

Using Zoom for Court Hearings

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Supreme Court & Court of Criminal Appeals Emergency Orders

- [Emergency Order 1](#) (March 13)

- Subject to constitutional limitations, permits all courts, without participants' consent to:
 - Modify/suspend deadlines and procedures
 - **Allow or require remote participation in hearings by all except jurors**
 - Consider as evidence sworn statements made out of court or sworn testimony given remotely
 - Conduct proceedings away from the court's usual location with notice and access to participants and public (modified by Emergency Order 3 to remove the requirement to be in the county of venue)

- [Emergency Order 3](#) (March 19)

- Prohibiting courts from conducting non-essential proceedings in person contrary to local, state, or national directives, whichever is most restrictive, regarding maximum group size
 - [Governor Executive Order](#) – limiting group sizes to **10 or less**



What's an Essential/Non-Essential Proceeding?

Essential

- Emergency
- Time-sensitive
- Liberty issue
- Injunctions
- Examples: criminal magistration, CPS removal and adversary hearings, TROs and temporary injunctions, juvenile detention hearings, family violence protective orders, certain mental health proceedings

Non-Essential

- Any matter which is not essential
- Examples: jury selection or jury trials, status conferences or dockets, truancy matters



Remote Proceeding Considerations

- Still a courtroom, just online
 - Decorum, demeanor, dress codes
- Constitutional requirements for open courts, public access remain
 - US Constitution 6th Amendment; Texas Constitution, Art. 1, Secs. 10 & 13
 - Same provisions to close a courtroom remain
- Due Process rights remain
- Not currently an appropriate tool for jury trials – prohibited by orders
- Some people may have limits in ability to access
- New, learning process
 - Start slow, test with staff and then a few cases



Zoom Accounts

- OCA acquired licenses for all judges in the state
 - Sign up at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TXCourtszoom>
- Just need web access, preferably with webcam
 - Recommend using desktop or laptop computer, but also compatible with tablet or cell phone app
- Provides all parties with access via free application, also by telephone
- Can stream live to YouTube (recommended) or FaceBook
 - Each court should create YouTube channel capable of livestreaming



Zoom Account Settings Demonstration



Zoom Meetings
Scheduling
Demonstration



Zoom In-Meeting Tool Demonstration



Notices to Parties & Public



Need to work with attorneys
and self-represented litigants



Posting information on
websites, at courthouse



Resources Available

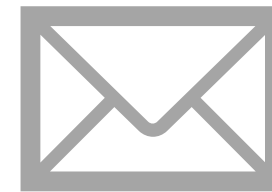


TxCourts website with resources

Step-by-step written instructions

Zoom Tutorial Videos

<https://txcourts.gov/programs-services/electronic-hearings-with-zoom/>



Email support:

zoomhelp@txcourts.gov



Questions?

