

the applicant of the time and place of the appearance when the applicant files the application.

Rule 4.4 Remote Appearances

(a) Permitted Remote Appearances and Required Personal Appearances.

Except as otherwise set forth in this Rule, a person's opportunity to participate remotely in civil, juvenile, and criminal matters shall be as set forth in S. Ct. R. 45, 725 ILCS 5/106D-1, and 725 ILCS 5/109-1(f). Unless the Court has waived a person's appearance for a specific hearing or proceeding, a person not permitted by S. Ct. R. 45, 725 ILCS 5/106D-1, or 725 ILCS 5/109-1(f) to appear remotely must appear in person for the hearing or proceeding.

(b) Exemptions.

Pursuant to S. Ct. R. 45(b)(1), Rochelle municipal court proceedings and all juvenile matters are exempt from the option in S. Ct. R. 45 to appear remotely without advance approval. Persons may appear remotely in these exempted case and proceeding types only with the Court's approval.

(c) Procedures for Appearing Remotely.

Persons permitted to appear remotely should be aware of the following:

(1) All courts within the Circuit use Zoom for remote hearings. All persons desiring to appear remotely must be able to access and use the Zoom platform with devices capable of receiving and transmitting data without interruption.

(2) Zoom links to judges' courtrooms can be found on the Circuit's website, www.15thjudicialcircuit.com, or on each county's website:

- Carroll County: www.carroll-county.net/judicial/index.php
- JoDaviess County: www.jodaviesscountyil.gov/court
- Lee County: www.leecountyil.com/490/Judicial-Virtual-Courtroom-Links
- Ogle County: www.oglecounty.org/departments/circuit_clerk/zoom_links_for_court.php
- Stephenson County: www.stephensoncountyil.gov/government/circuit_clerk_and_court/zoom_courtrooms.php

(3) Other information and assistance regarding remote appearances can be obtained from the websites identified above and from the Circuit Clerks:

- Carroll County: (815) 244-0230
- JoDaviess County: (815) 777-2295
- Lee County: (815) 284-5234
- Ogle County: (815) 732-1130
- Stephenson County: (815) 235-8266

(d) Procedures for Requesting Permission to Appear Remotely. Unless otherwise allowed by (1) an individual Court's own standing order or (2) a case-by-case exception made within the Court's discretion, a person seeking permission to appear remotely pursuant to S. Ct. R. 45(c) or (d) must seek that permission through a written motion filed, scheduled, and served as required by Local Rule 5.1.

(e) Conduct of Remote Hearings and Required Decorum. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, remote hearings shall be conducted as follows:

- (1) The Court will host the hearing and control entry into the hearing;
- (2) If requested by a party and if technologically feasible, the Court may allow breakout meetings, private chats, or other private communication between attorneys and clients during the hearing; provided, however, that during the testimony of any person, that person may not communicate by private chat with any other person;
- (3) The Court is responsible for the official record of the remote hearing, and no party may record any part of the hearing through the Zoom platform or any other means;
- (4) Any person permitted to testify remotely must appear by both video and audio;
- (5) When a participant is not speaking, the participant shall mute her or his microphone;
- (6) All participants must be in an environment free of video and/or audio distractions;
- (7) No exhibit may be used during a remote hearing unless a copy of the pre-marked exhibit was provided to all other parties and the Court at least one full business day before the hearing;
- (8) The Court shall be entitled to terminate or suspend the remote hearing for technological or other reasons at any time;
- (9) Remote hearings shall be conducted to the same standards as hearings in a courtroom and in accordance with the Illinois Rules of Civil Procedure, Illinois Rules of Evidence, Illinois Supreme Court Rules, and the Local Rules;
- (10) The precise method in which a remote hearing will be conducted remains within the discretion of the Court, within the bounds of applicable law, rules, and practice procedures;

- (11) All persons must use and display their real names (not aliases, “user,” or “iPhone”) on the Zoom platform to gain entrance to and participate in the hearing;
- (12) If a party or a party’s witness requires the use of an interpreter, that party shall be responsible for coordinating with the Court how the interpreter will be obtained and involved in the hearing;
- (13) Participants should be appropriately dressed and conduct themselves as they would in a courtroom;
- (14) Participants should ensure any background used is appropriate; and
- (15) Participants should not sit directly in front of or behind a window or otherwise use lighting that interferes with the quality of the video.

(f) **Communication of Rule 4.4.** To ensure persons desiring to appear remotely are informed regarding this Rule 4.4, a link to Rule 4.4 shall be created on each website identified in Rule 4.4(c)(3) and copies of Rule 4.4 shall be posted in each Circuit Clerk’s office and available in each courtroom.

Rule 4.5 [Reserved]

Rule 4.6 **Hearings by Telephone**

(a) **When Permitted.** Pursuant to S. Ct. R. 185, routine, uncontested motions and pre-trial conferences may be held in civil cases by telephone if requested by all attorneys or SRLs of record, supported by existing technology, and allowed by the Court.

(b) **No Record.** Unless arranged with the Court before a telephone conference, no verbatim record will be taken or maintained of any telephone conference conducted pursuant to Rule 4.6(a).