



*The*  
**DISCIPLINARY BOARD**  
*of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania*

**GUIDANCE FOR REMOTE PARTICIPANTS**  
**DISCIPLINE OR REINSTATEMENT HEARING**

It is expected that Discipline and Reinstatement Hearings be conducted in-person. However, circumstances may arise that require remote participation by a participant. The following protocols and guidelines are provided to assist participants in preparing for and participating remotely in Discipline and Reinstatement Hearings. Participants should be familiar with this document in advance of the hearing.

**PARTICIPANTS**

Participants in the hearing may include but are not limited to: Panel of Hearing Committee Member(s) (“Panel”), Office of Disciplinary Counsel staff counsel, respondent or petitioner, counsel for respondent or petitioner, witnesses, court reporter, and Disciplinary Board staff.

**OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE DISCIPLINE OR REINSTATEMENT HEARING**

The official record of the hearing shall be the transcript as generated by the court reporter. If the hearing is a public proceeding, it will be streamed on YouTube Live for the public to view.

**PROTOCOLS FOR TECHNOLOGY**

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

Upon guidance from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC), the Disciplinary Board utilizes Cisco Webex technology. Remote participants shall ensure that all necessary equipment and software are in good working order prior to the scheduled hearing. Each remote participant is responsible for his or her own equipment (i.e. laptop, desktop, smartphone, webcam, etc.).

In order to participate in the hearing remotely, each participant must have the following technology available for use:

- Access to one of the following types of equipment:
  - (1) computer with a webcam, microphone, and speakers (a headset with microphone is recommended);
  - (2) video-conferencing system that supports Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) calling;
  - (3) a tablet running Apple iOS or Google Android that has a forward-facing camera, microphone, and speakers; or,
  - (4) a smartphone running Apple iOS or Google Android that has a forward-facing camera, microphone, and speakers.

*\* If connecting from a laptop, tablet, or smartphone, the device should be plugged into wall power.*

- An internet connection download speed of at least 1.0 Mbps and upload speed of at least 1.5 Mbps (to test your internet connection, please visit <https://www.speedtest.net/>).

- An email address to be used to receive the invitation to the hearing. The invitation will come from a “@pacourts.us” email address.

### GETTING STARTED WITH CISCO WEBEX

Participants should have the Webex Meetings application downloaded to their computer or device. The application can be downloaded at <https://www.webex.com/downloads.html>. Click the Download button to begin downloading the application.

If possible, you may wish to download the Cisco Webex application to a secondary device that has access to a data plan (i.e. smart phone). This will provide a backup in the event you encounter internet connectivity problems with your primary device.

Participants are encouraged to further familiarize themselves with the Cisco WebEx technology. Specifically, the following are recommended:

- [Getting Started with Cisco Webex Meetings for Attendees](#)
- [Join a Webex Meeting](#)
- [Choose Your Audio and Video Settings Before You Join a Webex Meeting or Event](#)
- [Cisco Webex Meetings Video Tutorials](#)

### USING WEBEX AND PREPARING FOR THE HEARING

Close all other applications on your computer (e.g. Microsoft Edge, Internet Explorer, Chrome, etc.), your email (e.g. Microsoft Outlook, Gmail, etc.), and calendar. This will also prevent any application from inadvertently making sounds during the hearing (such as calendar or email alert chimes). If you have remote or virtual private network (VPN) access to any other system, ensure you are disconnected from such remote access so as to prevent technical difficulties.

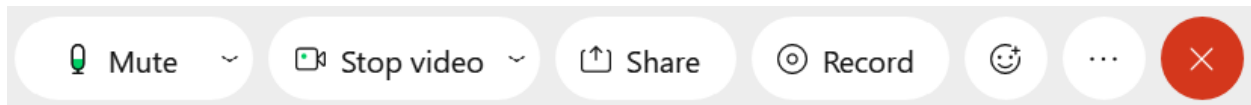
Sit facing a light source (i.e. face a window or a desk lamp) so that your face is well-illuminated and clearly visible. Sitting with your back to a window or bright light source reduces video quality and reduces your image to a silhouette.

Locate your device’s camera and make sure the lens is not blocked. Position the camera as close to eye level as possible rather than tilting your screen. Consider propping up your device on books to elevate it. Make sure your head and shoulders are visible on the screen.

