

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

These protocols will continue in effect until the court resumes normal in person proceedings.

Courtroom Proceedings.

With limited exceptions, the Court will not conduct in-court, personal proceedings. Any proceedings must be conducted via Zoom video and/or audio conferences. Members of the public may determine when a Zoom conference will be held by going to <https://jsos.oakgov.com/OaklandCounty> . The criminal docket for the week will be posted on this webpage on Wednesday of the week the hearing is scheduled. Members of the public who wish to attend a Zoom conference hearing may follow the instructions below. For specific times for criminal matters, please contact Barb Felder at (248) 466-4301 or felderb@oakgov.com. For civil matters, contact Kathy Adams at (248) 466-4491 or mcmillenchambers@oakgov.com. You may also check case filings and scheduled dates on Court Explorer <https://courtexplorer.oakgov.com/oaklandcounty/SearchCases> .

- **Additional Information for Zoom hearings:**

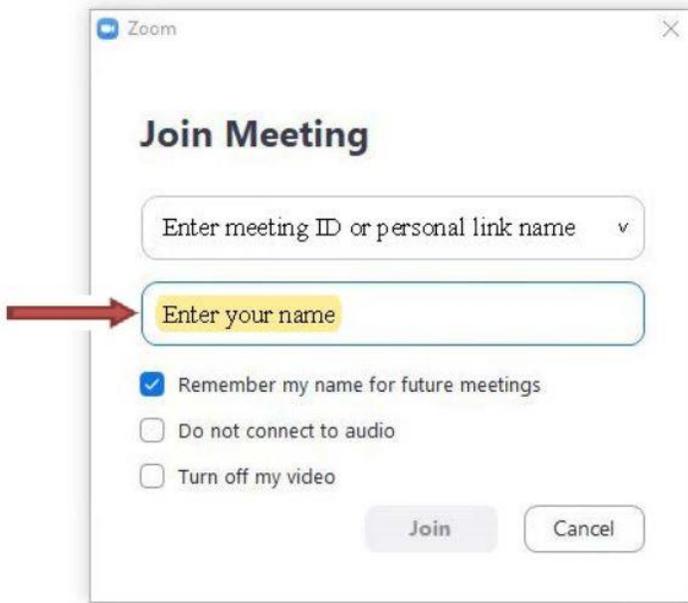
- A Zoom meeting room is an extension of the courtroom and appropriate conduct and attire is expected and required. Viewers are prohibited from recording, streaming or otherwise copying or distributing court proceedings.
- Remote participants must use a private, indoor, and quiet room with appropriate lighting that will be free of interruptions. A good internet connection is imperative.
- Wearing headphones during the proceedings is best practice as it eliminates potential feedback, we ADVISE all parties to wear headphones.

- **To join a hearing**

- **Tablets and Phones:** Install the free Zoom App from the App Store or Play Store prior to the call. At the time of the call launch the Zoom app and join using **Meeting ID 248 858 0337**
- **Audio-only via Telephone:** Call (646) 876-9923. Connect using **Meeting ID 248 858 0337**
- **Desktop, PC's, and Laptops:** Go to the Zoom Website (zoom.us), click on "Join a Call" or "Join a Meeting" and using Meeting ID **248 858 0337**
- **Technical Responsibilities:** The court uses Zoom meeting services for the Virtual Court Room experience. If you are having TECHNICAL issues with your equipment you should review Zoom training and support materials at [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us). Please understand Zoom is an independent service provider and will have NO knowledge of your court case or legal issues. Contact Brandon Rowells by email at rowellsb@oakgov.com or call **248-464-3428** to schedule a test call before the scheduled hearing. The court does not provide time during court proceedings to troubleshoot issues. It is your responsibility to ensure that your connection works before your court date.

- **Party Identification**

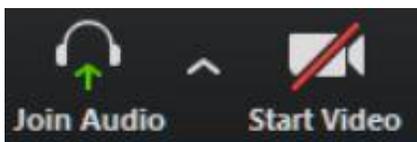
- **Where to identify yourself:** When joining the zoom meeting please identify yourself by typing in the box that says “Enter your name” in the “Join Meeting” window on Zoom (see illustration below) **before** joining the meeting.



- **How to identify yourself:** To assist the clerk in identifying you, please type in your case number, then PL or DF (for plaintiff or defendant), then your name with last name first. **(EXAMPLE: 19-243695-NI PL Stewart, Martha)**.
- Members of the public can simply type Public.

