

Guidelines for **Remote Appearances via Zoom**

Scheduling a Hearing:

- If you have an objection to conducting the hearing via Zoom, then you must file an objection with the court and show good cause why the hearing should not proceed remotely.

- Call/Email Judge Swett's Judicial Assistant, Kate, to schedule your hearing (239) 533-9157 or (lc-cty-jdg5@ca.cjis20.org). You will need to provide the case number, motion, subject of the hearing, amount of time requested, and the names and email addresses of all attorneys (or pro se parties) who will be participating.

- Once a hearing time is scheduled, you will receive information for your Zoom hearing. The necessary login credentials must be included in the Notice of Hearing. All parties should use the link to join the hearing prior to the start time.

- All participants shall enter their full name when prompted. Participants may be entered into a virtual waiting room, and they will be brought into the hearing when their case is called. Due to high volume, please expect delays and wait until your case is called. Please enter the meeting on mute.

Presentation of Evidence and Witnesses:

- If you intend to present any evidence or documents to the court, then you must pre-mark all items for identification and serve a copy to all parties no less than five (5) business days prior to the hearing. If possible, please send all documents in a single submission. If there are any pro se parties involved in your case, a copy of the pre-marked evidence shall be served on them, via US Mail, no later than ten (10) days prior to the hearing.

- Please confer with all parties prior to the hearing to determine any stipulations as to the admission of evidence and documents.

- You must comply with Administrative Order 2.40 regarding the introduction and management of evidence in remote hearings ([link on the previous page](#)).

Appearance of Witnesses and Parties:

- The attorney or party requesting that third parties attend the hearing will be responsible for sharing the Zoom hearing information with that third party and for making arrangements for their appearance. This includes witnesses, court reporters, etc. The Court will not be able to call parties to include them in the hearing.

- You will need to provide the Court with a list of people who are expected to participate in the hearing no less than five (5) business days prior to the hearing.
- The Court may administer the oath pursuant to AOSC20-16.
- Witnesses may not communicate with anyone during their testimony.
- Remote hearings are court events subject to rules of evidence, procedure, decorum, perjury, and contempt.
- If the Rule of Sequestration is invoked, then witnesses will be asked to login in only when it is their turn to testify or to wait in a waiting room.

Decorum and Attire:

Although the hearing is being conducted remotely, proper courtroom decorum should be maintained. Participants should be in a quiet setting and minimize any external distractions. Be aware of what is behind you and choose a solid neutral wall, if possible. Please dress like you are coming to the courthouse.

Tips for Success:

- For the best audio quality, consider using headphones and a microphone.
- If you are participating via a phone or tablet, please keep the device still.
- Do not walk around or move excessively while the hearing is in progress.
- To limit background noise, **mute your microphone when you are not speaking**. Unmute your microphone prior to speaking.
- A strong internet connection is helpful, and wired connections are more reliable than wireless. Use a dedicated internet connection during the hearing. If you must share your internet connection with others, then ask them to limit high-bandwidth activities (such as video streaming) while the hearing is in progress.
- Prior to your hearing, become comfortable using the platform. Test your connection. Have an alternative means to connect if you need a back-up.

Zoom 101 Sign UP and Download Meeting Client

Join a Meeting

Meeting Controls

Joining and Configuring Audio & Video

Preparation and communication are the keys to a successful remote hearing. Counsel should communicate with each other prior to the hearing and attempt to resolve as many issues as possible outside of court.