

COUNTY COURT AT LAW OF WALLER COUNTY, TEXAS
VIRTUAL HEARINGS "ZOOM" PROTOCOL

YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COUNTY COURT AT LAW OF WALLER COUNTY, TEXAS, VIA THE ZOOM MEETING APP. You must follow these instructions and appear for your hearing. Failure to appear may result in your claims being denied, or opposing claims granted against you, up to and including a default judgment.

First, visit **zoom.us** and create an account. You must use your real name in setting up your Zoom account. You should also download and install the app on your computer, tablet and smart phone. (You can do this by clicking Resources, and selecting Install Client or App). If you cannot figure out how to do it, just remember this – when you attempt to host or join a meeting, it will ask you whether to open in the browser or open/install the Zoom app. *Instruct it to open in the Zoom app and allow it to install the program.* You may in the alternative, use the call-in information with a voice call, but while you will be permitted to participate, you will not be permitted to testify under oath unless you appear in camera in Zoom.

Witnesses who are not on camera will not be permitted to testify.

Dress codes: Parties and witnesses should dress "smart casual", which is best described as what someone would wear to a first date or at dinner with their parents. Attorneys are responsible for ensuring that your clients and witnesses are aware of and comply with this dress code.

Participating in the Zoom Virtual Courtroom:


1. You will join the virtual courtroom at the scheduled time by clicking the link in the e-vite.
2. When you join a virtual setting, you will appear in a virtual waiting room with all other parties, attorneys and witnesses. There may be several cases set on the docket at that time. When your case is called, the Court will bring you into the virtual courtroom.
3. Because the Zoom app works on all modern smart phones, tablets and computers, each attorney is expected to appear by video, rather than merely by voice.
4. When you enter the virtual courtroom, your video will automatically be on and your audio muted, until the hearing begins.
5. Hearings will be on the record as my court reporter, Sheila May, will be a participant by Zoom as well.
6. Witnesses will be called as in any case, and the Court will bring them in one at a time from the waiting room. Remember, only people on video will be permitted to testify.
7. You may "slip notes" to your attorney, using the private chat feature. To do so, hit the "CHAT" button, and at the bottom of the chat window, pull-down the recipient arrow and select your attorney's name. **However, you are not to communicate with your attorney or anyone else while you are testifying. You are also prohibited from using the chat feature to communicate with witnesses. Witnesses are only permitted in the virtual courtroom while they are testifying. You are not to hold notes or paperwork in your hands while testifying, just as though you were on the witness stand. Witnesses are prohibited from watching the livestream of the hearing on YouTube.**
8. You may, upon request, confer in private with your attorney. You should "slip a note" via chat feature to your attorney and request a moment to confer. If your request is granted by the Court,

you will be moved into a confidential video room or “breakout room” to confer for a few moments.

9. Exhibits and plea papers must be submitted to the court coordinator, Yesenia Pinon, by 5:00p.m. the prior business day before the scheduled hearing, either through Dropbox or via email at y.pinon@wallercounty.us. The only formats that will be accepted are PDF for documents, JPG and PNG for images, and MP4 for videos. No DOC formats or executables will be accepted.
10. All exhibits should be named in this format: beginning with the cause number and followed by a short description, e.g. “20-01-23456 Verizon Cell Records” or “CCL19-123 Plea Papers”. Evidence not anticipated or submitted prior to the hearing may be submitted during the hearing through the Chat/File feature in Zoom. It is strongly encouraged that attorneys communicate prior to the hearing regarding possible stipulations on evidence.

Additional instructions will be given to you by the Court during the hearing.

So ORDERED.



Judge Carol Chaney
County Court At Law
Waller County, Texas