

ZOOM PARTICIPATION RULES

LANCASTER COUNTY COURT

Participation via Zoom as a plaintiff, defendant, ward/protected person, petitioner, personal representative, interested person or counsel for the same, in a non-evidentiary, non-sentencing hearing or observation of any court hearing via Zoom is a privilege the court is affording you, not a right you have. The privilege is subject to the Uniform County Court Rules of Practice and Procedure, the inherent power of the court, and the rules that follow below. Please be advised that the court may revoke the privilege at any time in the court's discretion.

1 BEFORE THE HEARING

Name Yourself Using Your Legal Name -

Prior to entering into a Zoom courtroom, please name yourself on Zoom using your legal first and last name. You may need to rename yourself if you, or someone else, have previously used a different name on Zoom. If you are merely observing, please name/rename yourself "Observer." Observers may be asked to turn their video off.

Waiting Room - Participants will be placed in a waiting room when they join the meeting. The meeting host will admit participants individually from the waiting room.

Wear Appropriate Clothing -

Non-attorneys shall be attired in courtroom-appropriate clothing (clothing with profane or inappropriate language, symbols, or ideas or simply the lack of clothing will not be tolerated and are grounds for immediate removal and loss of privilege). Zoom profile pictures must also comply with this rule.

Background – All persons shall be located in an indoor area with a quiet courtroom-appropriate background environment. This includes any Zoom-generated or artificial background. All persons shall be immediately in front of their device to allow those present in the Zoom courtroom to see and hear them clearly. Laying down in bed is not acceptable.

Be on Time / Attendance - All parties shall be present in the courtroom and prepared to proceed at the hour set for hearing by the court. Attorneys may Zoom in and out as needed.

2 DURING THE HEARING

Mute Yourself Immediately - Upon entering a Zoom courtroom, please immediately mute yourself by clicking on the microphone button usually found in the bottom left-hand corner of your screen (a red diagonal line through the microphone will appear that will indicate you have muted your device's microphone).

Do Not Speak Until Called Upon - Do not ask if the judge or anyone else can hear you. The judge will let you know when you may unmute, turn on your video, and speak. You may use the chat button at the bottom of your screen to communicate in writing with the judge about a Zoom or scheduling issue (for example, "I am having trouble getting my audio to work" or "I need to Zoom into another courtroom.") No other matters are to be addressed using the chat button.

Be Stationary - All persons shall be stationary, whether seated or standing. If you need to move to an area with better internet connectivity or to an area where there are no other individuals around you, please do so prior to entering the Zoom courtroom. It is not acceptable to be walking, moving, driving, or riding in a vehicle in a Zoom courtroom.

Conduct – All persons shall conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly manner. No person shall smoke, eat, drink, watch television, listen to music, or engage in other distracting or inappropriate conduct while in the Zoom courtroom.

Others – Persons participating in the Zoom courtroom shall not request or obtain assistance from any individual other than the judge, counsel or, in the situation of a minor or ward, the minor's/ward's parents/guardians/caretaker. If the participant has a question or issue (for example, the participant cannot hear what is being said), the participant should immediately bring the matter to the judge's attention.

Be Patient - Please be patient. While participation via Zoom allows for increased efficiency and decreased travel costs, please remember that the county court judge likely has several matters scheduled at the same time and wants to afford all their opportunity to be heard.

3 PROBATE DEFAULT HEARINGS

Exhibits – To the extent exhibits need to be offered/received, parties are responsible for providing exhibits to opposing counsel/parties prior to the hearing.

IT IS ORDERED THAT RECORDING OF REMOTE ZOOM PROCEEDINGS IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.

Attorneys, self-represented parties, witnesses, and attendees participating in remote hearings, or members of the public (with the exception of credentialed media subject to media rules) are prohibited from recording, capturing, saving, broadcasting, televising, or photographing the proceeding in any manner. **FAILURE TO ABIDE BY THIS ORDER MAY RESULT IN CONTEMPT OF COURT PROCEEDINGS.**