Joining the Zoom meeting:

- Upon joining the zoom meeting, you will be placed in a waiting room. Members of the public will be brought into the main Zoom room at the beginning of the session or as they appear in the waiting room. Other participants will be brought in when their matter is ready to be called. Please watch for “chat” messages from the host.
- When your case is called, you will see all participants on the call, including the judge.
 - Select “Join with Audio” when prompted or select the icon as shown below
 - Select “Join with Video” when prompted or select the icon as shown below
 - These icons will appear on the bottom left corner of your zoom screen
 - If connecting with a smart phone, tapping your screen will bring up prompts to join with audio and video.



After Your Hearing

- **Unless otherwise directed by the Court, parties MUST e-file an Order containing the Court's ruling. The Order must be signed by all counsel (electronic and signed with consent signatures are acceptable) and e-filed by 4:30pm on the day the motion is heard. Orders e-filed after 4:30pm must be e-filed and submitted pursuant to [MCR 2.602\(B\)\(3\)](#)**
- E-file instructions can be found by accessing: <https://www.oakgov.com/courts/circuit/programs/Pages/eFiling.aspx>.

• **Early Scheduling and Pretrial Conferences.** The Court will hold Early Scheduling and Pretrial conferences on the dates contained in existing scheduling orders. However, the court is staggering start times to make better use of litigant time. All persons connected to the e-file system will receive notice, at least a day in advance, of the actual time of the conference. Conferences will be conducted by Zoom video and/or audio conferences. The court will use these conferences to adjust scheduling order dates, including the date of trial, and will take into account delays resulting from the pandemic.

Criminal Call. The Court intends to conduct pretrials, sentencings and violation of probation proceedings virtually, though limited personal appearances will be held if testimony must be taken, and the parties do not agree to conduct the proceeding on Zoom. Videoconferencing of in-custody defendants will continue from the jail between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. on Fridays and non-custody cases between 1:00 and 5:00 on Thursdays. Counsel will participate by Zoom video and/or audio conferences. Defendants will participate via Zoom video and/or audio conferences. If confidential matters need to be discussed, as these matters occur, the Court will provide a private breakout room within the Zoom platform for counsel and Defendants to confer in confidence. **Attorneys are responsible for providing their client with the log-in information for the Zoom hearing.** For any questions concerning the criminal docket, please contact Barb Felder at felderb@oakgov.com. Or (248) 466-4301.

For criminal motions, please follow the protocol below.

Motions.

Scheduling of Summary Disposition Motions. All motions for summary disposition will continue to follow the normal protocol (i.e., contact Stacy Hannert at hannerts@oakgov.com or (248) 466- 4781 to schedule a hearing date. Stacy will issue a briefing schedule).

Scheduling of Appeals. Hearings on general civil and criminal appeals will be scheduled for virtual oral argument as required. Contact Stacy Hannert (above) with any questions.

Motions for Default or Default Judgment. Motions for default judgments will be heard. Notice must be provided to the defendant in the same manner that original service was obtained.

Motions to Adjourn. If all parties agree, the court will adjourn scheduling orders as requested. It

is not necessary to file a motion to adjourn a jury trial date that will occur before the court has resumed live jury trials. All cases receive a final pretrial date in the Case Management Order issued by Judge McMillen. The court is holding these final pretrial hearings *even if it does not appear the court will be holding a live jury trial due to the pandemic*. The Court will use the final pretrial date to address any issues the parties wish to discuss, and to reschedule the trial date. If we have overlooked a case, or the parties mutually are requesting further adjournment, please call Wendell at (248) 466-4084 to obtain a new scheduling order.

Scheduling of All Other Motions, Including Motions in Criminal Cases. For motions necessitating oral argument, Judge McMillen will hear such via Zoom video and/or audio during the regular Wednesday morning motion call. However, the actual times of the hearings will be staggered throughout the morning.

- To have a motion heard, the motion and praecipe must be e-filed. Instruction on e-filing are found at <https://www.oakgov.com/courts/circuit/programs/Pages/eFiling.aspx>
- On the Tuesday before a Wednesday motion call, the clerk will distribute the docket with the time of the hearing along with Zoom instructions to all parties whose email address is attached to the case file. If you have issues concerning the time a hearing is set, please call Kathy at (248) 466-4491.