the **Conference ID** when prompted
4. Answer questions when prompted

[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

+1 860-123-4567 United States,

Conference ID: 123 456 789#

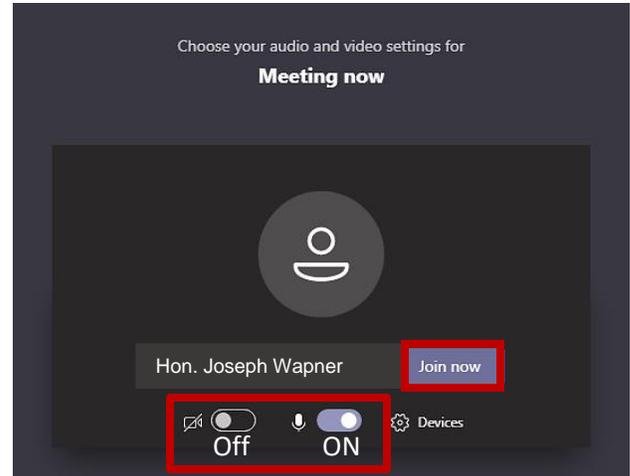
[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

+1860-123-4567 United States, Hartford

Conference ID: 123 456 789#

## Teams Sign In and Settings

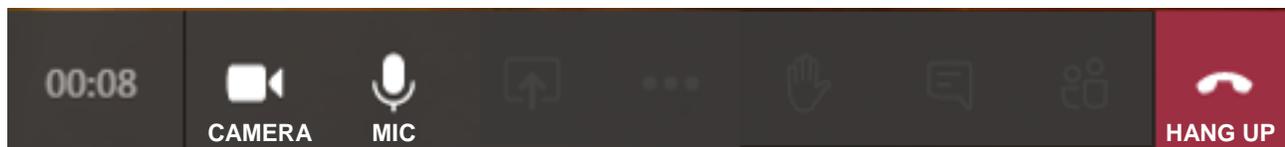
1. Type your **Title** followed by **First name** then **Last name**:  
e.g.: **Hon. Joseph Wapner**  
**Attorney Robert Lawman**
2. Slide the **Camera** button to the **left**: *camera off*
3. Slide the **Mic** button to the **left**: *mute sound*  
*Tip: Always mute the Mic when not talking.*  
*Note: slashes indicate items are Off / no slashes are On*
4. Select the **Join now** button to enter meeting
5. You may be admitted right away or wait in the *Teams* lobby until the organizer begins the meeting; please be patient.



## Teams Floating Toolbar

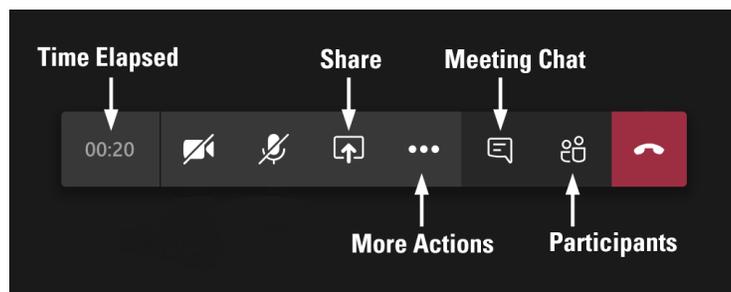
Test *Teams* any time prior to meetings using "[Teams Hearing Test Meeting](#)"

The toolbar will appear briefly when entering the meeting however will fade away after a set amount of time. To activate the *Teams* toolbar, please move your mouse cursor anywhere on the screen. Although many features make up the toolbar, there are three basic features used during a meeting: *Camera* and *Mic* which can be set to on or off and *Hang up* to end the meeting.

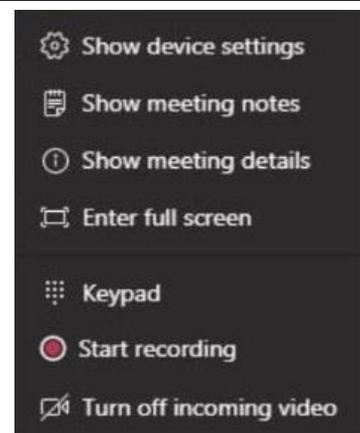


## Addition *Teams* toolbar features

1. **Time Elapsed:**  
Counts the duration of the meeting.
2. **Share:**  
Allows individuals to share their screen with other meeting participants.
3. **Meeting Chat:**  
Displays participants' meeting text chats.
4. **Participants:**  
Shows a list of everyone who is currently in the meeting.
5. **More Actions:**



- Show device settings: review / adjust your video source, audio source, etc.
- Show meeting notes: notes area where you can take notes to review later.
- Show meeting details: date/time of meeting, call a phone, copy link to join.
- Enter full screen: removes the tabs for chat, teams and fills entire screen.
- Keypad: Allows you to dial numbers for entering conference rooms.
- Start recording: allows you to start and stop recording of the meeting.
- Turn off incoming video: force all participants to enter meeting with video off.



