

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT 22B  
COUNTY OF DAVIDSON

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE  
SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION  
22 R 342

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

Pursuant to Rule 2 and Rule 22 of the North Carolina General Rules of Practice for District and Superior Court Courts, the local rules regarding remote hearings for Judicial District 22B, County of Davidson, are hereby ratified and remain in effect until further notice.

ENTERED in chambers on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2022.



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MARK E. KLASS  
SENIOR RESIDENT SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE

2022 AUG 15 11:21:09  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT 22B, CASE  
NO. 22-0342

I.  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT REMOTE HEARING PROCEDURES

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Pursuant to G.S. § 7A-49.6, Judicial Officials may conduct almost all types of proceedings (except for jury trials) utilizing remote audio and video transmissions. The proceeding must allow the parties, the presiding Judicial Official, and all other participants to see and hear one another. Judicial Officials “must safeguard the constitutional rights of those persons involved in the proceeding and preserve the integrity of the judicial process.” G.S. § 7A-49.6(a). Each party to any proceeding involving audio and video transmission must be able to communicate fully and confidentially with his or her attorney if the party is represented by an attorney. G.S. § 7A-49.6(b).

This order is not intended to limit the court’s authority to receive remote testimony pursuant to statutes that otherwise permit it, including G.S. § 15A-1225.1, 15A-1225.2, 15A-1225.3, 20-139.1, 8C-1, Rule 616, 50A-111, and 52C-3-315(f). See G.S. 71-49.6(i).

As used in the order, the following words have the listed meanings:

“Civil Proceeding” means any civil action or special proceeding, including any juvenile proceeding or estate proceeding.

“Confidential Hearing” means any proceeding closed to the public by law or by court order.

“Contact Information” means a participant’s name, physical address from which the participant is participating, e-mail address to be used in the Remote Hearing Invitation, and phone number where the participant may be reached at the time of the hearing.

“Contempt Hearing” means any hearing upon the issue of either civil or criminal contempt.

“Criminal Proceeding” includes both criminal offenses and infractions.

“Host,” when used as a noun, means the clerk of superior court in the county where the Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing occurs, or his or her designee.

“Hybrid Hearing” means a hearing where at least one participant participates remotely using WebEx or other audio-visual application approved by the NCAOC, and two or more participants are co-located. For the purpose of this definition, only a party and their counsel who are co-located are deemed a single participant.

“Judicial Official” means a presiding magistrate, clerk, or judge of the General Court of Justice.

“Juvenile Delinquency Proceeding” means a proceeding involving a juvenile alleged to be undisciplined or delinquent pursuant to Chapter 7B of the General Statutes.

“In-Person Hearing” means a hearing where the Judicial Official and all participants are co-located in the same physical space.

“Minor Child” means any child under the age of eighteen years unless legally emancipated.

“Remote Hearing” means any hearing in which no participant is co-located with any other participant, and the Judicial Official and all participants are participating via WebEx or other audio-visual technology approved by the NCAOC. For the purpose of this definition, only a party and their counsel who are co-located are deemed a single participant.

“WebEx” means the primary application approved by the NCAOC for Remote and Hybrid Hearings.

## **1. In-Person Hearings are Presumed**

The default hearing method for all case types, unless otherwise specified in this order or determined by the presiding Judicial Official, will be In-Person Hearings. At any time prior to or during an In-Person Hearing, the Judicial Official retains the discretionary authority to conduct these hearings by Remote Hearing in accordance with G.S. § 7A-49.6.

### **a. Civil Proceedings**

Although In-Person Hearings are presumed in Civil Proceedings, a party or parties may request a Remote Hearing by providing a motion to the Clerk of Court in District Court matters or the Court Coordinator in Superior Court matters *at least five days* before the hearing and serving the other parties with the motion. The motion shall describe the reason for the request, and the physical location(s) of the individual(s) while participating. Criminal and civil jury trials are not permitted to be conducted entirely remotely, except for witness testimony and jury management functions, as described in Section 9 of this order.

### **b. Criminal or Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings**

Although In-Person Hearings are presumed in a Criminal Proceeding or Juvenile Delinquency Proceeding, a party or attorney may request a Remote Hearing by providing notice to the court and notifying the Clerk of Court *at least five days* before the hearing and serving other parties with the motion. A Criminal Proceeding or Juvenile Delinquency Proceeding shall not proceed via a Remote Hearing except as authorized by G.S. § 7A-49.6(e) or as otherwise permitted by law.

Specifically, a criminal defendant or a juvenile alleged to be delinquent has right to be present and a constitutional right to confront witnesses during any material portion of the proceeding. When a criminal defendant’s or juvenile’s right to confront witnesses or be present is implicated, G.S. §7A-49.6(e) provides that the court must obtain a knowing, intelligent, and voluntary waiver of the applicable right(s) in order to conduct a Remote Hearing unless otherwise permitted by law.

