



U.S. BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

PARTICIPANT GUIDE FOR VIRTUAL HEARINGS

Hearings before the Court may be in-person only, hybrid (a combination of in-person and virtual) or virtual only. A virtual hearing is one held by video or telephone. The Court holds virtual hearings by Zoomgov.com video conference technology (“Zoom”), which is available without charge for all parties attending the hearing. The Notice of Hearing posted to the docket will describe the type of hearing and parties are urged to read the notice carefully and contact the Court with any concerns about attending the hearing. The following information is designed to assist those attending virtual hearings.

1. Important Reminders:

- **Any audio recording or capturing of images of any virtual hearing is prohibited and violations of this prohibition may result in sanctions. See MLBR 9037-1.**
- **A hearing held by video is an official court hearing and participants are cautioned to act and dress accordingly.**
- **The Court cannot provide technical support to those attending virtual hearings.**
- **The Court may require some parties to attend video hearings by telephone only.**

2. Before Attending a Video Hearing

A. Hardware and Software

Those participating in a video hearing must have access to the following hardware and software prior to attending the hearing:

- a. A computer, laptop, or tablet connected to a power source (smartphones are discouraged as the performance is inferior);
- b. Internet access (wired/ethernet connections are recommended, if possible);
- c. A camera for video input;
- d. Speakers or headphones to hear audio (if necessary for the individual or circumstances);
- e. Microphone for speaking (testing the microphone prior to the hearing and having a headphone with a built-in microphone, as well as a backup microphone, is recommended); and
- f. Access to Zoom. This can be accomplished by downloading and installing Zoom Client for Meeting at <https://zoom.us/download> OR by clicking on your email notification “Join Meeting Now” link sent by the Courtroom Deputy prior to the hearing and following install client prompts. For tablets and smartphones, download the Zoom Cloud Meetings app from the Google Play or Apple Store.



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B. Required Tutorial

Zoom provides tutorials for those unfamiliar with the platform. The Court requires that all who participate in a video hearing watch the Zoom tutorial, Getting Stated with Zoom Meetings, which can be found at lvetraining.zoom.us

3. Hearing Notification for Parties

A. Trial/Evidentiary Hearing

If the hearing is a trial or an evidentiary hearing in an adversary proceeding or contested matter, the parties to the hearing will receive from the Court a Supplemental Order Regarding Trial/Evidentiary Hearing by Video (“Supplemental Order”). The Supplemental Order will set forth the conduct, obligations, and other requirements for all parties participating in the hearing including counsel, pro se parties, and witnesses and will provide instructions for how to attend the hearing by video or telephone. You must review the Supplemental Order prior to the hearing, and you will be bound by its provisions. After you notify the Court you will attend the hearing, and the Court verifies your role, you will receive an email notification from the Courtroom Deputy prior to the hearing with the login information to appear at the hearing by video or, if applicable, the dial- in information to appear by telephone.

B. Nonevidentiary Hearing

If the hearing is a nonevidentiary hearing, the Court will issue a notice or order with general information and how to obtain login information.

C. Further Hearing Notification Information

If you are appearing by video, the notification will include a link to “Join Zoom Meeting” as well as a Meeting ID, Meeting Password, and Dial-in Telephone number. Kindly follow the steps in Section 5 below at least 30 minutes prior to the hearing to ensure that you can successfully connect and to test your system. You must make reasonable efforts to be available for a video test of Zoom when/if notified by the Courtroom Deputy.



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4. General Public Access

Virtual hearings are open to the public. Any person wishing to listen to a hearing must email the applicable Courtroom Deputy at the email address located in the Supplemental Order or on our website at : <http://www.mab.uscourts.gov/mab/judges-and-phone-numbers>. Please note that if a request is not made at least one business day before the Hearing, the Courtroom Deputy may not be able to respond.

5. Media Access

Members of the press seeking to attend a virtual hearing shall follow the instructions located on the Court's website, <http://www.mab.uscourts.gov/mab/media-requirements>.

6. Additional Zoom Information and Frequently Asked Questions.

A. Information Regarding Joining the Zoom Hearing By Video on a Computer or Laptop

1. Open **Start Zoom** on your computer (see #6 above) and select **Join a Meeting**

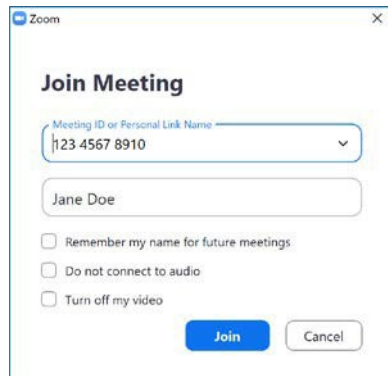


2. In the Join Meeting screen:

- Enter the **Meeting ID** number located in the Court's email notification
- Enter your first and last name as your **Display Name**
- Uncheck all 3 boxes
- Click on **Join**

