



## Supreme Court of Illinois

March 17, 2022

### **ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT CREATES REMOTE PROCEEDINGS TASK FORCE**

Illinois Courts remained open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic by moving many court proceedings, where appropriate, to remote hearings in almost every type of case. In recognition of the importance of continuing the positive change brought by the transition to virtual hearings, the Supreme Court’s Illinois Judicial Conference has formed a Remote Proceedings Task Force (Task Force). The Task Force is charged with evaluating the current state of remote proceedings and connecting best practices for virtual hearings from across the state.

“Remote proceedings are not the wave of the future, they are our present,” Chief Justice Anne M. Burke said. “Illinois Courts have a long history of increasing access to justice and responding to the needs of the communities they serve. The Task Force will be an important part of ensuring that progress continues. While this work is going on, it is expected that courts across the state continue to offer remote appearances.”

The Task Force is composed of circuit judges, trial court administrators, circuit clerks, and practicing attorneys, each bringing a unique and essential point of view. You can find a list of Task Force membership [here](#) and learn more about the Illinois Judicial Conference [here](#). The Task Force is expected to make recommendations to the Supreme Court about potential rule and policy changes and trainings to further the use of virtual methods for conducting court business.

The Illinois Supreme Court has recognized the importance of remote hearings in Supreme Court Rules [45](#) and [241](#) and emphasized that remote appearances should not be viewed as merely temporary COVID-induced measures. In addition, remote hearings constitute a boon not only to self-represented litigants but also attorneys and other court participants who have reaped numerous benefits. Remote hearings have brought greater party participation, fewer defaults and failures to appear, and enhanced case management and scheduling.

“The Supreme Court is committed to increasing court access for litigants,” said Supreme Court Justice David K. Overstreet, a member of the Illinois Judicial Conference. “Remote hearings have proven to increase attendance and participation. We look forward to receiving the Task Force’s recommendations.”

To ensure each courthouse across the state has the needed technology to provide court participants with the ability to appear remotely, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts is currently in the process of distributing significant grant funding to every circuit in the state to permanently update and upgrade technology in courtrooms to accommodate proceedings that are entirely remote or a mix of participants appearing in the courthouse and participants appearing by videoconference (e.g., Zoom) or by telephone.

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