Additionally, because Juvenile Delinquency Hearings are also Civil Proceedings, even when a juvenile consents to a Remote Hearing, all parties have a right to object to Remote Hearings pursuant to G.S. §7A-49.6 (e) using the procedure outlined in § 1(a) above.

## 2. Contempt Hearings

Criminal contempt is a crime, and, therefore, the procedural and constitutional protections incident to criminal prosecution, including the right to be present and the constitutional right to confront witnesses, attach. See *O'Briant v. O'Briant*, 313 N.C. 432, 329 S.E.2d 320 (1985). In civil contempt when the alleged contemnor faces potential incarceration (which is always the case), many of the procedural and constitutional protections incident to criminal prosecution also attach, including the right of confrontation. Therefore, in order to proceed by Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing, the court must obtain a knowing, intelligent, and voluntary waiver of the alleged contemnor's rights pursuant to G.S. §7A-49.6(e) unless otherwise permitted by law.

If a contempt hearing proceeds by Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing and the Judicial Official finds contempt and orders the contemnor to a term of imprisonment, the contemnor must report to the Davidson County Detention Center as indicated in the order. If a term of imprisonment is ordered a copy of the contempt order shall be provided to the Davidson County Sheriff's Office. A contempt order requiring a contemnor to report to the Davidson County Detention Center at a specific date and time should include a Sheriff's return section for the Sheriff's Office to indicate whether the person reported as ordered or failed to appear. This provision does not prohibit the Judicial Official from having the contemnor taken into custody immediately pursuant to a commitment order directed to the Sheriff. The Sheriff's Office will notify the Clerk of the contemnor's failure to appear at the detention facility on the date and time ordered, and the Clerk shall notify a Judicial Official. A Judicial Official may issue an Order for Arrest, if authorized by law, or take such other action as the judicial official deems appropriate in his or her discretion.

## 3. Hybrid Hearings

A presiding Judicial Official also has discretionary authority to conduct Hybrid Hearings in accordance with G.S. § 7A-49.6 so long as: (i) in Civil Proceedings, including Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings, any party has a right to object for good cause shown to the Hybrid Proceeding in accordance with the same procedures for objecting to Remote Hearings set forth in Section 1.a. above; and (ii) in Criminal Proceedings and Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings in which the right to confront witnesses or be present is implicated, the defendant or juvenile provides a knowing, intelligent, and voluntary waiver of the applicable right(s), unless otherwise provided by law, as provided in Section 1 above. Hybrid Hearings are specifically permitted by law in Criminal Proceedings when certain conditions are satisfied. *See, e.g.*, G.S. § § 15A-1225.1 9 (child witness remote testimony) 15A-1225.2 (remote testimony by a witness with an intellectual or developmental disability), and 15A-1225.3 (forensic analyst remote testimony); *State v. Seelig*, 226 N.C. App. 147 (2013) (allowing a witness's remote testimony during a criminal jury trial because the witness could not travel due to health reasons).

A party may request a Hybrid Hearing by providing a motion to the Clerk of Court in District Court matters and Superior Criminal Court matters or the Court Coordinator in Superior Civil Court matters *at least five days* before the hearing and serving the other parties with the motion. The motion shall describe the reason for the request, the individuals who will appear in person, and for any individual appearing remotely, the physical location of that individual while participating and the individual's contact information. In addition, the party seeking the Hybrid Hearing shall certify that the remote individual is able to access the Hearing. Otherwise, the party shall propose a

suitable alternate location. The Judicial Official has the discretionary authority to conduct the hearing by Hybrid Hearing without the need to find good cause.

#### **4. Scheduling/Hosting WebEx Hearings**

Concurrent with the filing of a complaint, motion, or responsive pleading, attorneys and self-represented litigants must provide a valid email address to the Clerk of Court in District Court matters and in Criminal Superior Court matters and to the Court Coordinator in Civil Superior Court matters or certify that they do not have email access.

Consistent with G.S. § § 7A-95(c) and 7A-198(c), the Clerk of the Clerk's designee shall schedule and host WebEx proceedings in district and superior court. When scheduling the hearing, the Host shall follow the naming convention for the WebEx hearing as stated in Rule 17.2 of the Rules of Recordkeeping promulgated by the Director of the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts. (NCAOC).

The Clerk may also designate one or more co-hosts, either judge(s) and/or the Court Coordinator, for each proceeding scheduled, as provided by G.S. § § 7A-95(c) and 7A-198(c). The co-Host is authorized to begin, conduct, and record the hearing if the Host is not available. Any recording will automatically be saved in the WebEx account of the Host.

The Clerk, Court Coordinator, or judge will send the WebEx link to attorneys of record and self-represented litigants who have calendared cases. Each attorney or self-represented litigant is responsible for providing the WebEx link to his or her client(s), witness(es), and other interested individuals, as applicable. Each WebEx link shall also be published on the court calendar. If a public access link (e.g., a YouTube link for live streaming) is provided that is separate from the WebEx link used by parties and witnesses, spectators/media should access the hearing via the public access link.

