

## EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM HEARINGS

**RECORDING OR REBROADCASTING OF A COURT PROCEEDING IS PROHIBITED. THE COURT SHALL MAINTAIN THE OFFICIAL RECORD. A violation of this prohibition may result in sanctions, denial to appear digitally, criminal prosecution, contempt of court, denial of admission to future hearings and other sanctions as the court deems necessary.**

It is the intent of this policy to maintain the security of those participating in Zoom hearings in the Eighth Judicial District. It is also for the purpose of maintaining the solemnity and dignity of each and every proceeding. Attorneys, witnesses, litigants, and observers in a Zoom proceeding with the court must follow the policies below. Adequate preparation and testing of your system is required to ensure a good experience. For security and enforcement of the court policies, the court may disable some Zoom interactions to maintain a safe and secure environment. Individuals attending a Zoom hearing are as much in court as if they were sitting physically in the courtroom. When attending a Zoom hearing in the Eighth Judicial District, the following policies and best practices shall be followed:

- The Eighth Judicial District uses the Zoom platform.
- Each participant will need a device with a microphone as well as a camera.
- Each Judge, at their discretion, may add rules for Zoom hearings.
- The device must have internet access. Please make sure you have sufficient internet connection. An individual appearing by Zoom is solely responsible for an adequate internet connection. Failure to adequately connect may result in a failure to appear, which could result in the court issuing warrants for arrest.
- Avoid using mobile devices if possible. Tablets and Smartphones can be used but their performance is sometimes limited and inferior.
- All participants shall have video and sound turned on and shall remain on mute unless requested to unmute by the court.
- Avoid using battery power only with laptops, if possible, plug in a good power source.
- If using a mobile device, turn off all notifications i.e., phone calls, messaging alerts, e-mails alerts, etc.
- Participants should test Zoom before the hearing including downloading the App at least one (1) day prior to hearing date.
- Use a headset if possible. Avoid using an open microphone and speakers such as are built in laptops and mobile devices.
- To prevent audio issues, use only one (1) Zoom connection to Zoom and **DO NOT** join multiple audio devices from the same room.
- Avoid distracting backgrounds.
- Avoid poor camera angles.

- Participants shall remain in camera frame the whole time. If you need to move around, you should remove yourself from the hearing and rejoin when your task is finished.
- Participants shall provide adequate lighting and sound for the Judge to clearly see and hear. All participants shall be in a quiet location that affords **SAFE AND UNDISTURBED PARTICIPATION**.
- Attire (clothing) shall be appropriate for court proceedings.
- Participants' full name shall appear on the Zoom profiles so each individual can be identified. Participants identified with numbers or slang names may not be admitted.
- The general public, family members, and media may be instructed to view the proceeding by live stream.

### **CRIMINAL HEARINGS**

- Counsel, parties, and witnesses should include a designation such as "State of Kansas", "Defense Counsel", "Defendant by name", "State's witness" or "Defense witness" in their Zoom profile.
- Defense counsel shall advise their clients of their constitutional right to appear in person.



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Benjamin J. Sexton  
Chief Judge  
Eighth Judicial District