

## **Judge Cassling's Zoom Rules and Tips**

1. These rules and tips apply to all court proceedings, including the motion calls. There are additional procedures and rules which must be followed for Zoom trials. Those procedures and rules are contained in the pretrial order which will be issued approximately a week before the trial is scheduled to start. They can also be found on the Court's website.
2. Ability of the public to observe the proceedings. A court hearing/trial is a public proceeding. Thus, any party interested in the case may attend or observe the Zoom hearing. Parties to the case may share the Zoom ID and passcode with any interested persons who wish to listen in. The information will also be posted on the Court Calendar which is located on Judge Cassling's website. Persons who are only observing must turn their cameras and microphones off at all times.
3. Use of video/audio. Turn your video/audio on only if you are participating in the hearing at issue. Only attorneys who are appearing in order to represent parties, pro se parties, and witnesses who are testifying may turn on their cameras and microphones during a court hearing. The video feed will display only the parties who will actually be participating—the Judge, the witness, the lawyer asking the questions, and any parties entitled to appear or object. Other attorneys assisting in the case must have their cameras off and their microphones muted.
4. Use of headsets. We strongly recommend that you use a headset or earbuds *with a microphone* for all Zoom hearings. Using a separate headset microphone instead of a built-in computer microphone reduces distortion, eliminates background noise, and ensures that

everything you say will be picked up. The result will be a more accurate record of the proceeding.

5. Avoid cross-talk where possible. Slow down and do not interrupt. It is vital that everyone slow down when speaking and not interrupt each other. Cross-talk will prevent the Court from understanding what is being said and will prevent the Court Reporter from making an accurate transcript. If repeated, willful, violations of this rule occur, the Court may sanction the offending party.

6. Early opening of the virtual courtroom. Zoom meeting rooms will be opened to the public thirty minutes prior to the scheduled court hearing. Attorneys may use the virtual courtroom during this time to conduct business (i.e, discussion with the trustee's office or opposing counsel) just as they would if appearing in person. Parties engaged in such discussions should be aware that, as soon as the court reporter enters a meeting room, the audio will be recorded.

7. Courtroom dress and decorum. You are reminded that, even though your matter will be heard in a virtual courtroom, parties and their attorneys are expected to conduct themselves with the same formality and decorum as they would if the matter were being heard in the Court's regular courtroom. This requirement includes the obligation, particularly for attorneys, to dress with the same formality and attire as they would if the proceedings were conducted in the Court's regular courtroom. If you are having trouble with the video or audio or other technical difficulties, please speak up immediately if possible. Otherwise, contact the courtroom deputy by email or

phone as soon as possible. Though glitches are expected, they do not always occur on the Court's end, so we will not necessarily know if your Internet goes down unless you tell us.

8. Photos/recordings. No photographs or recordings of the proceedings are permitted. During your presentation or testimony, cell phones must be turned off. More specific rules governing witnesses' access to cellphones during their testimony may be found in the Court's pretrial order for Zoom trials. The court reporter who is present for the hearing will be preparing the only official record of the proceedings.

9. Breaks during the course of a trial. If people want to take breaks during the trial, they should just ask for a break or raise their hand if someone else is speaking. If it is just a simple break, participants should turn off their video and audio during the break and then turn them back on when the trial commences again.

10. Breakout rooms for trials. If any party wants to be placed in a breakout room so that he or she may speak separately to another participant, the party should ask the Court, and, if appropriate, the courtroom deputy will arrange for the breakout and place the parties in the correct breakout room. For scheduled trials, breakout rooms will be set up in advance for the participating parties. Court personnel will also have a chambers breakout room.