

SUPREME COURT OF YUKON

PRACTICE DIRECTION GENERAL-24

Best Practices for Videoconferencing

Appearance of counsel or witnesses in court in person is preferred. Appearance by videoconference is permitted on request. Approval by the presiding judge will be necessary in the circumstances outlined below. Approval by the presiding judge is not required for Tuesday Chambers' appearances. (See Practice Direction Family-8/Civil-3/Criminal-6)

Approval Required

Requests for appearances by videoconference must be approved by the presiding judge for the following hearings:

- Trials
- Summary trials
- Applications scheduled for longer than a ½ day
- Judicial settlement conferences, binding or non-binding

Procedure

The request to appear by videoconference shall be made on reasonable notice by email to the Trial Coordinator at SC.TrialCoordinator@yukoncourts.ca who will seek approval from the presiding judge if required. If the request is approved, the Trial Coordinator will provide directions to the requestor by email, including directions to contact the Court Technologist at court-technologies@yukoncourts.ca, and completing a form.

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.

Case Management and Pre-Trial Conferences

Case management conferences and pre-trial conferences are conducted by videoconference. Exceptions requiring an in-person courtroom appearance are as directed by the presiding judge.

The Trial Coordinator will send a link to the participants in advance of the conference. Participants shall not forward or share the meeting link to any unauthorized individuals.

Whether conducted by videoconference or in person, a case management conference or pre-trial conference is generally confidential. Only parties and/or their counsel should appear at the conference and no one else should be present, unless otherwise permitted by the case management conference judge. Where the judge directs that the conference be held in a courtroom and recorded, or on Chambers' Day, the public may attend unless there are settlement discussions or counsel raises confidentiality concerns that are accepted by the court. (See Practice Direction General-25)

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 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.
- If participants are disconnected during the proceeding, they shall rejoin immediately using the same link, and if unable to reconnect, they must email the court technologist at court-technologies@yukoncourts.ca.
- Participants shall not share the videoconference link with anyone unless authorized by the court.
- If using a cellular hotspot (cell phone hotspot), participants must ensure they have strong signal strength and adequate data.
- Participants shall test their device, internet connection, microphone, and camera with the provided platform (e.g., Zoom) in advance of the hearing.

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)

- Participants shall give their full attention to the proceeding and shall not engage in other tasks while connected.

Duncan C.J.
February 11, 2026