#### **5. Audio Visual Quality/Functionality**

The Clerk of Court has the authority to designate a "Key Operator" because the Clerk is statutorily charged with operating electronic recording devices or designating someone else to do so under G.S. §§ 7A-95(c) and 7A-19(c).

The Clerk of Court will act as WebEx "Key Operator" pursuant to the NCAOC Rule of Recordkeeping 19.3 and may designate such deputy or assistant Clerks of Court to fulfill the role as deemed necessary and proper in the exercise of her/his discretion.

To ensure a quality recording and that all parties and the presiding Judicial Official can see and hear one another during the WebEx hearing, the audio equipment should be tested at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled hearing by the Clerk or the Clerk's designee. The presiding Judicial Official reserves the right to conduct a pre-trial conference as needed for the purpose of ensuring the quality of the Remote Hearing.

#### **6. Decorum and Etiquette in Remote Hearings and Hybrid Hearings**

The decorum of a Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing shall be the same decorum as an In-Person Hearing conducted in a courtroom (e.g., eating, drinking, smoking, and profanity are prohibited). An

attorney, party, or witness participating remotely in a Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing should have an appropriate background and a suitably quiet location. Attorneys are bound by the same rules of dress and decorum in Remote Hearings and Hybrid Hearings as they are for In-Person Hearings. Business attire or business casual attire shall be appropriate dress for parties and witnesses during a Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing.

All attorneys and parties are encouraged to access the Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the hearing. The court shall have discretion to deny entry to a hearing if a party is not present at the appointed time.

Attorneys and self-represented litigants shall identify themselves before speaking. During a Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing, attorneys and parties who are not testifying or speaking should mute their microphones. The Host or co-Host reserves the right to “mute” a party or attorney who fails to mute themselves if it causes feedback, echoing, or is otherwise noisy, disruptive, or distracting. If more than one person in the same location will be participating remotely in the Remote Hearing or Hybrid hearing, they must (i) share a device, (ii) ensure proper muting to avoid audio malfunction, or (iii) participate from separate rooms to ensure audio quality.

#### **7. Confidential Attorney-Client Communications During Remote Hearings and Hybrid Hearings**

If an attorney and client are participating in a Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing from separate locations, they may communicate privately, for example via text message or email, during the hearing, provided, however, parties may not communicate with counsel while they are testifying via any mechanism or medium other than the audio video technology seen and heard by all other participants, unless specifically permitted by the court to communicate with his or her attorney and cannot do so by text message or email, the presiding Judicial Official should be informed, and he or she shall permit such confidential communication, by enabling a breakout session through the WebEx, taking a break to allow for telephonic communication, or such other appropriate means.

The WebEx “chat” feature should not be used for attorney-client communications because, if the hearing is recorded, all chats are also recorded, including “private” chats between two individuals. Attorneys and parties are hereby notified that chats may be recorded and will not be reminded at a hearing. For this reason, all are encouraged not to use the “private” chat feature of WebEx, but rather to request a breakout session or a break in the proceeding to allow for attorney/client communication using the attorney’s own mobile phone, email, or some other method to ensure private communication. Attorneys should review Rule 1.6 of the Revised Rules of Professional Conduct as it may apply to communications with clients via various technological media during proceedings conducted via audio and video transmission.

#### **8. Exhibits and Evidence**

Failure to comply with the provisions set out regarding exhibits and evidence may result in a proposed exhibit not being considered, a continuance of the hearing, or other action in the discretion of the presiding Judicial Official.

##### **a. Testimony**

Pursuant to G.S. §7A-49.6(a), a remote proceeding must allow the parties, the presiding Judicial Official, and all other participants to see and hear one another.

The Clerk or the presiding Judicial Official shall administer oaths to witnesses during a remote proceeding. Affirmation may be used in lieu of swearing a witness. The person administering the oath must be able to see and hear the witness and the person taking the oath must be able to see and hear the official administering the oath.

Witnesses should be in a room alone when testifying in a Remote Hearing or a Hybrid Hearing, when feasible. Parties may be accompanied by their attorney if the attorney and party so choose. If a person will be in the room with a testifying witness, the attorney or witness shall advise the presiding Judicial Official prior to the witness' testimony. No person, including an attorney, may communicate with a witness about the witness' testimony while the witness is testifying via any mechanism or medium other than the audio and video technology seen and heard by all other participants, unless specifically permitted by the court to communicate privately during testimony.

If, while testifying, a witness wishes to communicate confidentially with his or her attorney, the presiding Judicial Official should be informed, and he or she may permit such confidential communication, by enabling a breakout session through the WebEx, taking a break to allow for telephonic communication, or such other appropriate means.

The presiding Judicial Official shall prescribe the manner in which and the terms upon which a Minor Child's testimony may be taken remotely and shall prescribe the appropriate location for the testimony and whether any third party may be present with the Minor Child.

