

Court Appearances - Zoom

1. The court will utilize [Zoom.com](https://zoom.us), a video conferencing platform, to conduct specific hearings.
2. To appear by Zoom, you must have a computer (e.g., desktop, laptop, tablet, smart phone) with a camera and microphone. You must have a functional internet connection.
3. No later than 3-4 hours before the hearing time and date you will receive email instructions for accessing the Zoom hearing. There is a ton of information online about how to use Zoom.
4. When you join the hearing you will be in the Waiting Room and will only be able to enter the courtroom when the Judge brings you in. Like the courtroom, only litigants and their attorneys will be invited into the virtual courtroom or "inside the rail." The court can see that you are in the Waiting Room, do not notify the court or the coordinator that you are there. It is possible you will have to wait in the Waiting Room until an earlier scheduled hearing is completed.
5. Attorneys and litigants using Zoom are expected to be dressed in business casual attire. All rules and regulations relating to court proceedings remain in effect. All participants must be in a location free of interruption or background noise. All persons appearing must be identified on the screen by their real name, not a nickname (e.g., "iphone" or "rivergrrrl.98") to be allowed into virtual courtroom. You must communicate these matters to your client and witnesses.
6. Zoom allows only one person to talk at a time. If the rule is invoked, non-testifying witnesses will be placed in the Waiting Room. If an attorney needs to talk to her client, she can request a private breakout room where they cannot be seen or heard by others.
7. Be aware that having two devices operating Zoom in close proximity will result in feedback. One should be muted.
8. The judge, court reporter and clerk will be in the courtroom for all Zoom proceedings. Court proceedings are open to the public, subject to any state or local order.
9. All exhibits must be *pre-marked*, exchanged (meaning, actually received) and emailed to dclerk@co.matagorda.tx.us at least 24 hours before the hearing is

scheduled to begin. The subject line of your email shall include the cause number and style of your case along with the date and time of the hearing.

10. NO PERSON MAY MAKE ANY AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING OF ANY COURT PROCEEDING. THIS PROHIBITION IS ENFORCEABLE BY CONTEMPT OF COURT AND IS PUNISHABLE BY A \$500 FINE, JAIL FOR UP TO 180 DAYS OR BOTH FINE AND CONFINEMENT. THE COURT REPORTER

11. If a criminal defendant has a setting, the defendant must sign a reset prior to the setting or a warrant will issue. Typically, warrants are held two (2) working days to give the defendant the opportunity to appear before being released to the Sheriff.

12. An attorney's Zoom use is not restricted to court hearings. Consider using Zoom or other similar platforms to conduct meetings with clients, mediations, telework and other matters. [The State Bar of Texas has further information about Zoom](#) accounts for attorneys, but by all means, choose the platform that works best for your purposes.

13. Please review the 130th District Court's Protocols and Procedures for further instructions.