



## **Remote Court Hearing by Videoconference Frequently Asked Questions**

(Updated 8/10/2020)

### **1. What is a remote court hearing?**

A remote court hearing means that you and the other participants may be participating from somewhere other than the courtroom using videoconferencing. The judge and court staff will be in the courtroom. You will be able to see and hear the judge and other participants.

The Hawai'i State Judiciary is offering this service to minimize in-person contact during the COVID-19 pandemic and give you the opportunity to participate more safely and conveniently.

The Judiciary is using Cisco Webex or Zoom to provide the videoconferencing service. Each court decides which one to use. Both of them are free and can be accessed on a home computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. You will need internet access or a data plan that allows you to view video.

If you do not have internet or the data to participate by video, you can a toll-free phone number to participate by phone only. The court may also choose to call you if you provide your phone number in advance. For instructions on how to participate in your remote hearing please refer to the instructions from the court.

General information about how to use the Cisco Webex and Zoom video and phone features can be found on the Judiciary website. Links are in the boxed area on the right side of this page, or on the bottom of the page if you are using a smartphone or tablet.

### **2. How do I know if I have a hearing scheduled?**

If the court has not already given you a hearing date and instructions on how to participate, it will contact you. You will be informed on whether to appear in-person, by

phone, and/or by videoconferencing. If you are unsure whether you have a court hearing or how to participate, contact the court as soon as possible.

**3. If I am scheduled for a remote hearing, will the court let me know?**

Yes, the court will notify you if you are scheduled to appear at a hearing remotely and will send you instructions on how to do it. The court will contact, so please plan accordingly.

**4. What if I do not have internet or phone access or cannot attend remotely?**

Contact the court staff as soon as possible to let them know. They may be able to help by rescheduling your hearing or by making other accommodations as appropriate.

If you would like to appear remotely using your computer or smartphone, but do not have internet access, there may be community or governmental resources that can help. For example, the DCCA has designated free WiFi hotspots at public parks, civil and community centers, and other public areas. These locations offer one-hour of free WiFi service per device per day. To locate a hotspot or determine if this option is appropriate for your circumstance, visit: <http://cca.hawaii.gov/broadband/dcca-designated-wifi-hotspots/>

**5. How do I participate in a remote hearing by video or by phone?**

Details on about how to participate in your remote hearing and whether it will be by Cisco Webex or Zoom, will be provided to you by the court before the date of your hearing. General information about how to use Cisco Webex and Zoom can be found on the Judiciary website. Links are in the boxed area on the right side of this page, or on the bottom of the page if you are using a smartphone or tablet.

- [Join a Zoom Meeting](#)
- [Join a Cisco Webex Meeting](#)

**6. What if I need an interpreter or other accommodations for the remote hearing?**

If you need an interpreter or other accommodation for your hearing, you must let the court know in advance so arrangements can be made.

- [Request an Accommodation](#)

During the hearing, if you are having trouble hearing or using the remote hearing technology, let the court know as soon as possible.

**7. What should I expect during the remote hearing?**

- When you first join, you may be placed in a virtual “waiting room” before the court is ready to move you to the “hearing room” for your case. If using Zoom, the court can send you a message while in the “waiting room,” but other participants will not be able to see or contact you.

- When you are moved to the “hearing room,” you will see the judge and other parties on your screen. The judge will make sure you can hear and be heard, and will explain the rules of the remote hearing. If at any time you cannot hear the court or other parties when they speak, immediately let the court know.
- Your hearing is live and will be recorded. Everyone will hear what you say. Place yourself on “mute” when not speaking, and listen carefully to the court’s instructions.
- When your hearing is complete and if using Zoom, the court may place you in a “breakout room” for court staff to speak to you about your case before you leave the remote hearing.

### **8. What if I am participating in a remote hearing, and my internet or phone data runs out or I run out of battery on the device I am using?**

Fully charge your device before the hearing begins and keep it plugged into the charger, if possible. If you sense that you are running out of data or battery, let the court know as soon as possible by sending a message using the “chat” feature. Even if you aren’t using your phone for the hearing, keep it near you with the call-in number easily available, just in case. Please make sure your phone is on silent.

***Contact the court as soon as possible if any technical difficulties prevent you from participating in the hearing either by video or by phone.***

### **9. Do you have any tips for participating in a remote hearing?**

Yes, here are some tips on how to make the most of your remote hearing participation:

#### ***Before the meeting***

- Download the Cisco Webex or Zoom App and test the equipment you plan to use for the video conference at least one day in advance. Make sure your computer or mobile device is fully charged, and that you have good internet connection.
- Sit in front of a neutral background, such as a wall, in a well-lit area where you won’t be disturbed.
- Dress as you would to appear in court.
- Place your camera at face-height.
- Close all other programs on your computer.
- Use earbuds or headphones, if you can. This improves sound quality.
- If you will be using exhibits it is recommended that you:
  - Clearly label all documents and send to the court and all parties at least two business days before the hearing.
  - Ask the court in advance for the best way to show the document during the remote proceeding as court procedures may differ.

#### ***During the meeting***

- Log into the meeting **at least 10 minutes before** the scheduled start time.
- Keep yourself on “mute” when not speaking.
- Keep your telephone near you during the meeting in case of technical difficulties, but make sure it is on silent.

- **Do not make any recording of the hearing.** If you do, the court may sanction you.

#### **10. What should I do if I'm scheduled for an in-person hearing, but prefer to appear remotely?**

If you are scheduled for an in-person hearing, but prefer to appear remotely, contact the court as soon as practicable to request a remote appearance. Last minute requests might not be received or acted upon by the court, so it is recommended that you submit a request no less than two business days before your hearing date. You should double check that you have the hardware necessary to participate remotely before making your request with the court. Requests to appear remotely are subject to court approval and availability. While the Judiciary has significantly expanded its remote hearing capabilities, not all courtrooms have the necessary equipment to hold hearings remotely just yet.

If your request to appear remotely is granted, the court will provide you with the necessary instructions.