

Guide to Attending a Zoom Videoconference Hearing or Mediation

Some of SOAH's hearings and mediations are being conducted by videoconference using Zoom.

This guide shows how to attend a Zoom videoconference.

You can appear and participate in a Zoom hearing or mediation with your desktop or laptop computer, with your smart phone or tablet device, or you can participate by dial-in telephone. To join with video, you will need a computer or other electronic device that has access to the internet and a camera. To join the hearing with a smartphone or tablet, you will need to download the Zoom app on the device and allow the app to access your smartphone's camera and microphone.

Zoom is a FREE DOWNLOAD available at: <https://zoom.us/download>

*Prior to your hearing or mediation, you can test whether Zoom is working properly on your computer or smart device by joining a test meeting at: <https://soah-texas.zoomgov.com/test>

The specific steps you need to join a hearing are detailed below.

Desktop/Laptop Computer - To join with your computer, you can:

1. Open your internet browser
 - a. Go to <https://soah-texas.zoomgov.com/>
 - i. Select "Join a meeting"



- ii. Enter the Meeting ID and Password.

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Join a Meeting

Meeting ID or Personal Link Name

Join

[Join a meeting from an H.323/SIP room system](#)

Smartphone or Tablet - To join with your Smartphone or tablet device:

1. Download the Zoom app, if you have not already done so
2. Select "Join a meeting"



3. Open the app and enter the Meeting ID and Passcode.

Telephone - If you do not have access to a device that would allow videoconferencing, you can join by dialing into the meeting on any telephone:

1. Call either of these numbers:
 - a. (669) 254-5252
 - b. (646) 828-7666
2. Enter the Meeting ID and numeric Passcode when prompted. Please note that the passcode for joining a meeting via telephone is different (it contains numbers only) than for joining via computer or smart device.

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If you are joining and participating in a Zoom hearing or mediation using a smart device, be sure that your device has a good battery charge or is plugged in.

Mediations – if you are participating in a mediation using Zoom, please follow the mediator’s instructions with respect to submitting information to the mediator.

Hearing Exhibits - If you have exhibits you want the judge to consider, you should pre-file documentary evidence or exhibits in strict accordance with the judge’s orders (usually not later than 10 days before the hearing). You should read the judge’s orders carefully and follow the filing instructions within the orders. FAILURE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE FILING OF EXHIBITS MAY RESULT IN YOUR EXHIBITS BEING EXCLUDED.

Hearing Witnesses - If you have witnesses that will be testifying, you will need to pre-file a witness list, and you will need to provide the Zoom meeting information to the witnesses so that they can join.

Hearing Decorum - Remember that participants in a Zoom hearing are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with expectations at an in-person hearing, including decorum, demeanor, and dress code.

- All participants should enter the hearing Zoom Waiting Room at least 5 minutes prior to the hearing start time.
- Participants will remain in the Waiting Room until the Administrative Law Judge takes the bench and admits the parties to the hearing. Audio will be muted in the Waiting Room until the Administrative Law Judge calls the docket or commences your hearing. Video will be active upon entry in the hearing Waiting Room.
- Please note that even if you cannot see yourself on the screen, your video camera may be engaged and all others present in the proceeding may be able to see you.
- Parties can ask the judge for permission to talk privately with each other or with their attorney/client in a break-out room, but any chatting or text messaging with parties or witnesses while they are testifying is strictly prohibited.
- Participants in Zoom proceedings should minimize outside noise and distractions. If the hearing involves information or subject matter that is confidential by law, participants are expected to participate from a private location without any unauthorized persons present.
- Unless the judge specifically says otherwise, SOAH will make an audio recording of the Zoom proceeding that serves as the official record of the hearing in accordance with SOAH’s Rules of Procedure. Attorneys, self-represented parties, witnesses and attendees participating in remote hearings are prohibited from recording, capturing, saving, broadcasting, or photographing the proceeding in any manner without the express permission of the presiding judge.
- If you experience internet connectivity problems or other technical difficulties during the hearing that result in your participation being interrupted, you should attempt to rejoin the hearing as promptly as possible, which may mean rejoining the hearing by telephone.