#### **b. Exhibits**

Attorneys and self-represented litigants shall list all exhibits to be offered at a hearing on an exhibit log and provide copies of documentary exhibits and photographs of tangible exhibits to the other parties 5 business days prior to the hearing. All exhibits must be pre-marked for identification purposes. Attorneys and self-represented litigants are not required to provide exhibits to the other parties if doing so would disclose trial strategy or trial preparation.

Each party must deliver either a hard copy or an electronic copy of all pre-marked, proposed exhibits to the Clerk of Court in a District Court matter or a Superior Criminal Court matter or to the Court Coordinator in a Superior Court civil matter *at least five days* prior to the hearing. This includes both documents provided to the other parties and those submitted only to the Clerk, as described below. Exhibits not delivered prior to the hearing may be accepted in the discretion of the presiding Judicial Official.

Special care should be taken to preserve confidentiality when confidential records are stored or transmitted electronically. Ideally, confidential records in electronic format should be encrypted in transit and at rest. See, e.g.,

<https://www.americanbar.org/new/abanews/publications/youraba/2019/october-2019/remember-your-ethical-duties-when-it-comes-to-encryption/>.

Exhibits must be provided to the Clerk in District Court matters and Superior Criminal Court matters five business days before the court session. The pre-marked exhibits must be provided

in an envelope (case number on the outside of the envelope) and contain an exhibit log. The entirety of this submission shall not be made a part of the file and shall not be disclosed to anyone except appropriate judicial officials, absent consent of the submitting party. This rule is intended to ensure the clerk has exhibits that may be admitted into evidence during a remote hearing, yet at the same time preserve a party's ability to prevent disclosure of trial strategy and tactics.

Exhibits must be provided in a physical medium that the clerk can accept and retain (e.g., documents shall be printed out and in paper form, photos may be printed or on a disc or flash drive, and videos shall be on a flash drive, DVD, or other medium capable of retention). Exhibits that are admitted during the hearing that are not submitted to the Clerk prior to the hearing must be provided to the Clerk within 3 business days after the court session concludes in the same format as offered into evidence in the remote proceeding (e.g., documents shall be printed out and in paper form, photos may be printed or on a disc or flash drive, and videos shall be on a flash drive, DVD, or other medium capable of retention). Any non-documentary exhibit offered into evidence in a remote hearing (e.g., by displaying it on camera for all participants) shall be delivered to the clerk as presented and in a container provided by the party and appropriate for long-term preservation of the exhibit. The Clerk has no responsibility to take custody of or retain exhibits that are neither offered nor admitted.

Unless the court has ordered that some other entity retain custody of an exhibit, any exhibit offered or admitted into evidence which was admitted, but which was not provided to the Clerk prior to the commencement of the proceeding, must be submitted to the Clerk not more than five business days after the court session concludes. The Clerk has no responsibility to take custody of or retain exhibits that are neither offered nor admitted. The pre-marked exhibits must be provided in an envelope (with the case number affixed to the outside of the envelope) and contain an exhibit log. Exhibits must be provided in the physical medium that the Clerk can accept and retain and in the same format as offered into evidence in the remote proceeding (e.g., documents shall be printed out and in paper form, photos may be printed or on a disc or flash drive, and videos shall be on a flash drive, DVD, or other medium capable of retention). Any non-documentary exhibit offered into evidence in a remote proceeding (e.g., by displaying it on camera for all participants) shall be delivered to the Clerk as presented and in a container provided by the party and appropriate for long-term preservation of the exhibit.

The presiding Judicial Official may choose, but is not required, to inquire if all exhibits a party intended to introduce as evidence have been considered by the court at the conclusion of the hearing.

**c. Displaying documents during Remote Hearings and Hybrid Hearings**

Attorneys and self-represented litigants may display digital exhibits during a Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing using the "share" feature with permission of the presiding Judicial Official. Prior to displaying confidential exhibits (e.g., juvenile records), the attorney or self-represented litigant shall inform the presiding Judicial Official, who will then ensure that only those parties authorized to access the documents are allowed to observe the confidential records. Presentation of confidential exhibits may require either exclusion of non-participants from the Remote or Hybrid Hearing or some other mechanism for exchanging those exhibits among the parties.



If the proceeding is one that is open to the public, then the presiding Judicial Official must facilitate access to the proceeding by the public and the media as nearly as practicable to the access that would be available were the proceeding conducted in person in accordance with G.S. § 7A-49.6(g), while also protecting confidential information, such as juvenile case records, displayed during the Remote or Hybrid Hearing.

## 9. Jury Proceedings

Criminal and civil jury trials are not permitted to be conducted remotely, except for witness testimony and jury management functions, as described below.

