

Local Rules of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda

Title 1. General and Administrative Rules

Chapter 1. General and Administrative Rules

Rule 1.8b. Emergency rule re remote hearings conducted during COVID-19 crisis

(a) Notification of remote hearing

The Court will send notice by email to parties and counsel whose cases have been set for remote hearing. The notice will, among other things, provide information on how to connect to the remote hearing.

To ensure that this notice can be given, all parties and counsel should ensure that they have provided the Court with the following information:

- Party/counsel name
- Case name
- Case number
- Current mailing address
- Current email address

(b) Method of remote video hearing

Remote hearings generally will be conducted through the BlueJeans audio and video conference platform. BlueJeans can be accessed through the following means:

- On the web at <https://www.bluejeans.com>;
- Through the Court's BlueJeans web site at <http://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/Pages.aspx/Remote-Appearances-BlueJeans->; or
- Via a mobile device by downloading the BlueJeans app from either in either iOS or Android format.

In some instances the judicial officer may instead choose to conduct a remote hearing telephonically by using CourtCall or by requesting that the parties set up a dial-in conference call.

(c) Technical considerations for remote video hearings

To facilitate a successful remote video hearing, parties and counsel should do the following prior to the hearing:

- Ensure that their device has a functioning camera, a strong internet connection, and an adequate power source, as video conferences quickly drain some batteries;
- Sit close to their Wi-Fi router or connect via Ethernet cable;
- Attempt to limit other office or household streaming during the hearing; and
- Check their connection, audio and video by joining a test meeting at bluejeans.com/111.

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(d) Conduct of participants in remote hearings

All participants in remote hearings must observe the following code of conduct:

- Refrain from using the speakerphone, which can generate feedback.
- Mute the microphone when not speaking.
- Maintain the same decorum as would be expected in a courtroom.
- Dress appropriately.
- Wait to speak until called on by the bench officer; do not interrupt.
- Speak very slowly and clearly; pause before responding to questions.
- When participating via audio only, identify yourself each time you speak.
- Ensure that only participants recognized by the Court appear on the video feed.
- Prohibit prospective witnesses from being within hearing distance or visual range of the proceedings.

(e) Prohibition on recording or broadcasting remote hearings

Participants may not record, broadcast, or rebroadcast any portion of a remote hearing without the advanced written permission of the judicial officer.

(f) Violations

Any violation of this rule may be the basis for termination or continuance of the hearing, or an order imposing monetary or other sanctions as provided by law.

Rule 1.8b adopted effective May 21, 2020.