

SUPREME COURT OF YUKON

PRACTICE DIRECTION
GENERAL-24

Best Practices for Videoconferencing

Appearance of counsel or witnesses in court by videoconference is permitted on request to the Trial Coordinator. Approval by the presiding judge may be necessary.

Notice

The Trial Coordinator shall be advised of the request and will seek approval from the presiding judge, if necessary. Once approved, counsel shall provide the Court Technologist by email with the name and email address for the individual(s) who will be appearing by video. The email subject line shall include the name of the case and the court file number. The notice requirement depends on the location of the individual(s) and the number of individuals seeking to appear by video. The notice requirements are:

TYPE OF REQUEST	NOTICE REQUIRED
Victim attendance as observer by video	5 business days
Video appearance in Canada	15 business days
Video appearance, multiple parties, in Canada	15 business days
Video appearance outside of Canada	20 business days
Video appearance, multiple parties, outside of Canada	25 business days

No Recording or Photography

There shall be no recording or photography during video appearances. Participants are not permitted to audio- or video-record, photograph, or screenshot any portion of a virtual or in-person proceeding. Some proceedings are confidential and there may be a publication ban in effect.

Confidentiality at Case Management and Pre-Trial Conferences

The conversation among the parties, their counsel, and the judge in a case conference or pre-trial conference is confidential. Only parties and/or their counsel should appear at the conference and no-one else should be present, unless otherwise permitted by the conference judge. Participants shall not forward or share the meeting link or dial up information to any unauthorized individuals.

Connection and Quality

To reduce the chance of disruption of connection and to maximize quality, participants shall follow these practices:

- Participants shall restart their computer or device prior to connecting to the court.
- Participants shall make sure their device is charged or is connected to a power source.
- It is preferable for participants to use a device that is connected directly to a network cable rather than Wi-Fi. If using Wi-Fi, participants must be as close as possible to the Wi-Fi access point.
- Participants shall mute notifications on their computer/device and keep phone on silent mode.
- Participants shall reduce the number of other devices that are using the internet connection during the hearing. If a participant is appearing from home, other household members shall be asked to refrain from using the Internet during the remote appearance.
- Devices such as Google Home, Alexa, Echo, SIRI or other internet-enabled devices shall be turned off during your participation in the hearing.
- No other applications shall be running on the participant's electronic device when they are appearing by video.
- If using a desktop computer the participant is requested to use a headset. If using a laptop computer the participant is not required to use a headset.
- Participants using their phone shall ensure it is in a steady position to avoid a shaky image.
- Participants should join the remote appearance at least 15 minutes early.
- If participants are required to enter a screen name or username, it shall be their first and last name.
- Participants shall mute their device when not speaking.

Decorum

- Participants shall conduct themselves as though they are physically appearing in a courtroom.
- Participants shall ensure they are in a quiet, private area and ensure their background is as neutral as possible. Inappropriate profiles or background photos shall not be used.
- Participants shall make best efforts to ensure they will not be interrupted during their video appearance.
- Participants shall make sure the brightest source of light (e.g. a window or lamp) in the room is in front of them not behind or beside them.
- Participants shall make sure their face is visible in the frame.
- Only one person shall speak at a time.
- Participants shall not eat food nor drink any beverage other than water during the video appearance.
- Smoking or vaping are not permitted during the video appearance.
- Participants shall dress appropriately. Attire is expected to be the same as if the participant were appearing in court. Counsel shall wear business attire unless it is an appearance for which they are required to gown. (See Practice Direction General-15 Gowning)

Duncan C.J.
September 3, 2021