

## **GUIDANCE FOR VIRTUAL APPEARANCES**

**In addition to in-person appearances, some court appearances are now remote. That means some or all of the people will participate by video or by phone. Read below to know how to prepare for your remote appearance:**

### **How do I know if I have a remote hearing?**

The court will notify you if your hearing is remote. Court staff may contact you by U.S. mail, email, or phone.

### **What if I don't have Internet or a phone?**

You can participate in-person by going to the Family Court in the county where your case is pending.

### **What if I cannot join at the scheduled hearing time?**

You must have a good reason why you cannot be present at the scheduled time and you must tell the court as soon as possible and before your court date.

### **Will the court tell me how to join the remote hearing?**

Yes. The court will send you instructions, either by mail or email, on how to join your remote appearance by video and by phone.

### **Preparing for your court appearance**

- Check to be sure you have good Internet or phone connection.
- Download Microsoft Teams, if possible. Practice with the app so you feel comfortable.
- Charge your computer or mobile device.
- Use earbuds or headphones, if you can. This frees up your hands and improves sound quality.
- Try to find a quiet place where no one will interrupt you.
- Have all your papers ready, including a list of what you want to say to the jurist.
- Know what time your hearing starts and how to log on or what number to call.
- If you are appearing by Teams, set the camera at your eye level. If using your phone, prop it up so you can look at it without holding it. Look at the camera, not the screen, when you speak.
- Sit in a well-lit room, if possible.

### **What should I expect during the hearing?**

- When you first join, the clerk will take you from a “waiting room” to the “hearing room.”
- The clerk will make sure you can hear and talk and will go over all the rules.
- If you need an interpreter let the clerk know as soon as possible.
- Your hearing is live and will be recorded. Everyone in the hearing can hear what you say.

### **During the proceeding**

- Mute yourself when not speaking to improve sound quality.
- Whether you are participating by phone or by Teams, say your name each time you speak.
- Talk slowly and do not interrupt other people when they are speaking.