



BALTIMORE COUNTY DISTRICT COURT GUIDELINES FOR REMOTE HEARINGS

Pursuant to the *Amended Administrative Order Expanding Statewide Judiciary Operations in Light of the COVID-19 Emergency*, filed on February 16, 2021, the *Administrative Order on the Implementation of Remote Electronic Participation in Judicial Proceedings*, filed June 18, 2018, and the *Amended Administrative Order on Remote Proceeding Held During the COVID-19 Emergency*, filed May 1, 2020, the following guidelines shall be used for remote hearings. These guidelines shall supplement the Guidelines for Remote Hearings in the Maryland Trial Courts, which are incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein and can be found at the following website:

<https://www.mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/import/eservices/pdf/remotehearingsguidelines.pdf>

1. Requests for remote hearings shall be made at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the hearing date. Requests for remote hearings made less than ten (10) days prior to the hearing date will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may result in a denial of the request or postponement of the case.
2. **Requests shall be made on Form CC-DC-110 (<https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/ccdc110.pdf>) or a motion substantially similar to Form CC-DC-110.**
3. The District Court highly encourages “Damages Only” tort cases be heard via remote hearing.
4. Upon approval by the Court to conduct a proceeding using remote electronic participation, the Court shall distribute by electronic mail an invitation from an approved remote proceeding communication platform (i.e. Zoom for Government). Once you receive notice of the type of remote hearing platform, download any necessary application to your electronic device before the hearing to ensure it is properly working and that there are no issues (e.g. camera working, sound check, sufficient internet connectivity).
5. Each party shall confirm by reply email their intent to attend the proceeding remotely. Even in situations where one party opts to attend a proceeding remotely, another party may elect to attend the proceedings in-person.
6. Attorneys shall forward the email link for the remote hearing to their clients and witnesses. Self-represented litigants will be required to forward the email link for the remote hearing to any witnesses. In the event the witnesses are to be sequestered, see No. 7 below.

7. Witnesses: Prior to the hearing the attorneys and self-represented litigants should file with the Clerk of the Court a list of witnesses, with full names, email addresses, and telephone numbers. If a party requests to have the witnesses sequestered, and an email hearing link was sent by the party to the witness, the remote platform may allow for a witness to remain in a virtual waiting room until the called to testify by a party.
8. All participants are expected to conduct themselves as if they were in the courtroom. Attorneys are expected to abide by the Maryland Attorneys' Professional Rules of Conduct and maintain professionalism in both their appearance and conduct.
9. Exhibits
 - a. Any exhibits intended to be used by any party shall be filed with MDEC. The party shall make reasonable efforts to upload any exhibits at least three (3) days prior to the date of the scheduled proceeding. Exhibits shall be pre-marked.
 - b. Pro Se parties that do not have access to MDEC shall be provided with a hard copy of the pre-marked exhibits prior to the date of the scheduled proceeding.
 - c. Pro Se parties that do not have access to MDEC shall file their exhibits with the clerk's office prior to the date of the scheduled hearing. Exhibits shall be pre-marked. Alternatively, exhibits from Pro Se parties may be emailed to towsontempmove@mdcourts.gov; however, the Pro Se parties must contact the clerk's office to confirm receipt.
 - d. If a party fails to pre-file exhibits, the Court may take any reasonable and appropriate action, including but not limited to, prohibiting the introduction of exhibits or postponing the matter.
10. Day of Hearing
 - a. Party or counsel seeking to attend the proceeding by remote hearing shall login at the specified time and will be placed in a virtual "waiting room" until their case is called.
 - b. The proceeding will be conducted as part of the daily docket.
 - c. Remote hearings are official court proceedings and will be recorded by the Court. The independent recording of any hearings by any participant, including attorneys, is prohibited by Maryland law.
 - i. Video or audio recording of any proceedings by any party other than the court though any device or format is strictly prohibited. Failure to comply may result in the imposition of sanctions or a finding of contempt, or criminal charges.
 - d. During remote hearings, all participants should mute their audio function and unmute only when speaking. This will limit the amount of noise interference during the hearings.
 - e. The trial judge has the discretion to postpone or continue the proceeding upon a determination that the proceeding does not meet the interests of justice or fairness.
11. The Guidelines for Remote Hearings in the District Court for Baltimore County are subject to change.