### a. Civil Jury Proceedings

A witness in a civil jury proceeding may testify remotely if the presiding Judicial Official finds that good cause exists for doing so under the circumstances in accordance with G.S. §7A-49.6(c) or as otherwise provided by law. Any party seeking to solicit witness testimony remotely shall file with the court and serve on the other parties pursuant to N.C. R. Civ. P. 5 *at least five days* prior to the hearing, a motion setting forth the specific basis of the request for remote testimony. The Judicial Official shall consider the request and make a written or recorded determination as to whether the party has shown good cause to permit the witness to testify remotely. There is no statutory authority to make this good cause determination *ex parte*, so procedures under N.C. R. Civ. P. 7(b) shall be followed. Only if the presiding Judicial Official finds that the party has demonstrated good cause for the request, may the witness testify remotely. If an emergency arises and the requesting party is unable to provide proper notice as outlined above, the requesting party may make the request orally in accordance with N.C. R. Civ. P. 7(b). Both the oral motion and the ruling on the motion should be recorded.

### b. Criminal Jury Proceedings

A witness in a Criminal Proceeding may only testify remotely in accordance with G.S. § 7A-49.6(e), which provides: "Except as otherwise permitted by law, when the right to confront witnesses or be present is implicated in criminal . . . proceedings, the court may not proceed by audio and video transmission unless the court has obtained a knowing, intelligent, and voluntary waiver of the defendant's . . . rights."

Hybrid Hearings are permitted by law in Criminal Proceedings when certain conditions are satisfied. *See, e.g.*, G.S. §§15A-1225.1 (child witness remote testimony), 15A-1225.2 (remote testimony by a witness with an intellectual or developmental disability", and 15A-1225.3 (forensic analyst remote testimony); *State v. Seelig*, 226 N.C. App. 147 (2013) (Allowing a witness's remote testimony during a criminal trial because the witness could not travel due to health reasons).

## 10. Record of Hearing/ Official Transcript

As provided in G.S. § 7A-95(c) and 7a-198(c), the Clerk of Court, the Clerk's designee or the court reporter will create a record of the court proceeding via the Liberty Recording System (operated by the

Clerk or the Clerk's designee), WebEx recording (operated by the Clerk or the Clerk's designee), and/or by one of several techniques employed by court reporters. The Clerk, as custodian of each of these types of recordings, shall maintain and preserve each recording made by the Clerk, the Clerk's designee, or the court reporter pursuant to G.S. §§ 7A-95(c) and 7A-198(c). During a Hybrid Hearing, it is especially important to ensure that all participants are being clearly recorded, which may require using a combination of the Liberty Recording System, the WebEx recording, and/or court reporter technique (if applicable). The court reporter maintains the responsibility for preparing the official transcript from the recording(s) prepared by the court reporter, Liberty recording, and/or WebEx recording. Only a person on the NCAOC Court Reporters and Approved Transcriptionist List may prepare the official transcript from the recording(s) prepared by the court reporter, Liberty recording, and/or the WebEx recording.

Each individual Confidential Hearing must be a separate recording in WebEx.

### **11. Access to WebEx Recordings**

WebEx recordings of proceedings are public record unless the recordings are sealed by the court or confidential by law (e.g., involuntary commitment hearings, juvenile abuse, neglect and dependency proceedings, and Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings). WebEx recordings include the recorded audio, video, chats, and other information. Presiding Judicial Officials should keep in mind that most WebEx recordings are public record when considering whether to allow Remote Hearings or Hybrid Hearings involving police informants, minor children, jurors, sensitive family matters, etc.

Confidential WebEx recordings may only be provided to a requesting party as permitted by law. Sealed WebEx recordings may only be provided to a requesting party as permitted by order of the court.

### **12. Public Access**

The public has a right to attend court proceedings unless a proceeding is confidential by law or the presiding Judicial Official has closed the proceeding. If the proceeding is one that is open to the public, access to a Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing must be provided as nearly as practicable to the access that would be available were the proceeding conducted in person pursuant to G.S. §7A-49.6(g).

To facilitate public access to a Remote Hearing, each WebEx link shall be published on the court calendar for the session. Any person who wishes to obtain access to a hearing may also contact the Clerk of Court in District Court matters and Superior Criminal Court matters at 336-242-6702 and District or Superior Court Civil matters at 336-242-6704 or the Court Coordinator in Superior Civil Court matters at 336-242-6862 *at least five business days* prior to the hearing to obtain a link to the WebEx proceeding. All spectators must access the hearing via the appropriate hearing link at the time set for the hearing. If a public access link (e.g., a YouTube link for live streaming) is provided that is separate from the WebEx link used by parties and witnesses, spectators/media should access the hearing via the public access link. For the purpose of this order, a spectator is defined as any person or entity who is not a hearing participant (e.g., party, witness).

Absent approval by the presiding Judicial Official under Rule 15 of the General Rules of Practice, the parties, attorneys, witnesses, spectators, public and media shall refrain from making any recordings, videos, or photographs of any hearing, including Remote Hearings and Hybrid Hearings. The presiding Judicial Official may permit or prohibit "electronic coverage" and "electronic media coverage" as provided in Rule 15 of the General Rules of Practice. Failure to comply with a Judicial official's

prohibition of electronic coverage or electronic media coverage may result in ejection from the hearing and appropriate sanctions to include contempt. Rule 15(i) of the General Rules of Practice provides that recordings by the media or the public permitted by the court, if any, including film, video tape, still photographs or audio reproductions shall not be admissible as evidence in the proceeding out of which it arose, any proceeding subsequent and collateral thereto, or upon any retrial or appeal of such proceedings.

