



# **THE DO'S & DON'Ts OF VIRTUAL HEARINGS**

## **DO'S**

- ✓ **CONNECT EARLY:** Appear for your hearing 10 minutes early. You will be in the virtual waiting room until you or your case is called.
- ✓ **IDENTIFY YOURSELF:** Rename yourself on Zoom to show your actual name.
- ✓ **DRESS APPROPRIATELY:** All participants must be *fully* dressed in proper courtroom attire—no pajamas, sunglasses or hats.
- ✓ **ACT AS IF YOU WERE AT THE COURTHOUSE:** Behave as if you were attending Court in person. The same rules that apply to a live hearing in the courtroom apply to virtual hearings.
- ✓ **BE PREPARED:** Have pen and paper readily accessible to write down important dates, times, and information regarding your case. You may also want a calendar to coordinate future Court appearances.
- ✓ **SPEAK TO THE CAMERA:** When speaking, try to look directly at the webcam, not the screen. Position your camera at eye level and be mindful of what is behind you (as it will be visible to everyone).
- ✓ **BE ALONE:** Remain seated in one quiet space, without anyone else present. If someone walks in, identify them immediately.
- ✓ **STAY MUTED:** Mute yourself when you are not speaking to avoid background noise.
- ✓ **STAY QUIET:** Participants should speak one at a time and pause prior to speaking in the event that there is video/audio lag.
- ✓ **PRACTICE:** Become familiar with & practice Zooming prior to your hearing. Learn to connect your audio and check your lighting. To testify, you must appear by both VIDEO **AND** AUDIO so be familiar with both functions.

## **DON'Ts**

- × NO gum, no eating, no smoking or vaping.
- × NO minor children. Minors are NOT permitted to attend or be present in the room where any participant is attending Court. Persons with minor children should take all reasonable steps to ensure they are not exposed to the proceedings.
- × TURN OFF any electronic devices, especially phone ringer/notifications/alerts; do not communicate during the proceeding without the Court's permission and do not record the proceedings.
- × NO DRIVING: You must not attend or observe court proceedings while driving or operating heavy machinery. Your full attention is required.

## **REMEMBER:**

- If you are represented by an attorney and you need to confer, advise the Court and you will be placed in a "breakout" room.
- If you have any technological issues (for example, you cannot hear or your screen freezes), please let us know immediately. If you cannot communicate in any other way, you may use the chat function to let us know what is happening.
- Exhibits/Evidence may be shown ("shared" on the screen) if they are provided at least **48 hrs** in advance pursuant to the Court's Exhibit Policy.
- If a party has an objection, the Court must rule/address the objection before the witness continues their testimony.
- While testifying, it is important that you not communicate with anyone else. That means that you may not talk, text or email with anyone while you are testifying in our virtual courtroom. You may not look at any documents, electronic or paper, unless the Court has given you prior permission to do so. That includes your reports or any notes that you have relating to your testimony.