Configure and test your audio and video prior to joining the Webex conference. Click the arrow to the right of the audio or video button, select your audio playback device and microphone, and then test your setting. *If you are using a headset, plug it in to your device prior to logging into the Webex conference. If you do not plug in the headset prior to joining the motion hearing, you may have to log out and log back in in order to allow other participants to hear you.*

## WEBEX CONTROLS DURING THE HEARING

Participants have access to various functions within the Webex software.



From left to right, the controls above are:

1. Mute/Unmute microphone
2. Turn On/Off camera
3. Share your desktop or files
4. Recording control (only available to the host)
5. Reactions – emojis used to react to comments in Chat (not hearing appropriate)
6. More Options – has more controls available within
  - a. If you are having audio difficulties with your computer, you can have the system call you directly.
    - i. Click the ... icon and then choose “Switch Audio.”
    - ii. Click the “Call Me” option. Enter the phone number that the system should call and press the switch button. When the call comes in, you will be prompted to press the number “1” to connect.
7. Leave/End the meeting. At the end of the proceeding, press this icon to be disconnected.

## PROTOCOLS PRIOR TO THE HEARING

The protocols outlined below will be employed in advance of the hearing:

- All remote participants will be required to participate in a test session that will be scheduled with Disciplinary Board staff within one week prior to the scheduled hearing.
- At least one business day prior to the scheduled hearing, the Disciplinary Board shall provide all remote participants, and counsel, as the case may be, with the information required to connect to the proceeding. This invitation is sent by email from a “@pacourts.us” email address. Participants should monitor SPAM and/or junk folders for the invitation if they have not received it. Participants who have not received the invitation should contact Special Counsel.
- It is the responsibility of counsel or the pro se respondent or petitioner to provide the connection information to their clients and witnesses who will be participating remotely.

## PROTOCOLS DURING THE HEARING

### DECORUM

The scheduled hearing is a formal proceeding and is therefore an extension of the courtroom. Remote participants shall use a private and quiet space that provides for no interruptions. An appropriate camera

background is expected. Appearing for the hearing remotely while outdoors, in-vehicle, occupying a public space, or performing personal functions is not permitted.

#### WITNESSES AT THE DISCIPLINE OR REINSTATEMENT HEARING

It is the responsibility of the party calling the witness who is appearing remotely to prepare the witness and to ensure the witness has the necessary technology to participate in the hearing from his or her location. Witnesses will be placed in the virtual lobby and will be unable to communicate with any others in this location. When the witness is called to testify, he or she will be brought into the meeting room to verify appropriate audio and video connectivity, and to commence testimony.

#### EXHIBITS AT THE HEARING

A party who is calling a witness who is appearing remotely shall ensure that their witness has access to all of the exhibits necessary during his or her testimony.

#### TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES DURING THE HEARING

A remote participant who encounters technical difficulty during the hearing shall first try to reconnect to the Webex conference. In the event that a participant is unable to reconnect, the participant shall immediately notify Special Counsel of the difficulty via telephone at (717) 231-3390.

#### TIPS FOR PARTICIPATION USING REMOTE TECHNOLOGY

All remote participants are encouraged to follow these tips for successful participation:

- Enter your name completely (e.g. John M. Doe) when signing in.
- You should “mute” yourself when not speaking in order to avoid background noise. The host of the WebEx conference may mute any participant if background noise is disruptive.
- Use earbuds, headphones, or a headset with microphone to avoid feedback and ensure good audio quality.
- Be mindful of your behavior. On a video conference, you are visible at all times. If you wouldn't do it in the courtroom, don't do it on the video conference.
- Be respectful of others when talking. Participants should speak one at a time and pause briefly prior to speaking in the event of any audio or video lag.
- Position the camera at or slightly above eye level. Do not hand-hold mobile devices and do not lay phones or tablets flat on a desk or tabletop.
- Check your lighting. Ideally, sit facing a window or position a lamp where light is directly on your face. Do not position yourself in front of a window, as the light may blind the camera and darken the image.
- Dress in a soft solid color. If wearing a tie, choose a solid color.

Adopted 2021.07.23  
Revised 2021.10.05  
Revised 2022.04.25  
Revised 2022.08.11  
Revised 2023.05.11