

TRAFFIC ZOOM HEARINGS – FAQ'S

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VIRTUAL HEARINGS

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and for the safety of all parties, arraignments, compliance hearings and courts trials on cases alleging infraction violations may be conducted remotely. Infraction cases which are conducted remotely will be heard by videoconference/phone using Zoom and live-streamed on the Fresno Superior Court's YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1QI1GyLuShmXKOhqJbxqqQ>. Appearance by Zoom is free. Any recording of the hearing is prohibited.

Although you may choose to appear in person at the courthouse, we strongly encourage you to appear remotely. Judges and court staff will appear remotely. Defendants, attorneys and witnesses may continue to appear in person at the courthouse; others may not be admitted to the courthouse.

Any defendant, parent/guardian of a juvenile defendant, defense witness or attorney who is requesting to attend remotely must submit their request and email address to the Traffic Department **at least three (3) court days before the scheduled hearing or due date**. Failure to comply with this notice requirement may result in the request for a remote appearance being denied or the hearing being rescheduled.

All documents, photographs, videos and other evidence must be filed with the Court **at least two (2) court days before the scheduled hearing date or due date**. Failure to file your evidence timely with the Court may result in your hearing being continued or your evidence not being considered.

CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS

If you need additional information, please contact the Traffic Zoom Coordinator at (559) 457-1700 or email at infodeskcrim@fresno.courts.ca.gov.

FAQ's¹

1. Is the virtual courtroom more casual than a regular courtroom?

Consider the videoconference to be a courtroom. Dress neatly. Do not wear printed t-shirts, tank tops, or hats. Dress like you are going to a job interview. If at all possible, a caregiver should help keep your child occupied.

2. How do you know if you have court by Zoom?

¹ Adapted from the self-help information provided at: <https://texaslawhelp.org/article/virtual-court-3>

You will first receive either a Notice of Calendar Setting or a Mandatory Reminder Notice or Juvenile Courtesy Notice. These notices will provide you with your court date or your due date. These notices will also explain the options you have for resolving your case without making a personal appearance in an actual courtroom. If you want to appear remotely over ZOOM you must submit this request along with your case number, phone number and email address to the Traffic Department **at least three (3) court days before your scheduled hearing date or due date**. You can: (1) fax the Court at (559) 457-1710; (2) send mail to the Court at: Fresno Superior Court, ATTN: Traffic Division, 1100 Van Ness Ave. Fresno, CA. 93724; or (3) email the Court at infodeskcrim@fresno.courts.ca.gov.

Once the Court receives your request and email address the Court will email you an invitation and a link to participate in the ZOOM hearing. Do not try to start your own Zoom session. Judicial officers have access to professional versions of Zoom which allow them control the proceeding (for example, controlling who can talk and when) almost as if it were really in a courthouse.

3. I want to show the judge some evidence. How do I do that?

You must provide your evidence to the Court **at least two (2) court days before your scheduled hearing date or your due date**. You can: (1) fax the Court at (559) 457-1710; (2) send mail to the Court at: Fresno Superior Court, ATTN: Traffic Division, 1100 Van Ness Ave. Fresno, CA. 93724; or (3) email the Court at infodeskcrim@fresno.courts.ca.gov. If your evidence is not received at least two (2) court days before your hearing date or due date your matter may be continued or your evidence may not be considered.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING EVIDENCE

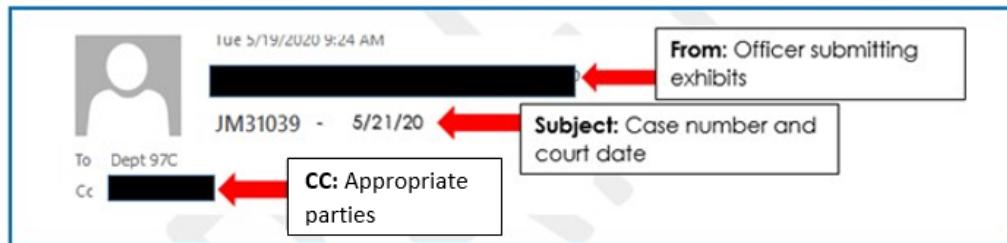
All evidence to be considered by the Court for a Zoom Court Trial hearing should be submitted to the following e-mail address at Dept97C@fresno.courts.ca.gov.

To ensure all exhibits are received and attached to the proper case before the hearing, we ask that you submit as follows:

What to include in the subject line:

SUBJECT LINE: In the subject line of the e-mail should have the case number and court date.

EXAMPLE SUBJECT LINE FOR EMAIL (include Case Number and Court Date)



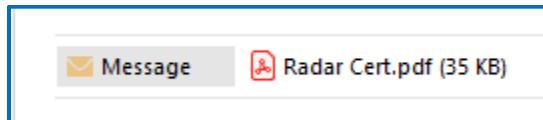
What if I have more than one piece of evidence?

Submit EACH exhibit separately. Do not scan them all into one PDF file.

How do I name the file?

Label each PDF exhibit with the name of the document/exhibits a PDF name would be: Radar Certification

EXAMPLE OF FILE NAMING



What if I have more than one case?

Send a separate email for each case with the evidence to be considered.

What if I have video or audio recording I would like to present?

Any evidence that is submitted for review in court needs to be in a format that can be transmitted to the Appellate Court for review. All video and/or audio recordings must be submitted on a CD, DVD or usb drive that will be retained by the court.

You can deliver to the courthouse and place in the **drop box** is open Monday-Friday from 8 AM to 4 PM, except holidays or **mail** it to: Fresno Superior Court, Attn: Traffic Department, 2317 Tuolumne Street, Fresno CA 93721.

