



Provincial Court of British Columbia

It is important to participate in all court proceedings in a respectful way since that will assist the Court in carrying out its work.

Attending court remotely means attending a proceeding by computer, mobile device (audio conference or video conference) or telephone without having to physically be in the courthouse.

For example, the default method of attendance for the following appearances is remote:

- *Family Law Act* family management conferences and family settlement conferences
- *Provincial Court (Child, Family and Community Service Act) Rules* family case conferences
- Criminal bail hearings in the Northern, Interior and Island Regions and criminal pre-trial conferences
- Small claims trial conferences and settlement conferences

Court proceedings where some participants attend court remotely while others attend in person are usually called hybrid proceedings.

For example, the default method of attendance for the following appearances is hybrid:

- *Family Law Act* pretrial conferences and trial preparation conferences

- Counsel in criminal bail hearings in the Vancouver and Fraser Regions, criminal initial appearance court.

Sometimes there is a choice about whether to participate remotely or in person. At other times, in-person or remote attendance is required unless a judge orders otherwise.

Guidance for everyone participating in court remotely

The convenience of appearing in court remotely brings with it responsibilities for everyone to behave with the same dignity, formality and respect for the proceedings as if they were physically in a courtroom.

Unless a judge directs or orders otherwise:

- Put your cell phone on silent mode
- Do not audio-record, video-record, photograph or take a screenshot of any part of a proceeding; there are penalties for doing so, including prosecution
- Do not publish, broadcast or distribute court proceedings in any way; there are penalties for doing so, including prosecution
- Read and comply with [Notice 21 Remote Attendance in the Provincial Court](#)

Lawyers participating in court remotely

Lawyers must comply with *Notice 21 Remote Attendance in the Provincial Court* when participating in proceedings remotely. Some key expectations for lawyers described in the Notice are:

- Lawyers must wear business attire
- When attending remotely using MS Teams, lawyers must appear by video conference or apply to the Court to appear by audio conference

Common steps in a remote or hybrid hearing

A remote or hybrid hearing may include some or all of these additional steps. The Court may:

- Ask if anyone other than the parties and their lawyers is present or listening (in a family court matter, children should not be able to hear any part of a virtual hearing)
- Confirm that no one is recording the hearing
- Tell you which written materials they have received and will be considering (if the judge doesn't mention this, you may ask)
- If anyone has filed an affidavit that has not been sworn or affirmed to be true, ask them to swear or affirm that it is true

Microsoft Teams Guide

Instructions on joining a virtual court hearing using Microsoft Teams.



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