

429th District Court
Rules for Remote Proceedings
Updated 7/21/20

The Governor of Texas has issued a disaster proclamation as a result of COVID-19, and the Office of Court Administration (OCA) has provided Zoom accounts for District Judges to conduct hearings remotely. All ESSENTIAL court matters will proceed in the 429th District Court of Collin County by remote appearance. Non-essential hearings will also proceed by remote appearance at the Court's discretion and as the Court's docket allows. The following restrictions and limitations apply for remote proceedings.

PROCEDURES FOR LITIGANTS:

The 429th will be using Zoom video conferencing. It is free to download at www.zoom.us, or you can download the app directly to your cell phone. Your computer must have internet access, a video camera and a microphone.

The Court Coordinator will email you a Zoom invitation with a link to access the hearing and will also provide a phone number if a self-represented litigant or witness does not have internet access. It is your responsibility to forward that information to each individual who needs to participate in the hearing.

If you intend to offer any exhibits during the hearing, you need to email them to all parties, the Court Reporter (CBardwell@co.collin.tx.us), and the Court Coordinator (LPairs@co.collin.tx.us) no later than 4:00 p.m. the day before the hearing. The subject of the email should be the full cause number and "Plaintiff Exhibits" or "Defendant Exhibits." The documents must be in .pdf format. If you fail to follow this requirement, the Court Reporter will not maintain these documents in the record.

Documents which have been e-filed and accepted into the Court's file do not need to be re-sent to the Court.

PROCEDURES FOR WITNESSES:

Witnesses **MUST** appear by video conferencing. The attorney calling the witness is responsible for ensuring that the witness has a separate video and audio feed. Attorneys should not attempt to "share" a connection with a witness. Each individual participating must be located in a separate room from other participants to prevent interference with the audio feed. It is the responsibility of the attorney offering the witness to ensure that the witness has the link to the proceedings and that all exhibits are available to the witness, including those of opposing parties.

FOR THE PUBLIC:

The Open Courts provision of Texas law allows all Texans access to court proceedings. Remote hearings may be live-streamed via the Court's YouTube channel found [here](#). **VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING IS PROHIBITED.** The public may view the proceeding while it is happening but is prohibited from recording the proceeding. Anyone who records the proceedings, other than the official court reporter, may be held in contempt of Court.