Remote Hearing Witness Instructions for Entire Tribunal Hearings[1]

Please read the following instructions in advance of your scheduled hearing

IMPORTANT - Remember that a proceeding held through videoconferencing (Microsoft Teams or Zoom) is the same as an in-person hearing in the courtroom. Standards of decorum, behavior, and dress are the same. The virtual courtroom is an extension of the physical courtroom, and the Tribunal Member or Administrative Law Judge has the same authority in both courtrooms. Follow the instructions below when you testify as a witness.

1. **You are NOT permitted to:**

    a. Discuss your testimony with anyone, except lawyers, other representatives, and their staff, until after the remote hearing has concluded in full.

2. **Virtual Hearing Invitation:**

    a. You have received or will receive an invitation to join the video conference from the representative who will be calling you as a witness. If you do not receive the invitation, you can obtain a copy of the Notice of Hearing from the Hearings Calendar page of the Tribunal's website.

3. **Downloading and Testing Software:**

    a. It is your responsibility to download and test either the Teams or Zoom software before the hearing. The software can be downloaded via computer, smart phone, or other device (such as a tablet). Download the application on the device you intend to use during the hearing and make sure that the device has a microphone and webcam (most laptops, smart phones, and tablets do).

4. **Joining the Hearing:**

    a. Please keep in mind that you may be in an electronic waiting room until the Tribunal admits you to the remote hearing.

5. **Environment During Testimony:**

    a. You must be alone (or with your attorney) in a quiet area where you will not be overheard or disturbed by others.

    b. Apart from a party's lawyer and the lawyer's staff, no third-parties shall be physically present in the room where you are testifying.

    c. You cannot reference any notes, books, or any other items during your testimony unless that has been authorized by the court on the record.

    d. You shall turn off all electronic devices, except for the device enabling participation in the hearing.

[1] These instructions are a modification of those provided by the SCAO.

e. No other programs or windows should be open on the witness's device or computer.

f. You shall not exchange any electronic messages during your testimony.

- ✓ If you have any issues, please advise the party you are testifying on behalf of or the court in advance of the hearing if possible.

6. Tips for a Successful Remote Hearing:

a. Ensure a good video conference connection to the court.

b. Your screen will identify you during the proceeding. Make sure that the personal identifier on the screen shows your name and not your phone number.

c. When speaking, remember to look at the webcam.

d. Try to place your mobile device on a solid surface with the camera at eye level or slightly above eye level. Avoid carrying the mobile device in your hand during the proceeding.

e. Do not talk over others and wait until the judge asks you to speak. Speak one at a time and pause prior to speaking in case there is any audio/video lag.

f. Keep your device on mute when not testifying. This reduces feedback and limits background noise. There is an icon located on the screen to mute or unmute.

g. Do not participate while operating a motor vehicle.

h. Do not do other things while on the call/video conference. Pay attention so that you do not miss anything. Turn off any televisions, radios, computers, or other devices.

i. Behave as normally expected of you during a court proceeding. If you become disruptive or there is a need to remove you from the proceeding, you could be placed in the waiting room or removed from the virtual hearing.