

Notice and Guidelines for In-Person and Virtual Hearings (Zoom Instructions) Referee Jaclyn K. Jelsema – Friend of the Court (FOC) Hearing Room – 48th Circuit Court

Parties and attorneys must appear in the same manner. If a party requests to appear in-person, their attorney of record must appear in-person under MCR 2.407(B)(4). If remote participation is permitted, the other participants may participate using Zoom. Parties/attorneys are responsible for providing Zoom instructions to witnesses participating remotely.

Remote participants, including witnesses, must provide a current phone number and email address to the court prior to a remote hearing under MCR 2.407(D)(2). Submit this to the FOC via email at SShaw@allegancounty.org with the case name and hearing date. (Attorneys and parties with current and complete information on file with the FOC are not required to resubmit.)

If you choose to appear remotely, you MUST ensure you have the technical ability to do so: using Zoom with a camera, video, audio, and a strong internet connection (Wi-Fi or LTE). Do not call the court/FOC at the time of your hearing to advise of problems, call into the hearing using the phone-in option below.

Must I Appear In-Person or May I Appear Via Zoom?

HEARING TO ENTER JUDGMENT OF DIVORCE (PRO CON): The appropriateness of remote participation for these hearings is presumed under MCR 2.408(B)(8). *You may appear in-person or via Zoom.*

- Your Judgment of Divorce (JOD) must be approved by the FOC prior to the hearing.
- If appearing in-person, you must have your original JOD and copies with you.
- If appearing remotely, you must submit your original JOD and copies to the Referee prior to the hearing by leaving it with FOC Reception to the Referee's attention. Failure to do this will delay your divorce.

CHILD SUPPORT OBJECTION HEARINGS:

Remote participation for these hearings is permitted by discretion of the court under MCR 2.408(A)(1) and 2.407(C), and is generally appropriate considering the short duration, minimal evidence presented, and the convenience to the parties.

SHOW CAUSE HEARINGS RE: PARENTING TIME:

You may appear in-person or via Zoom.

STATUS REVIEW HEARINGS:

EVIDENTIARY HEARINGS: Remote participation for these hearings is prohibited under MCR 2.408(A)(2) except at the discretion of the court, considering the factors in MCR 2.407(C). It is presumed that hearings involving the testimony of witnesses and the presentation of evidence are inappropriate for remote participation. *You must appear in-person unless remote participation has been approved prior to the hearing.*

- The Order for Evidentiary Hearing will indicate if remote participation was approved at the time of scheduling. If notice for remote participation is not later received, *presume your hearing is in-person*. Zoom will not be available unless notice has been provided under MCR 2.407(B)(6).
- Proposed exhibits are NOT accepted electronically, except at the discretion of the Referee.
- Refer to the Discovery Requirements included in the Order for Evidentiary Hearing for rules involving witnesses and the presentation of evidence.

How to Connect to a Virtual Hearing with Referee Jelsema:

Submit your contact information (phone and email) and the contact information of any remote witnesses prior to the hearing to SShaw@allegancounty.org.



<https://miscocourts.zoom.us/my/Allegan48cFOC>



Zoom App or www.zoom.us. Meeting ID: **Allegan48cFOC**
-or- **896 899 8062**



(646) 876-9923. Meeting ID: **896 899 8062** (no participant ID)
This method should be used only as a last-resort for unforeseen technical issues.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Non-parties are not permitted to join virtual hearings. Only attorneys, parties, and witnesses will be joined from the waiting room.

Troubleshooting Tips:

- Your Wi-Fi connection may be weak, move to find a stronger signal or switch to LTE data.
- Check the audio settings within Zoom, as well as your device's sound settings.
- Sometimes logging off and logging back on works magic!
- Close other apps that may be slowing your device or stealing your bandwidth.
- Switch to phone audio in Zoom, your participant ID will appear when the option is chosen.

Remote Participation Rules:

- A virtual hearing is still a court hearing, and you should act as if you were physically present in the building. Appropriate conduct and attire is required.
- Be familiar with Zoom and resolve any technical issues prior to your hearing. <https://support.zoom.us/>
- Display name must be appropriate and identifiable.
- *Log in 5 minutes early.* You will enter a "Waiting Room" and your case will be called when the court is ready.
- Be in a room with consistent lighting that is private, quiet, and free from interruptions.
- Use a good Wi-Fi connection or mobile data plan to ensure a quality connection (any data charges incurred are the responsibility of the participant).
- Additional help for self-represented litigants: <https://courts.michigan.gov/News-Events/Pages/SRL.aspx>
- A violation of these rules could result in termination of your connection and your ability to participate in the hearing.