



# How to get Zoom for your court

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*Why hold  
virtual  
hearings?*

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## Cannot hold in-person hearings

Courts must not conduct in-person proceedings contrary to the Guidance for All Court Proceedings During COVID-19 Pandemic (“Guidance”) issued by the Office of Court Administration, which may be updated from time to time, regarding social distancing, maximum group size, and other restrictions and precautions. Prior to holding any in-person proceedings, a court must submit an operating plan that is consistent with the requirements set forth in the Guidance. Courts must continue to use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.

18<sup>th</sup> Emergency Order Regarding the COVI-19 State of Disaster, Supreme Court of Texas

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What does the OCA  
Guidance say?  
*Let's take a look!*

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NOTE: Courts are **not required** to commence in-person proceedings on June 1 and should include in their discussions with the county judge/mayor and local health authority a proper date for commencing in-person hearings under the operating plan.

- **Courts should use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.**<sup>2</sup>  
All proceedings, both essential and non-essential, should occur remotely (such as by teleconferencing, videoconferencing, or other means) unless litigants or other court participants are unable to successfully participate in a remote hearing for reasons beyond the court's control.<sup>3</sup> Courts may need to conduct hybrid hearings in certain proceedings.
- **Prior to any court holding in-person proceedings**, other than essential hearings that cannot be conducted remotely because doing so is not possible or practicable,<sup>4</sup> the local administrative district judge for a county or the presiding judge of a municipal court, as applicable, must submit **an operating plan for all courts** in the county or municipality to the Regional Presiding Judge.<sup>5</sup>
  - Each local administrative district judge must attempt to confer with judges of all courts with courtrooms in county buildings, including district judges, county court at law judges, county judges, justices of the peace, associate judges, magistrates, and chief justices of the courts of appeals where applicable.

"Guidance for All Court Proceedings During COVID-19 Pandemic (For Proceedings on or after

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The great new is Zoom will be  
*very* helpful

- Magistration
- Attorneys with multiple appearances
- Litigants who have trouble appearing due to work, lack of childcare, lack of transportation
- Law enforcement can testify easier during off duty hours



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Even better news:



*You can keep doing  
virtual hearings even  
after the pandemic!*

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But the BEST news yet is:



*It's simple to use –  
promise!*

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Because it is required, let's look at how to sign up for Zoom

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## Steps:

1. Texas Courts website: <https://www.txcourts.gov/>
2. Click 'Electronic Hearings (Zoom)' in the top line of the "ANNOUNCEMENTS" box
3. Email: [zoomhelp@txcourts.gov](mailto:zoomhelp@txcourts.gov) to ask for your court's account access

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Next step?



*YouTube!*

*To give the public access to an 'open court'*

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The information on  
this *right under* the  
Zoom info on the OCA  
site

**Let's take a look:**

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The hearings are not meant to be recorded

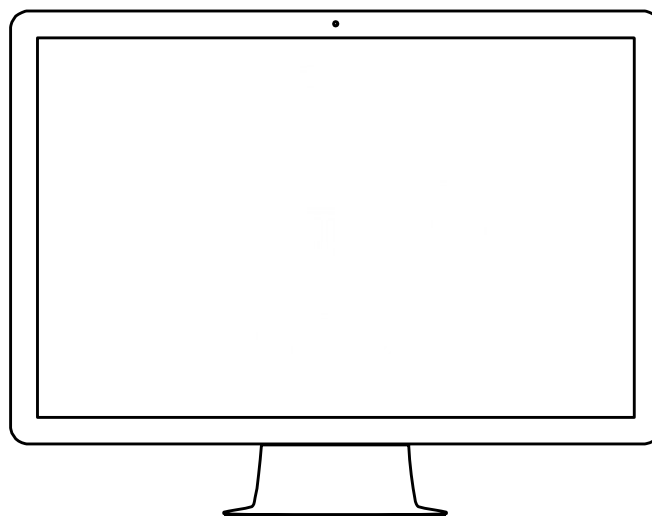
**Be sure to delete**  
**after**



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**Resources on  
TJCTC  
website**

**[www.tjctc.org](http://www.tjctc.org)**



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What does “unable to successfully participate in remote hearings for reasons beyond the court’s control” mean?

- » **This applies to the parties – not the court’s inability to participate. The court has a free Zoom account waiting for it through OCA**
- » **Some parties may not have enough data, a smart phone, internet**
- » **Can set up a ‘Zoom room’ physically at your courthouse**
- » **Can hold in person IF you meet the Regional Presiding Judge’s ‘operating plan for all courts’**

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I need more resources!

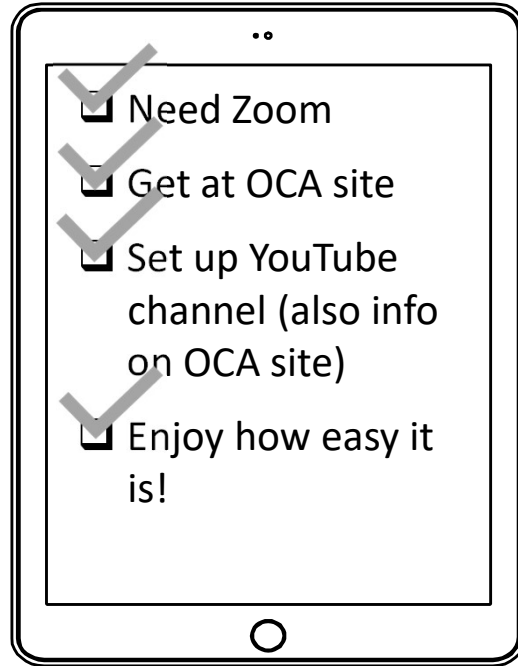
**COVID-19 Justice Court Workgroup:**

1. **Helpful SRL tips**
2. **Guidance**
3. **Don’t forget OCA site and TJCTC site**

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# Let's review!



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# THANKS!

## Any questions?

- » [td24@txstate.edu](mailto:td24@txstate.edu)
- » [www.tjctc.org](http://www.tjctc.org)

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