

RULE 4 REMOTE APPEARANCES AND PROCEDURES

All appearances under this rule shall comply with SCR 45 and 241 as amended.

A. General Rules

1. Any judge in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit has the discretion to create and maintain a remote hearing or docket to address safety or health concerns, provide cost or time savings to the court or parties, or improve efficiency of court operations. In the creation and scheduling of such hearings, judges and courthouse personnel should strive to utilize technology which is readily available to the public and attorneys and is available at either no cost or low cost to participants.
2. Nothing in this rule requires a judge to hold either a remote hearing in any proceeding unless otherwise mandated by law or other established court procedure – see Section D below. Those proceedings allowed to be conducted by video or telephone under SCR 45(c) - 45(e) may be required to be in person if the judge determines the nature of the hearing, the conduct of the parties or attorneys in the case or the need to allow parties and their attorneys to communicate and negotiate effectively requires it.
3. When a remote hearing involves a defendant in custody, the judge shall provide a reasonable opportunity for counsel to communicate privately with said defendant prior to, during and immediately after the proceeding.
4. A judge may direct an attorney to initiate a remote hearing in an individual case as necessary, if that order does not place an undue burden on any one party or attorney.
5. Persons who appear in a remote hearing must conduct themselves in the same manner and in accordance with the same standards as the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, Illinois Supreme Court rules, and Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court Rules. The same rules regarding dress, conduct, demeanor, language and respect for the Court and staff apply as if the participants were physically present in the courtroom.
6. Judges should make reasonable efforts to allow public viewing of any public court proceeding conducted by video.
7. In addition to paragraph C below, remote hearing instructions and information will be made available to the bar associations of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit.

B. How to join a remote proceeding in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit

1. Go to Zoom.us (the Chrome browser works best). Select “Join Meeting” in the upper right-hand corner. Enter the Meeting ID, which is a series of numbers, as provided by the Court.
2. In McLean County, visit the Remote Hearings Directory:
(<https://www.mcleancountyil.gov/circuit-court/remote-hearings>) to hyperlink to the appropriate court proceeding.

3. If you cannot access the virtual courtroom through a computer or smart phone, please dial the following phone number: 1-312-626-6799 and enter the Meeting ID, followed by # when prompted.

C. Where to find information and assistance for remote proceedings

1. In Ford, Livingston, Logan, McLean and Woodford Counties, contact the office of the judge assigned to the case or the Circuit Clerk's office:
 - a. Ford County Circuit Clerk 217-379-9420
 - b. Livingston County Circuit Clerk 815-844-2006
 - c. Logan County Circuit Clerk 217-735-2376
 - d. McLean County Circuit Clerk 309-888-5301
 - e. Woodford County Circuit Clerk 309-467-3312
2. Remote hearing information and instructions will be posted in public areas in the five county courthouses of the circuit.
3. In McLean County, visit the remote hearings directory:
(<https://www.mcleancountyil.gov/circuit-court/remote-hearings>)

D. Proceeding types exempted from remote proceedings by case category

1. Criminal Felony and Criminal Misdemeanor
 - a. Hearings on release from detention
 - b. Recall of a warrant (unless represented by an attorney)
 - c. Evidentiary hearings
 - d. Plea of guilty
 - e. Sentencing
 - f. Jury or bench trial
 - g. Hearing to revoke probation
 - h. Hearings conducted under the Sexually Dangerous Persons Act
 - i. All specialty court proceedings (unless waived by the Court)
 - j. All contempt of court proceedings
2. Civil (all subcategories)
 - a. Evidentiary hearings
 - b. Settlement conferences
 - c. Jury or bench trial
 - d. All contempt of court proceedings
3. Family and Dissolution
 - a. Evidentiary hearings
 - b. Settlement conferences
 - c. Bench trials
 - d. Recall of a warrant (unless represented by an attorney)
 - e. All contempt of court proceedings
4. Juvenile Delinquency
 - a. Hearings on release from detention
 - b. Recall of a warrant (unless represented by an attorney)
 - c. Evidentiary hearings
 - d. Plea of guilty
 - e. Sentencing

- f. Jury or bench trial
 - g. Hearing to revoke probation
 - h. Hearings conducted under the Sexually Dangerous Persons Act
 - i. All contempt of court proceedings
5. Juvenile Abuse & Neglect
 - a. Evidentiary hearings
 - b. Adjudication hearings
 - c. Permanency hearings
 - d. Disposition hearings
 - e. Termination of Parental Rights
 - f. All specialty court proceedings
 - g. All contempt of court proceedings
 6. Major Traffic, Minor Traffic, DUI, Ordinance Violations
 - a. Hearings on release from detention
 - b. Recall of a warrant (unless represented by an attorney)
 - c. Evidentiary hearings
 - d. Plea of guilty (unless waived by the Court)
 - e. Sentencing (unless waived by the Court)
 - f. Jury or bench trial
 - g. Hearing to revoke probation
 - h. All specialty court proceedings
 - i. All contempt of court proceedings

E. How to request a remote proceeding

1. Parties who wish to appear remotely for a future court appearance where the proceeding is otherwise scheduled to be in-person shall make such request to the Court in writing or in-person. The requirement of "in writing" may include email correspondence if allowed by the Court. Any said request shall be sent to the other party or attorney for a party in the case. Said request must be made at least three business days prior to the court proceeding. The other party or attorney may make written objection to the Court of said request. It is within the discretion of the Court whether to grant any request where an in-person appearance is otherwise required.
2. Attorneys who wish to appear remotely must follow the steps outlined in section E (1) above and must notify their client of any such request. If the party is required to attend the proceeding in person, the attorney shall be so required unless their appearance is waived by the Court. The other party or their attorney may make written objection to the Court of said request. It is within the discretion of the Court whether to grant any request where an in-person appearance is otherwise required.
3. In its discretion, the Court may convert an in-person proceeding to a remote proceeding for the health, safety or welfare of the parties or attorneys, or efficiency of the Court. The decision of the Court to switch to a remote proceeding is not determinative for future court hearings.