

Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Dependency Court Hybrid Procedures

OVERVIEW

- In accordance with No. SC22-1, Supreme Court of Florida, In Re: Amendments to Florida Rules of Juvenile Procedure, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure and Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Forms, the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit has implemented procedures for Dependency Court operations related to remote proceedings. The effective date is December 1, 2022. These procedures cover all Dependency Courts (Judges and General Magistrates, hereinafter referred to as the Court).
- These procedures are applicable to all parties and attendees (hereinafter referred to as participants), including attorneys, parents, case management professionals, Guardian ad Litem volunteers and caregivers.
- The Dependency Courts will utilize applicable technology, allowing participants to appear in court proceedings in person or virtually.
- Zoom is the platform used by the Dependency Courts for virtual hearings. The Courts are not precluded from using additional technology.
- Participants may appear virtually for all hearings (daily dependency hearings, judicial reviews, weekday and weekend shelters) other than trials or lengthy evidentiary hearings. There is no requirement to request a remote appearance unless specified by the Court.

The Court, may at any time, require participants to appear in person.

ADVANCED PREPARATION

- Each participant will need a device with a microphone and camera, with internet access on the same device.
- All participants **must** have their *video and sound* turned on in their Zoom settings.
- Participants should attempt to provide adequate lighting and sound for the Court to clearly see and hear them.
- Participants are encouraged to test Zoom before the hearing, including downloading the app at least one day before the hearing if using a tablet or phone.
Click link to test Zoom: [Http://zoom.us/test](http://zoom.us/test).

Failure to establish or maintain a stable internet connection with Zoom audio and visual may result in the Court requiring in person participation.

THE HEARING

- The Court will not provide technical support for Zoom participants.
- Appropriate attire is mandatory for any appearance in Court. Dress for your Zoom proceeding as if you were attending your court proceeding in the courtroom.

No participant may operate a motor vehicle or be a passenger in a moving vehicle while attending a hearing.

- Participants must be in a quiet location and must maintain a stationary position throughout the hearing.
- The Court may establish breakout rooms for Attorneys to confer with their clients, as appropriate.

ATTORNEYS

- Attorneys must confer with their clients at least 24 hours prior to the hearing to determine if the client will participate in person or virtually.
- If their client is participating virtually, the attorney must provide them with the Zoom information and advise of the courtroom procedures.
- If appearing virtually, an attorney *shall not* appear in more than one hearing at a time. If scheduled for another hearing, send a message to that Court indicating their anticipated availability.

Attorneys and other participants appearing virtually shall not appear in more than one hearing at a time.

NON COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS

- Participants will not be admitted or will be removed from hearings if they display disrespectful or aggressive behavior.
- No participant will be admitted into the breakout room or hearing room if they are driving, laying down, dressed inappropriately or in a location where confidentiality cannot be maintained.
- The hearing will continue if a participant drops of or cannot communicate.
- Any participant may be required to appear in person for failure to comply with the listed requirements.