**Note: Additional Actions may be displayed and are determined by method used to sign in to Teams: Installed Teams App vs. Teams Web App.**



## Self-Represented Party E-Services Enrollment, Account Activation and Access

Rev. 6/1/2018

### For Questions or Help:

**E-Services Help Line: (866) 765- 4452**

**[SelfRepEnroll@jud.ct.gov](mailto:SelfRepEnroll@jud.ct.gov)**

**[Eservices@jud.ct.gov](mailto:Eservices@jud.ct.gov)**

Enroll in E-Services to create an SRP User ID and password to use to log in to E-Services to electronically:

- File all appellate matters (required as of 8/1/2016)
- File your new civil, family, housing or small claims case
- File and look at documents in your electronic civil, family, housing or small claims case
- Access your court notices in the E-Services Inbox
- Request online access to your electronic civil, family, housing or small claims case
- Mark your civil or family short calendar matters
- Keep your account information up-to-date

**Note:** See the Procedures and Technical Standards for information on the specific case types that are e-filable.

To look at or file documents in your case, you must have an E-Services User ID and password, electronic access to your case, and an appearance in your case.

This quick card will help you with enrollment and requesting electronic access. Find more information by selecting **Self-represented Parties** on the [E-Services Welcome Page](#).

### [How do I enroll in E-Services?](#)

1. Go to the Judicial Branch home page by entering [www.jud.ct.gov](http://www.jud.ct.gov) in the address bar of your browser.

**Note:** The Judicial Branch supports Microsoft Internet Explorer® version 9 or higher, or Firefox 25 or higher.

2. Click on E-Services on the left of the home page.

3. Click 

4. Click 

5. Fill in the *Account Type*. If you are enrolling in E-Services to file and look at documents in Superior Court cases online, you must create an *individual account* only. If you are enrolling to represent yourself in a small claims case, you can create either an individual account or a business account.

6. Fill in the *Account Information*. Click in each box (field) and enter the information. If the information is required, you will see an asterisk "\*" at the beginning of the line.

*Enter your e-mail address correctly. An e-mail with the link you will need to click to complete your enrollment and activate your account will be sent automatically to the e-mail address you enter in this form.*

7. Fill in *User ID and Password*. You must make up a User ID that you will use to log in to E-Services and electronically sign documents you file online.

**Note:** *The User ID you create cannot be changed and appears on all documents that you file with the court.*

**Note:** *Your User ID can use only letters and numbers. It cannot use any special symbols like #, & or @. You cannot use your e-mail address as your User ID. Your password must have at least 8 characters but no more than 10 characters. It also must contain at least one number.*

8. Fill in *Security Question*. Enter a question and an answer that only you will know, and enter your year of birth. We use this information to make sure that you are the one asking for your User ID and password if you forget your ID or password.

9. Save a copy of this information for your records by clicking 

10. Click 

11. The page that appears will tell you that your Enrollment Application has been received.

12. Click 

13. Within 30 minutes, you will receive an e-mail from E-Services. The e-mail has a link you must click to complete your enrollment and activate your account.

You should review the [Procedures and Technical Standards for E-Services](#) which apply to Judicial Branch electronic services. For appellate matters, see the [Appellate E-Filing Procedures and Technical Standards](#). Both documents can be found under the **Self-represented Parties** tab at the top of the [E-Services Welcome Page](#).

Scroll down or turn this card over for information on activating your E-Services Account.

### How do I activate my E-Services account?

Once you receive the confirmation that your enrollment application has been received, check your e-mail account for an e-mail from E-Services.

**Note:** The link in this e-mail is active for *30 days only*. If you don't use the link to complete your enrollment before the 30 days end, the system automatically removes your information, and you will have to enroll again.

1. Check your email account for the E-Services e-mail
2. Click the link in the E-Services e-mail to go to the **New Account Activation** page
3. Enter your User ID and password on this page
4. Click 
5. Check the information you gave when you enrolled to be sure it is correct
6. Read the Electronic Services (E-Services) User Agreement
7. Check the box next to "I agree"
8. Click 
9. You will then go to the E-Services home page where you can log in. To file on any appellate matter, select **Appellate E-Filing**. To file on civil, family, housing or small claims matters, select **Superior Court E-Filing**.\*\*

\*\*To file on a small claims case filed before September 1, 2017 that has not been transferred to the appropriate judicial district or housing session location and assigned a new docket number, select **Centralized Small Claims E-Filing**.

