STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA	IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE
	SUPERIOR AND DISTRICT
SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT	COURT DIVISIONS
	26-R-

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

Pursuant to Rule 22 of the North Carolina General Rules of Practice for District and Superior Courts, the local rules regarding remote hearings for the Second Judicial District have been modified this day and shall remain in effect until further notice.

This the 5th day of August, 2026

Seth H. Edwards

8/6/2026 3:52:51 PM

Seth H. Edwards
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge
Second Judicial District

Keith B Mason

8/6/2026 1:18:29 PM

Keith B. Mason
Chief District Court Judge
Second Judicial District

Second Judicial District Remote Hearing Procedures

Pursuant to G.S. § 7A-49.6, Judicial Officials may conduct almost all types of proceedings (except 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. 7A-49.6(i).

As used in this 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 prosecution of 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 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 Hearings 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, shall 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 Manager in Superior Court matters at least 10 days before the hearing and serving the other parties with the motion using AOC-G-164. https://www.nccourts.gov/documents/forms/motion-for-fully-remote-hearinghybrid-remote-hearing-and-order-on-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.

The Judicial Official has the discretionary authority to conduct the hearing by Remote Hearing without the need to find good cause. If a party objects to such a Remote Hearing, the following procedures shall apply pursuant to G.S. § 7A-49.6(d).

Each party objecting to a Remote Hearing shall file with the court using form AOC-G-165 https://www.nccourts.gov/documents/forms/objection-to-remote-hearing-and-order-on-objection-to-remote-hearing and serve on the other parties pursuant to N.C. R. Civ. P. 5 within 5 days after service of the request an objection or motion setting forth the specific basis of the objection, unless the time period is waived by the presiding judge. The presiding Judicial Official shall consider the objection, and in his or her discretion, make a written or recorded finding as to whether the party has shown good cause for the objection. There is no statutory authority to make this good cause determination *ex parte*, so procedures under N.C. R. Civ. P. 7(b) should be followed. The presiding Judicial Official has discretion to hear the objection remotely, if technologically permissible, given the basis of the objection. If the presiding Judicial Official finds that the party has demonstrated good cause for the objection, the proceeding shall not be held remotely. If there is no objection, or if there is an objection and good cause is not shown, the presiding Judicial Official may conduct the proceeding remotely unless otherwise directed by the court.

If an emergency arises and a party objecting to a Remote Hearing is unable to provide a written objection or motion as outlined above, the party may make the objection orally during a hearing or trial or at a session at which a cause is on the calendar for that session in accordance with N.C. R. Civ. P. 5 7(b)(1). Both the oral motion and ruling on the motion should be recorded. If granted, the Judicial Official shall direct the hearing be converted to an In-Person Hearing, as provided above.

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 using form AOC-G-164 https://www.nccourts.gov/documents/forms/motion-for-fully-remote-hearinghybrid-remote-hearing-and-order-on-motion and notifying the District Attorney and Clerk of Court at least 10 days before the hearing and serving the 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 a right to be present and a constitutional right to confront witnesses[1] 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 using form AOC-CR-411. https://www.nccourts.gov/documents/forms/waiver-of-rights-and-consent-to-audio-video-proceeding

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(d) using the procedure outlined in Section 1(a) above.

2. Contempt Hearings

Criminal contempt's are crimes, 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.[2] 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.[3] 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 as provided in Section 1 above.

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 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 County Sheriff's Office. A contempt order requiring a contemnor to report to the 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 a contemnor's failure to appear at the detention facility on the date

[1] *See, generally,* State v. Pope, 257 N.C. 326 (1962).
[2] O'Briant v. O'Briant, 313 N.C. 432, 329 S.E.2d 370 (1985).
[3] Lowder v. All Star Mills, Inc., 301 N.C. 561, 273 S.E.2d 247 (1981).

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 (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 the Court Manager in Superior Court matters at least 10 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 remotely and that the courtroom in question is capable of accommodating a Hybrid 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 the Court Manager in 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 or 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 Manager, 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 made will automatically be saved in the Webex account of the Host.

The Clerk, Court Manager, 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 Rules 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 his/her 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 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 Hearings or Hybrid Hearings at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the hearing. The court shall have discretion to deny entry to the 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 and video technology seen and heard by all other participants, unless specifically permitted by the court to communicate privately during testimony. If a party wishes to communicate confidentially 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 or by 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.[4] For this reason, all are encouraged not to use the "private" chat feature of Webex, but rather to request a breakout session or use their own mobile phones, email, or some other method to ensure private communication.

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 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 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

[4] Attorneys are cautioned to 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.

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 or 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

Exhibits must be submitted to the clerk 2 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 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 clerk has no responsibility to take custody of or retain exhibits that are neither offered nor admitted.

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 case records or other information protected by law), the attorney or self-represented litigant shall inform the presiding Judicial Official, who will then ensure that only those individuals authorized to access the documents are allowed to observe the confidential exhibits. 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 10 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 jury 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, 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 clerk's designee), Webex recording (operated by the clerk or clerk's designee), and / or by one of several techniques employed by court reporters. The clerk, as the 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 [should be published on the court calendar for the session. Any person who wishes to obtain access to a hearing may also contact Paula Weathington at 252-940-4016 at least 3 business day(s) 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, and microphones shall be muted during a 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 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 unreasonable 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-foreign-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 interpretation 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 instead are addressed in Section 14.

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

The court shall ensure the rights of any individuals 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 Disability Access Coordinator for your County**,** or via the 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, reasonable accommodations can no longer be provided, the hearing shall be delayed to address the reasonable accommodation or continued to another court session.

IT IS SO ORDERED

This the 5th day of August, 2025

8/6/2026 3:53:23 PM

Seth H. Edwards
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge
Second Judicial District

8/6/2026 1:18:15 PM

Keith B. Mason
Chief District Court Judge
Second Judicial District