Spectator cameras may be enabled, but microphones shall be muted during any Remote Hearing. Spectators shall not speak or otherwise communicate with any party or witness during the hearing. Spectators shall not utilize the chat feature or interfere with the hearing in any way. The presiding Judicial Official will provide instructions to all parties and spectators to protect the integrity of the hearing. Once the presiding Judicial Official begins instructions for the participants, the WebEx hearing may be locked, and additional spectators may be prohibited from joining the hearing.

Any spectator, witness, or participant who violates orders given by the presiding Judicial Official pertaining to the use of WebEx, who contacts testifying witnesses or parties, who photographs, records, or videos the proceeding (without the permission of the presiding Judicial Official), or who disrupts the proceeding is subject to being ejected from the hearing and may not be allowed to rejoin the hearing in the presiding Judicial Official's discretion. They are also subject to appropriate sanctions to include contempt.

These limitations on spectator access are necessary to protect the integrity of the hearing and to ensure the hearing can proceed without reasonable interruption or delay. Further, the limitations protect the ability of the court and the parties to remotely conduct hearings without undue delay, interruption, or disruption while still granting the public's ability to attend the hearing.

### **13. Spoken Foreign Language Interpreters**

The court shall ensure the rights of a person who needs a foreign language interpreter are protected prior to initiating a hearing. Requests for spoken foreign language court interpreters should be submitted to the Language Access Coordinator using the online request form at <https://www.nccourts.gov/request-for-spoken-language-court-interpreter>. Such requests should be submitted as soon as the attorney/party is aware of the need for an interpreter to allow sufficient time to schedule the interpreter.

If the interpreter cannot be adequately accommodated in a Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing, the proceeding shall be held in-person. If, at any time during a Remote Hearing, the interpretation cannot be conveyed to either the court or the party, the hearing shall be delayed to address interpretation or continued to another court session. Note: Sign language interpreters are not spoken foreign language interpreters and are instead addressed in Section 14.

### **14. Requests for Accommodations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act**

The court shall ensure the rights of any individual that require a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis and may include, but are not limited to, the use of licensed interpreters (e.g., sign language interpreters, deaf blind interpreters), periodic breaks, or captioning. Reasonable accommodation requests should be submitted to the Clerk of Superior Court (Disability Access Coordinator either in-person, at 336-242-

6707, by email at [Davidson.DAC@nccourts.org](mailto:Davidson.DAC@nccourts.org) or via online request form at <https://www.nccourts.gov/form/disability-access-request>. Such requests should be submitted as soon as the attorney/party is aware of the need for an accommodation to allow sufficient time to review the request and arrange for a reasonable accommodation.

If a reasonable accommodation cannot be provided in a Remote Hearing or Hybrid Hearing, the proceeding shall be held in-person. If, at any time during a Remote Hearing, the reasonable accommodation can no longer be provided, the hearing shall be delayed to address the reasonable accommodation or shall be continued to another court session.

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

File No. \_\_\_\_\_

In The General Court Of Justice

District  Superior Court Division

\_\_\_\_\_ County

<b>STATE VERSUS</b>		<b>WAIVER OF PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND CONSENT TO AUDIO-VIDEO PROCEEDING</b>	
<i>Defendant Name</i>			
<i>Additional File No.(s) And/Or Offense(s)</i>			
<i>Date Of Proceeding</i>	<i>Location Of Defendant</i>	<i>Nature Of Proceeding (e.g. motion hearing, probable cause hearing, plea, sentencing hearing)</i>	
<i>Attorney For State</i>	<i>Location Of State's Attorney</i>	<i>Attorney For Defendant (if represented)</i>	<i>Location Of Attorney (if represented)</i>
<p><b>NOTE TO CUSTODIAN/COUNSEL:</b> Complete all fields above for the case(s) for which this remote audio-video proceeding is conducted before the defendant's execution of the waiver below. Sign the waiver as witness below after defendant has executed the waiver. Upon completion of the proceeding, deliver this waiver along with any other documents resulting from the audio-video proceeding to the clerk's office for execution by the presiding official.</p>			
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RIGHTS AND WAIVER</b>			
<p>As the undersigned defendant in this action, I freely and voluntarily declare that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have been advised of my right to appear in a courtroom and be personally present for the proceeding described above;</li> <li>• I have been advised that I am not required to waive my right to be present, and if I do not waive that right, my case will not be unreasonably delayed;</li> <li>• I have been advised that I have the right to appear in court for the purpose of confronting and cross-examining any witnesses who may testify in this proceeding;</li> <li>• if represented by an attorney, I have been afforded the ability to consult privately with my attorney and understand that I will be able to consult with my attorney privately during this proceeding;</li> <li>• if represented by an attorney, I have had the opportunity to discuss this right to personal appearance with my attorney; and</li> <li>• I fully understand and appreciate the consequences of my decision to waive the right to appear personally in court for the proceeding described above.</li> </ul> <p>I therefore freely, voluntarily, and knowingly waive my right to be present in the courtroom for this proceeding, including for the purpose of confronting and cross-examining any witnesses who may testify, and I consent to participate in this proceeding by audio and video transmission.</p>			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Signature of Defendant</i>		
<i>Name Of Witness</i>	<i>Signature Of Witness</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Counsel for Defendant</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other (specify)</i> _____	
<b>CERTIFICATE OF JUDICIAL OFFICIAL</b>			
<p>I certify that the above named defendant was advised on the <i>Date Of Proceeding</i> above of the right to appear in a courtroom and be personally present for the proceeding described above; that he/she was advised that his/her case would not be unreasonably delayed if that right was not waived; that he/she was advised of the right to appear in court for the purpose of confronting and cross-examining any witnesses who may testify; that he/she understands and appreciates the consequences of his/her decision to waive the right to personal appearance; and that the defendant voluntarily, knowingly and intelligently waived the right to personal appearance and consented to conduct the proceeding described above by audio and video transmission.</p>			
<i>Location Of Judicial Official During Proceeding Described Above</i>			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Name of Judicial Official (type or print)</i>	<i>Signature of Judicial Official</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>District Court Judge</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Superior Court Judge</i>

