



**PARTICIPANT GUIDE  
FOR VIDEOCONFERENCE  
PROCEEDINGS**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of New Hampshire (the “USBC”) has developed this guide for participants attending evidentiary and non-evidentiary video hearings and video trials (each, a “Zoom Proceeding”). The USBC has adopted the ZoomGov platform, a secure system that is separate from the commercial or free version of the platform.

Zoom Proceedings are designed to take place with no one other than USBC personnel physically present in the courtroom. Zoom Proceedings are open to the general public at no charge. All counsel, parties, and witnesses (collectively the “Participants”) that may participate in a hearing or trial via Zoom must undertake appropriate pre-proceeding testing of Zoom. Instructions for use of said videoconferencing technology (including the meeting ID and password) for any pretrial testing and for the Zoom Proceeding will be communicated to the Participants at an appropriate time. Those who receive the Zoom Proceeding invitation from the Court may not forward or otherwise share that invitation with any other persons.

This Participant Guide is a work in progress. As such, your feedback is greatly appreciated by the Court. If you have suggestions, you can email them to Taylor Boilard at [taylor\\_boilard@nhb.uscourts.gov](mailto:taylor_boilard@nhb.uscourts.gov).

## **II. PROFESSIONALISM**

Although the Zoom Proceeding will be conducted by video, all formalities of a courtroom must be observed in all respects. When called to testify, a witness must situate himself or herself in such a manner as to be able to view the video screen and be seen by the Court. The Court and all Participants must be able to see the entire personage of the witness. While any witness is testifying, the witness may not communicate, by any means, with any person (other than the presiding judge and the Participant examining the witness) for any reason. All Participants must

treat Zoom Proceedings as though they were in a courtroom and must adhere to basic courtroom protocols, including courtesy and respect. Only one person should speak at a time, each Participant should speak clearly for the electronic record, and witnesses should pause for objections. The Zoom Proceeding constitutes a court proceeding, and any recording other than the official court version is prohibited.<sup>1</sup> No one may record images or audio of the proceeding from any location.

### **III. CONSIDERATIONS PRIOR TO ZOOM PROCEEDING**

#### **A. Hardware and Software**

Those participating in a Zoom Proceeding must have access to the following hardware and software prior to participation:

- a computer, laptop, or tablet connected to a power source (smartphones are discouraged as the performance is inferior);
- internet access (wired/ethernet connections are recommended, if possible);
- a camera for video input;
- speakers or headphones for clear audio (if necessary, for the individual circumstances); and
- a microphone for speaking (testing the microphone prior to the hearing and having a headphone with a built-in microphone, as well as a backup microphone, is recommended).

#### **B. Best Practices**

**1. Location**—The location chosen by any Participant must be suitable for the Zoom Proceeding. All Participants should consider the following when choosing a location for their participation.

- Is the location quiet?
- Does the location provide some level of privacy?
- Is the location free from distractions?

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<sup>1</sup> It is the policy of the Judicial Conference of the United States to generally prohibit the broadcasting of proceedings from United States courts. Persons granted remote access to proceedings are reminded of the general prohibition against photographing, recording, and rebroadcasting of court proceedings pursuant to Judicial Conference policy. Judicial Conference of the United States, Sept. 20, 1994, pp. 46-47.

- Each Participant should situate himself or herself at an empty table or desk facing the camera, in a manner that avoids distracting items or lighting in the background.

**2. Equipment**—Participants should consider the following recommendations when selecting the equipment to be used for the Zoom Proceeding.

- Use a PC, laptop, or larger tablet for the video portions of the Zoom Proceeding.
- Use a good quality web camera.
- Consider audio quality.
- Set cell phones on silent and use only as backup to the Zoom connection.
- Close all other programs to avoid pop-ups.
- Mute all sounds from all other applications (email notifications, chat messaging, etc.).
- Avoid using battery power only (laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc.). Plug into a good power source while in a Zoom meeting.
- Unless you have confirmed the quality is sufficient, avoid using an open microphone and speakers (such as are built-into laptops, or a webcam mic). Using a good quality headset (headphones with mic) will help ensure you can be heard and can hear others with maximum audio quality.