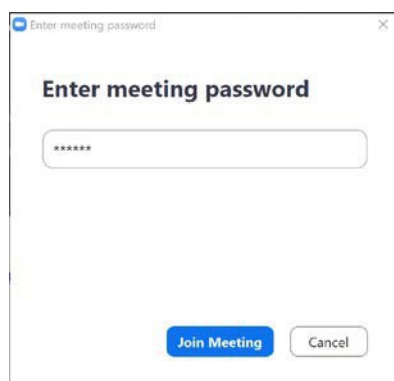


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The image shows a Zoom 'Join Meeting' dialog box. At the top, it says 'Join Meeting'. Below that is a dropdown menu for 'Meeting ID or Personal Link Name' with the value '23 4567 8910'. Underneath is a text input field for the name, containing 'Jane Doe'. There are three checkboxes: 'Remember my name for future meetings', 'Do not connect to audio', and 'Turn off my video', all of which are currently unchecked. At the bottom right are two buttons: 'Join' (in blue) and 'Cancel' (in grey).

- Next, enter the **Meeting Password** (located in the Court's email notification) and click on **Join Meeting**



The image shows a Zoom 'Enter meeting password' dialog box. It has a title bar that says 'Enter meeting password'. The main heading is 'Enter meeting password'. Below this is a password input field with six asterisks '*****'. At the bottom are two buttons: 'Join Meeting' (in blue) and 'Cancel' (in grey).

- When you first join the hearing, you will be placed in a **Waiting Room**. You will see the message "Please wait, the host will let you in soon" as well as a warning regarding recording or otherwise capturing images of the hearing. When the Court is ready, the Courtroom Deputy will admit you to the virtual courtroom and provide further information.



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B. Information About Meeting Control Panel Functions



Mute – use to mute/unmute your microphone. Click on the up arrow (next to the Mute icon) to adjust your audio settings. The host may mute/unmute you during the proceeding.

Video – use to start/stop your video. Participants are required to have video turned on. Click on the up arrow (next to the Video icon) to adjust your video settings.

Participants – use to view a list of all participants attending this hearing. This feature may be limited or disabled by the host.

Chat – use to send a chat message. This function will be disabled.

Share Screen – use to start sharing a screen or an application window on your computer with others in the meeting, including documents stored in a file on your computer. This function can only be used as permitted by the Court and will allow you to present documentary evidence to the Court. Click the green up arrow to reveal sharing options, sharing your entire monitor or just one open window/program (i.e., the entirety of what is on the screen or just a single open PDF/photograph). The hearing participants will remain on the screen allowing you to see both document you are sharing and the hearing participants. To end screen sharing, click on the red button on top of the screen which is only visible while you are sharing your screen.

Record – this function will be disabled. Video trials/evidentiary proceedings may not be recorded or otherwise captured from any location by any means.

Reactions – this function will be disabled.

Leave – use to leave the meeting.



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C. Information Regarding View Options

To see all hearing participants, choose “gallery view” or to see just the person speaking, choose “speaker view.”

D. Information For Presenting Evidence

Those presenting exhibits will utilize the Share Screen option on Zoom and must ensure prior to the hearing that they are able to use Share Screen for identification and introduction into evidence of their exhibits. The exhibits must be open so they are ready to be shared.

E. Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do if I get disconnected?

If you get disconnected, call in to the hearing using the dial-in number provided in your email notification.

Can I record a Zoom Hearing or photograph the screen?

No. No hearing may be recorded or otherwise captured from any location by any means.

Will my telephone number be visible if I call in?

No, the Courtroom Deputy will change your Display Name according to standard protocols.

If the Supplemental Order so indicates, do I have to be on video?

Yes, unless you are a member of the public or you are a party, counsel, or witness and you are expressly exempted by the Court.

Do you have tips for a video appearance?

Yes, make sure the camera is at eye level. You may want to put your device on a stack of books so you can be hands-free and look directly at the camera while talking. Avoid moving around with your device during the proceeding. Avoid speaking to someone not in the proceeding. To see your face clearly, avoid having bright light behind or beside you and sit so that your entire face and shoulders occupy much of the screen. Avoid distracting real or virtual backgrounds.



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What if I want to speak with my representative (or client) privately?

Request that the Court permit you to speak with your representative (or client) privately. The Court may excuse you to a private breakout room or provide further direction as appropriate.

What is a breakout room?

A breakout room is a separate virtual meeting space, apart from the main virtual courtroom. Breakout rooms are private, and only the participants in the room can see or hear what is going on in them. Discussions in the breakout rooms are not recorded and not considered part of the official proceeding or the record of the hearing.

Can I obtain a transcript of a Zoom hearing?

The procedures for obtaining a transcript of a Zoom hearing are the same as for all hearings before the Court. See <http://www.mab.uscourts.gov/mab/obtain-case-documents> for further information.

Do you have further Zoom training suggestions?

Yes. Zoom provides training resources at <https://support.zoom.us>.