4. Recording of the hearing is prohibited. What does that mean?

Any recording of a court proceeding held by video or teleconference, including "screenshots" or other visual copying or audio recording of a hearing, is absolutely prohibited. Violation of these prohibitions may result in sanctions, including removal of court-issued media credentials, restricted entry to future hearings, denial of entry to future hearings, or any other sanctions deemed necessary by the Court.

5. What are some other Zoom tips?

You should practice using Zoom before court, if at all possible. You may also benefit from watching court hearings beforehand.

Some other tips:

- Wear a solid color (like a black robe for judges), not a pattern.
- When speaking, speak clearly and look directly at the camera, not at the screen.
- Position the camera at your eye level or slightly above eye level.
- Be mindful of your surroundings for example the following: Check the lighting. Light from a window behind you might blind the camera, making you look dark. Light above you in the center of a room might cast shadows. Ideally, put a lamp, or sit facing a window, where light is directly on your face. Also be aware that your screen may cast light that can make you look blue.

- Speak one at a time and pause prior to speaking in case there is any audio/video lag.
- Participants must mute themselves when not speaking in order to avoid any potential background noise.
- Do not put your phone on hold if you are participating by phone.
- **Test your connection and setup with Zoom by testing your connection with a test meeting.**

6. I am having a hard time with internet access now.

There may be some resources available during the COVID-19 crisis. Please see:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/availableinternetplans.asp>.

You can appear by Zoom by participating on video, but if you do not have access to the internet, you may appear by phone by simply calling in to the phone number that will be provided to you in the invite that will be sent to you from the following email address: Dept97C@fresno.courts.ca.gov.

How do I use ZOOM?

Preparing to Participate in a Zoom Video Conference²

If you will be a **party to the case** in a Zoom video conference with the Court (attorney, witness, case party, etc.), preparing properly will ensure all involved will have a good experience using this system. If you wish to observe the Zoom video hearings with the Court, please go to the Fresno Superior Court's YouTube page where you can observe the **COURTROOM LIVE STREAMS** as they occur. Observers will be able to see and/or hear the Court proceeding in the same manner as the participants, and will have a similar experience to sitting in the courtroom gallery. Please note that some proceedings may provide phone-only connectivity via Zoom or other means. For security and enforcement of court standards, the Court may disable Zoom interactions (such as chat, screen share, whiteboard, Q&A, raise hand, react, etc.). The Court will not provide any type of support on Zoom for participants. Please contact the Zoom Help Center, your local IT support, or other online guidance.

Zoom Account and Software

- If you do not already have a Zoom account, set one up at <https://zoom.us>. A paid Zoom account is **not necessary** for any interaction with the Court.
- Log into <https://zoom.us/profile> and set your name, phone and email. Including a photo will help identify you when connecting.

² CREDIT: <https://www.cand.uscourts.gov/zoom/>

- Install the **latest** Zoom Client for Meetings at <https://zoom.us/download>. Although Zoom can be used in a browser only, it is very limited. The full Zoom client is required for best functionality and best experience with the system.
- **Always keep your software up to date!** The Zoom Client automatically updates itself upon launching the software, but you can also [update it manually](#).

Settings

Zoom has a lot of settings, and as Zoom updates their system they may change aspects. Below are a few recommended settings:

- **General:** Ask me to confirm when I leave a meeting: ON (Helps prevent unintended departures)
- **Video:** Enable HD: OFF (Helps prevent poor video performance, and usually looks just as good as HD)
- **Video:** Always display participant names on their video: ON
- **Video:** Always show video preview dialog when joining a video meeting: ON (Final check before your video displays to others)

Learning

The Court will only be using the audio and video functionality of Zoom. Other functions like text chat, screen sharing, etc., may not be used, and will likely be disabled for your session, so you only need to learn the basics of using Zoom for audio and video. Learn how to select the correct source for both, and how to mute/unmute your audio, and Start/Stop your video:

- Video: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/200521865-Video>
- Audio: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/200319096-Audio>
- Learn how to easy mute/unmute with Push to talk: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360000510003-Push-toTalk>
- Hot Keys and Keyboard Shortcuts to start/stop video, mute, etc.: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/205683899-Hot-Keys-andKeyboard-Shortcuts-for-Zoom>

Recommendations

- Avoid using a mobile device if possible. Although tablets (iPads) and smartphones can be used, they are very limited, and the performance is inferior.
- Avoid using battery power only (laptops, etc.). Plug into a good power source while in a Zoom meeting
- Unless you've confirmed the quality is sufficient, avoid using an open microphone and speakers (such as are built-into laptops, or a webcam mic). Using a good quality headset (headphones with mic) will often help ensure you can be heard, and can hear others with maximum quality.
- Avoid noisy and echoing locations. Use of a headset will improve audio quality when this is unavoidable.
- Avoid distracting real or virtual backgrounds.

- Avoid bad camera positioning (if possible).
- Avoid using Wi-Fi if possible. Connection via a hard-wire Ethernet cable will always be faster and more reliable than Wi-Fi.

Before Every Court Session using Zoom

- Connect your device to power.
- Make sure your internet connection is good:
<https://www.pcworld.com/article/2048594/how-to-test-your-homeinternet-speed.html>
- Test your video.
- Test your audio.
- Run a quick test to connect with another Zoom user, or use the Zoom test:
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115002262083-Joining-a-test-meeting>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Fresno Superior Court notices related to COVID-19:

<http://www.fresno.courts.ca.gov/>