#### **C. Time Zone Considerations**

Participants should keep in mind that the time on the Zoom invitation sent out by the USBC is prevailing Eastern time.

#### **D. Required Zoom Training**

Zoom provides tutorials for those unfamiliar with the platform. The USBC requires that all who participate in a Zoom Proceeding watch the Zoom tutorial, “*Getting Started with Zoom Meetings*”, which can be found at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/201740096>.

#### **E. Access to Zoom**

Accessing the Zoom Proceeding can be accomplished by downloading and installing Zoom Client for Meeting at <https://zoom.us/download> OR by clicking on your email notification “Join ZoomGov Meeting” link sent by court personnel prior to the hearing and following install client prompts. For tablets, download the Zoom Cloud Meetings app from the Google Play or the Apple Store. For your convenience, the following links will take you to specific Zoom

articles for downloading the software for your computer or smartphone:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362033-Getting-Started-on-Windows-and-Mac>

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362993-Getting-Started-with-iOS>

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/200942759-Getting-Started-with-Android>

Please note that although members of the public and the press may observe the proceeding by utilizing a smartphone, Participants may not connect to the proceeding through a smartphone without first seeking leave of Court.

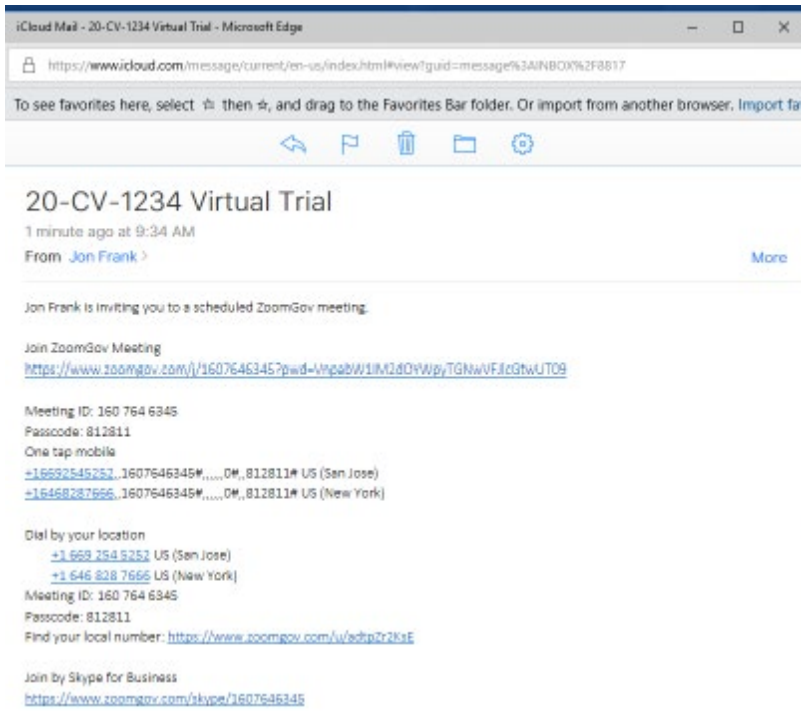
#### **F. Zoom Testing Prior to Proceeding**

The USBC’s Order establishing procedures for the proceeding by video will require that the Participants attend any Zoom test sessions scheduled by court personnel prior to the scheduled Zoom Proceeding. All Participants are expected to conduct any such test sessions from the space and with the equipment they plan to use during the Zoom Proceeding.

#### **IV. ZOOM INVITATION**

After you notify the Court that you will participate in the Zoom Proceeding, and the Court verifies your role, you will receive a Zoom invitation from court personnel with the login information and/or dial-in information to appear at the Zoom Proceeding by video or by telephone, as applicable.