**NOTE TO PRESIDING OFFICIAL:** Upon verification of the information above that identifies the case(s) and proceeding conducted by audio and video transmission, complete this signature section and file with the clerk of superior court for the county in which the case(s) is pending.

\_\_\_\_\_ County In The General Court Of Justice  
 District  Superior  Before The Clerk  Small Claims

**IN THE MATTER OF:**  
 Name And Address Of Plaintiff / Petitioner / State  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address of Plaintiff / Petitioner / State  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name And Address Of Defendant / Respondent  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address of Defendant / Respondent  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE AND MOTION FOR**  
 FULLY REMOTE HEARING  
 HYBRID REMOTE HEARING

Nature of Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Hearing (if scheduled): \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE AND MOTION FOR REMOTE HEARING TO OPPOSING PARTY**

The undersigned hereby requests that the hearing referenced above be conducted, or partially conducted, via audio and video transmission, pursuant to G.S. 7A-49.6 on the grounds listed below. If a hybrid hearing is requested, specify which participant(s) wants to participate remotely, their physical location while participating, and the contact information for the participant(s).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I  have  have not consulted the opposing party / attorney regarding this motion. The opposing party / attorney  takes no position on a remote hearing  agrees to a remote hearing  desires an in-person hearing. (Note: An objection to the hearing being conducted via audio and video transmission must be filed within \_\_\_\_ days of the service of this motion.) The estimated time needed for the hearing on this motion is: \_\_\_\_\_.

Name Of Person Requesting Remote Hearing	Date	Signature
Email Address:	<input type="checkbox"/> Plaintiff or Petitioner / Attorney	<input type="checkbox"/> Defendant or Respondent / Attorney
	<input type="checkbox"/> District Attorney / Assistant DA	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

This Motion for Remote Hearing is scheduled for hearing:

Date of Hearing	Time Of Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	Location of Hearing
-----------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I certify that on this date, a copy of this Motion for Remote Hearing was served by:

first class mail at the address(es) as follows:  
 plaintiff / petitioner / attorney for plaintiff or petitioner \_\_\_\_\_  
 defendant / respondent / attorney for defendant or respondent \_\_\_\_\_  
 district attorney \_\_\_\_\_

personally, delivering a copy to the  
 plaintiff / petitioner / attorney for plaintiff or petitioner \_\_\_\_\_  
 defendant / respondent / attorney for defendant or respondent \_\_\_\_\_  
 district attorney \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Signature	<input type="checkbox"/> Plaintiff or Petitioner / Attorney	<input type="checkbox"/> Defendant or Respondent / Attorney
		<input type="checkbox"/> District Attorney / Assistant DA	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

**ORDER ON MOTION FOR REMOTE HEARING**

This Motion was reviewed by the court out of session. OR  After a hearing on the motion, the Court  finds  does not find that the hearing shall be held via audio and video transmission.

Therefore, it is ORDERED that this hearing shall be held on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  in person in Courtroom \_\_\_\_  fully remote via audio video transmission  hybrid remote via audio video transmission. If the hearing is to be held via fully remote or hybrid remote means, the following participant(s) is / are permitted to testify remotely \_\_\_\_\_ from (specify the location(s) from which the participant(s) is / are testifying) \_\_\_\_\_.

