

# When You Are a Participant in a Virtual Hearing Conducted Via Video or Audio Conference



## Before the Hearing:

Test the video meeting link in advance to ensure you can log on without any difficulties. Ensure your device is fully powered and plugged in.

Wear a headset or earbuds with a built-in microphone to ensure optimal audio quality and minimize echo.

Ensure you are close enough to your microphone, so your voice is captured clearly.

Log on to the video or audio conference 15 minutes prior to your scheduled time to ensure no technical difficulties. Wait until you are admitted into the main room by the host.

Join from a quiet, private location to prevent interruptions and background noise.

Do not use inappropriate backgrounds or profiles.

Your screen name must be in the format "Last Name, First Name" unless otherwise directed by the court.

If you wish, please include your prefix (Mr./Ms./Mx., etc.) preceding your name and/or pronouns in brackets after your name (e.g., he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.)

Turn off notifications on all devices to avoid disrupting the proceeding.



## Joining the Hearing:

***The same formal etiquette and protocol of a physical court is expected in the virtual court.***

Do not eat, smoke, vape or drink anything except water (with the exception of accommodating a disability or medical issue).

Dress appropriately. Counsel must wear business attire or gowns in accordance with the applicable practice directions.

State and spell your last and first name for the record when prompted and advise the court if you are representing a party.

Do not interrupt if you are late for your hearing. Wait until there is a pause and announce your presence in the hearing.



## Addressing the Court:

State your full name for the record before the hearing and when directed by the presiding judicial official.

Speak clearly and concisely when addressing the court.

Do not speak too fast and do not speak over or interrupt anyone in the hearing.



## When you are not speaking:

Mute yourself when you are not addressing the court to prevent audio distortion.

Have necessary documents ready in advance. Do not shuffle papers near the microphone as it disrupts the proceeding.

Do not put the teleconference line on hold as it causes a loud beeping sound in the main conference.

Do not use speaker phone when phoning in as it may cause audio quality issues.



### **IMPORTANT:**

***You are not permitted to make any recording of the proceedings or take photos or screen captures of the proceedings. It is an offence under section 136 of the Courts of Justice Act, and it may constitute contempt of court, for anyone to copy, record, screenshot, photograph, publish, broadcast or disseminate a court hearing or any portion of it including on social media and/or other internet sites without express permission of the Court.***

# Courtroom Etiquette for Virtual Hearings