If you are appearing by video, the invitation will include a link to “Join ZoomGov Meeting” as well as a meeting ID, meeting password, and dial-in telephone number. At least 15 minutes prior to the Zoom Proceeding, you should join the meeting to ensure that you can successfully connect and have adequate time to test your system. Below is an example of what a Zoom Proceeding invitation email could look like.



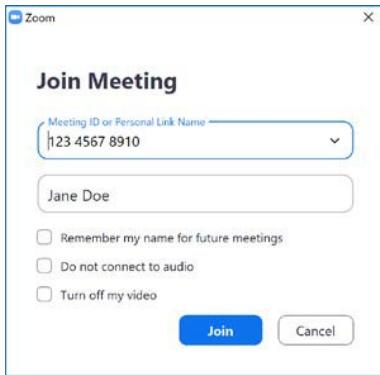
## V. JOINING THE ZOOM PROCEEDING

In order to join the Zoom Proceeding, please complete the following steps:

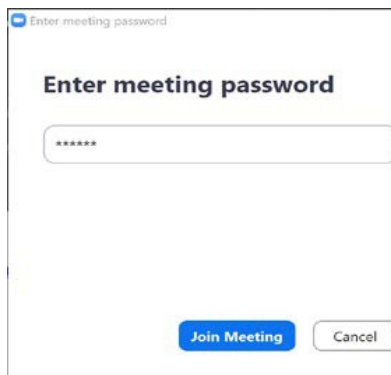
- Open Start Zoom on your computer and select “Join a Meeting”



- In the “Join Meeting” screen, enter the Meeting ID number located in the Court’s email notification
- Enter your first and last name as your Display Name
- Uncheck all 3 boxes
- Click on “Join”



- Next, enter the Meeting Password (located in the Court’s email notification) and click on Join Meeting



When you first join the hearing, you will be placed in a “Waiting Room.” You will see the message “Please wait, the host will let you in soon.” When the Court is ready, court personnel will admit you to the virtual courtroom and, if needed, provide further information.

## **VI. GENERAL PUBLIC AND MEDIA ACCESS**

Any member of the public or the press who would like to observe a Zoom Proceeding must contact court personnel designated in the order that scheduled the Zoom Proceeding to receive access information. Please note that if a request is not made at least one business day before the Hearing, the designated court personnel may not be able to respond.



## VII. BASIC ZOOM CONTROLS

On a computer, a menu bar containing participant tools may appear and disappear as you hover the cursor over the Zoom meeting, typically at the bottom of the screen. Mobile application interfaces may appear differently but will contain most of the same functionality.



- **Mute** – Use to mute/unmute your microphone. Click on the up arrow (next to the Mute icon) to adjust your audio settings. The host may mute or unmute you during the proceeding.
- **Video** – Use to start or stop your video. Participants are required to have video turned on. Click on the up arrow (next to the Video icon) to adjust your video settings.
- **Participants** – Use to view a list of all participants attending the hearing. This feature may be limited or disabled by the host.
- **Chat** – This function will be disabled.
- **Share Screen** – Use to start sharing a screen or an application window on your computer with others in the meeting, including documents stored in a file on your computer. This function may only be used as permitted by the Court and may allow you to present documentary evidence to the Court. To use, click the green up arrow to reveal sharing options (i.e., the entirety of what is on the screen or just a single open window or program). The hearing participants will remain on the screen allowing you to see both document you are sharing and the hearing participants. To end screen sharing, click on the red button on top of the screen which is only visible while you are sharing your screen.
- **Record** – This function will be disabled. Video trials and hearings may not be recorded or otherwise captured from any location by any means.
- **Reactions** – This function will be disabled.
- **Leave** – Use to leave the hearing.
- **View** – To see all hearing participants, choose “gallery view” or to see just the person speaking, choose “speaker view.”

- **Hide Non-Video Participants** – Use to hide all participants who are joined with their video off or by telephone. This can be accomplished in Gallery View, by right-clicking on any participant that either has their video off or has joined by telephone, clicking on the three dots at the upper-right corner of their participant box, and choosing hide non-video participants.