Date	Signature	<input type="checkbox"/> Superior Court Judge	<input type="checkbox"/> District Court Judge	<input type="checkbox"/> Magistrate
		<input type="checkbox"/> Clerk of Superior Court	<input type="checkbox"/> Asst. CSC	<input type="checkbox"/> Designee _____

*NOTE: G.S. 7A-49.6 grants each presiding judicial official discretionary authority to conduct civil proceedings by remote audio and video transmission without the need to find good cause UNLESS a party objects.*

<b>STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA</b>		File No. _____
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_____ County	In The General Court Of Justice <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Before the Clerk <input type="checkbox"/> Small Claims
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<b>IN THE MATTER OF:</b>	
Name And Address Of Plaintiff / Petitioner / State	
Email Address of Plaintiff / Petitioner / State	
Name And Address Of Defendant / Respondent	
Email Address of Defendant / Respondent	

<b>OBJECTION TO REMOTE HEARING</b>
Nature of hearing: _____ Date of Hearing (if scheduled): _____

<b>OBJECTION</b>
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The undersigned hereby objects to the hearing referenced above being conducted, or partially conducted, via audio and video transmission, pursuant to G.S. 7A-49.6(d) on the grounds listed below:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I  have  have not consulted the opposing party / attorney regarding this objection. The opposing party / attorney  takes no position on a remote hearing  desires a remote hearing  agrees to an in-person hearing. The estimated time needed for the hearing on this objection is: \_\_\_\_\_.

Name Of Person Objecting	Date	Signature
Email Address:	<input type="checkbox"/> Plaintiff or Petitioner / Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Defendant or Respondent / Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> District Attorney / Assistant DA <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

This Objection to a Remote Hearing is scheduled for hearing:

Date of Hearing	Time Of Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	Location of Hearing
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<b>CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE</b>
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I certify that on this date, a copy of this Objection to a Remote Hearing was served by:

first class mail at the address(es) shown as follows:

plaintiff / petitioner / attorney for plaintiff or petitioner \_\_\_\_\_

defendant / respondent / attorney for defendant or respondent \_\_\_\_\_

district attorney \_\_\_\_\_

personally, delivering a copy to the

plaintiff / petitioner / attorney for plaintiff or petitioner

defendant / respondent / attorney for defendant or respondent.

district attorney.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Signature	<input type="checkbox"/> Plaintiff or Petitioner / Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Defendant or Respondent / Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> District Attorney / Assistant DA <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
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<b>ORDER ON OBJECTION TO REMOTE HEARING</b>
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This Objection was reviewed by the court out of session. OR  After a hearing on the Objection, the Court  finds  does not find that the moving party has demonstrated good cause that the hearing should not be held via audio and video transmission.

Therefore, it is ORDERED that this hearing shall be held on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  in person in Courtroom \_\_\_\_  fully remote via audio video transmission  hybrid remote via audio video transmission. If the hearing is to be held via fully remote or hybrid remote means, the following participant(s) is / are permitted to testify remotely \_\_\_\_\_ from (specify the location(s) from which the participant(s) is / are testifying) \_\_\_\_\_. The participant(s) must provide contact information to the Court prior to the hearing.

Date	Signature	<input type="checkbox"/> Superior Court Judge <input type="checkbox"/> District Court Judge <input type="checkbox"/> Magistrate <input type="checkbox"/> Clerk of Superior Court <input type="checkbox"/> Asst. CSC <input type="checkbox"/> Designee _____
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Previously a two-volume printed manual, this new web-based version features eight manuals organized by subject matter. Learn more on Juno.

**Review the Clerk of Superior Court Manual Series Website**



## **Technology Updates**

### **2022 Laptop Replacement Project**

#### **Workstation Lifecycle Replacement**

The 2022 Laptop Deployment Project has been divided into two phases for staff with equipment identified for lifecycle replacement. Phase One addresses monitor replacement with eCourts compatible dual 24" monitors and will be on a county-by-county schedule based on your facility warehouse delivery date. Phase Two, the replacement of an assigned desktop or end-of-life laptop, is scheduled to begin July 2022.

Both phases will be completed in collaboration with your assigned ATS field technicians and have a planned completion date of January 31, 2023 (supply chain issues may affect completion date). These replacements will be tracked with system-generated NCAOC Help Desk tickets placed in the assignee's name. See Juno for further explanation and an [example](#) of the ticketing process.

#### **CRAVE**

The Courtroom Audio Visual Experience Project, known as CRAVE, is a statewide effort led by the Endpoint Services team to modernize courtrooms with immersive Webex technology. This project will expand the Judicial Branch's ability to conduct remote proceedings, may in some cases reduce the need for in-person appearances, and reduce courthouse foot traffic. The project will deploy over 200 courtroom systems and 200 kiosks across sites in all 100 counties.

The Endpoint Services team will continue to coordinate these efforts with you directly. You will also receive updates via Judicial Branch email distribution and can view the ongoing status on the Juno [CRAVE](#) project page. The project is currently scheduled to be completed by May 30, 2023.

#### **WAVE**

The Wireless Access for Virtual Enhancement Project, better known as WAVE, is a statewide effort led by the Network Services department to deliver expanded Wi-Fi coverage and enhanced wireless security to all courthouse campuses. This project will dramatically increase the available footprint of the NCAOC wireless services,