### What if I don't get an e-mail from E-Services?

1. Check your e-mail account to make sure it allows you to get e-mails from E-Services
2. Go to the Judicial Branch website at [www.jud.ct.gov](http://www.jud.ct.gov)
3. Choose **E-Services** from the menu
4. Select 
5. Enter your User ID and password
6. Select 
7. Check your e-mail address on the next page
8. Choose **Change Email Address** to correct it
9. Click 

### How do I request electronic (online) access to my civil, family, housing or small claims cases?

If you are a plaintiff filing a *new* case online, you automatically have electronic access to the case. If you are a plaintiff filing a case on paper, or if you are the person being sued (defendant) in *any* other case, you must request and be approved for electronic access to your case online. **\*\*If you are filing on an appellate matter, you do not have to ask for electronic access to every case.\*\***

Enroll in E-Services and activate your account before you request electronic access to your civil, family, housing or small claims case. To request electronic access, you must:

1. Go to the Judicial Branch website at [www.jud.ct.gov](http://www.jud.ct.gov)
2. Choose **E-Services** from the menu on the page
3. Click 
4. Enter your User ID and Password
5. Click 
6. Choose **Superior Court E-Filing**
7. Find your case by selecting **By Docket Number** or **By Party Name** under **E-File on an Existing Case**

**Note:** A search by a name gives you a list of cases to choose from. A search by docket number takes you directly to the main page (case detail page) for the case.

8. Choose "Request Electronic Access" as a "Case Activity"
9. Click 
10. Click the box next to the party you are requesting electronic access for. (It must be you.)
11. Click  at the bottom of the page.
12. Print the page that appears to bring to the clerk's office.
13. Bring the request and a photo ID to the clerk's office.

**Note:** The name on the photo ID **must** match the name of the party or you must also bring **proof of a name change**.

14. If you cannot go to the court, you can mail a notarized copy of your photo ID with your request. Do **not** send your original photo ID in the mail. The notary's signature and statement must be *on the copy* of the ID.

**Note:** Acceptable **photo** IDs include: driver's license, current government or military ID, U.S. passport or U.S. passport card, a certificate of citizenship or naturalization (with photo) or a permanent residence card (with photo).

15. The clerk will send you an e-mail approving or denying access.



# ITDTU –Etiquette Tips for the Virtual Courtroom Process



Information Technology Division – Training Unit

## Etiquette Tips for the Virtual Courtroom Process

### Video and Audio conference etiquette:

- The same formal etiquette and protocol of a physical Court is expected in the Virtual Court.
- Counsel and litigants are to dress professionally as if they were attending an in-person hearing in a courtroom.
- Read all the documentation prior to the virtual proceeding and be prepared.
- Participants are to join a Virtual proceeding from a quiet, secure location.
- Participants are to ensure that there will be no interruptions, distractions such as children or pets present.
- Witnesses are not permitted to use or access their phones while participating in virtual proceedings unless told to do so by the judge.
- Do not interrupt other people when they are speaking, nor attempt to speak over them.
- Speak clearly and concisely.



## Teams: Share Content VCP - Single Matter Hearings

Information Technology Division – Training Unit



### Teams: Share Content in a Virtual Court Proceeding - Single Matter Hearings

*During a Virtual Court Proceeding it is very important that all documents are provided before the Virtual Court Proceeding starts, but on occasion, under special circumstances, you may receive permission from the court to share information on your screen during a proceeding.*

**Training Video** Click link below or image on the right

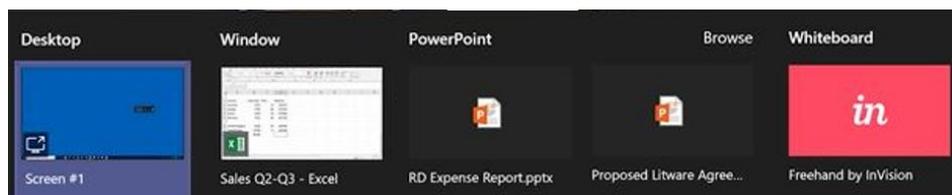
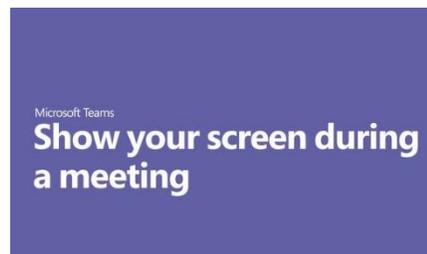
[Show your screen during a meeting](#)

#### Share your screen

To share your screen, select **Share**  in your meeting controls.

Then, choose to present your entire desktop, a window, a PowerPoint file, or a whiteboard.

**Note:** If you're using Teams on the web, you'll only be able to share your screen if you're using Google Chrome or the latest version of Microsoft Edge.



Share your...	If you want to...	What will be presented...
Desktop	Show your entire screen, including notifications and other desktop activity <b>(not recommended)</b>	You need to seamlessly share multiple windows <b>(not recommended)</b>
Window	Show just one window, and no notifications or other desktop activity <b>(recommended)</b>	You only need to show one thing and want to keep the rest of your screen to yourself <b>(recommended)</b>
PowerPoint	Present a PowerPoint file others can interact with	You need to share a presentation and want others to be able to move through it at their own pace
Whiteboard	Collaborate with others in real time	You want to sketch with others and have your notes attached to the meeting

When you're done sharing, go to your meeting controls and select **Stop sharing**.

**Note:** you may need to put cursor on the screen to see control, Stop sharing or the icon.

**Note:** If you're using a Mac, you'll be prompted to change your privacy settings before you're able to share your screen. Also, window sharing isn't available for Linux users.

