

REMOTE PROTOCOLS

A. Zoom Familiarity. Parties, witnesses, participants, and non-participants (collectively referred to as “Participants”) should become familiar with the capabilities of Zoom as it is not the court’s responsibility to train. Participants shall have sufficient hardware and bandwidth to ensure a continuous and smooth transmission of the conference or trial. Parties shall provide adequate instruction to witnesses, participants, and non-participants they intend to have present. Parties may request a “dry run” to allow witnesses, participants and non-participants experience accessing the conference or trial, to ensure connection, and test other capabilities of Zoom by contacting the Court’s Legal Assistant.

B. Equipment. Participants are required to join the conference or trial with a computer or laptop with a camera and microphone for transmitting both video and audio. **Smart phone or tablet connections are not permitted.** Join the conference or trial at least five minutes before it is scheduled to start. Participants will automatically be placed in a waiting room until admitted to the conference or trial. Only those individuals who have been authorized and designated by the parties will be permitted to join.

C. Courtroom Decorum. Proper courtroom decorum is required of all Participants. Participants are reminded to act and dress in the same professional manner as you would when appearing in person in a courtroom.

D. Background Noise. Eliminate all background noise. To avoid feedback or echo do not have multiple computers or phones connected to the conference or trial in the same room. Remain on mute when not speaking. Participants shall take steps to prevent other people, animals or other distractions becoming visible during the conference or trial.

E. Remote Backgrounds. Use of Remote backgrounds is prohibited, except for the “blur” function.

F. Recording. Participants are prohibited from videotaping, broadcasting, televising, audio recording, or taking photographs during the conference or trial.

G. Interruption. Non-participants may not speak or interrupt the conference or trial and if this mandate is violated, they will be disconnected from the proceeding. When the conference or trial begins, and unless the Court is in recess, all non-participants must turn their video off and must mute their microphone.

H. Witnesses. Parties shall coordinate with each other as to when a witness will need to be available to log into the conference or trial. It is the responsibility of the lead attorney for each party to provide the instructions on logging into the Remote conference or trial to their witnesses and to ensure their witnesses are available to testify when called. The party calling a witness must instruct the witness that he or she may not communicate with anyone during the examination other than the examining attorney or the court and that he or she may not consult any written, printed, or electronic information during the examination other than documents provided during the examination. The witness must disable all electronic devices, including cell phones, except the device enabling participation during the examination. Any exchange of messages to the witness during his or her testimony is prohibited.

I. Trial Exhibits. The parties shall comply with the Trial Exhibit requirements in the Court's Procedures and Practices in Conventional (or Settlement) Proceedings.

J. Remote Instructions for Trial. All attorneys and non-attorney representatives will receive an email invitation from the court reporter with instructions on logging into the Remote trial. The court reporter is required to set up a separate breakout room for each party for their use as needed. Judge Gatto requires all witnesses to remain in the waiting room until the court reporter brings them in individually as they are called to testify. It is the responsibility of the lead attorney or non-attorney representative for each party to provide the instructions on logging into the Remote trial to the parties, witnesses, participants, and non-participants. No later than **14 days before trial**, the parties must jointly complete and file with the court and the court reporter the Participation Form.

K. Remote Instructions for Settlement Conference. All attorneys or non-attorney representatives will receive notice from the court with instructions on logging into the Remote conference. The court will set up a separate breakout room for each party for their use as needed. The court will set up a waiting room and all participants should be initially admitted only into the waiting room. It is the responsibility of the lead attorney or non-attorney representative for each party to provide the instructions on logging into the Remote conference to the parties, witnesses, participants, and non-participants. Within **14 days before conference**, the parties must jointly complete and file with the Court the Participation Form.