

Practice Direction on Electronic Proceedings

These requirements apply to all electronic proceedings before the Adjudicative Tribunals of CPA Ontario. It is the responsibility of each party to ensure that all necessary persons, including any witnesses, are aware of and comply with these Directions, which are to be read in conjunction with the [Rules of Practice and Procedure](#).

Technology Requirements

Electronic and hybrid proceedings take place on the Zoom platform.

Download

The Zoom application should be downloaded prior to the proceeding date to minimize any delays or disruptions on that date.

<https://zoom.us/download>

Note: It is possible to join Zoom sessions via web browser, but use of the Zoom desktop application is strongly recommended as use of the web browser may result in lower audio and/or video quality and because users may experience feature limitations (such as joining audio and screen sharing in Safari).

All participants are required to have the following technology:

Hardware

Component	Requirement (Recommended)
Computer and processor	2.5 Ghz or higher; 32-bit or 64-bit
Memory	8 GB RAM
Operating system	Windows 10, Windows 11 macOS X (10.13) or later
Devices	Standard laptop camera, microphone, and speakers
Other	➤ The optional Blur background effect requires a sufficient processor. For a list of compatible processors, please see the Virtual Background requirements .

While not required, a second monitor, external webcam, and headset are encouraged.

Bandwidth

For hearings, minimum 1.0 mbps/600 kbps (upload/download speed) is required, with 15 mps recommended. It should be noted that the standard bandwidth offered by most internet providers is at least 15 mps. Connectivity rates may be tested on speedtest.net.

Testing

Prior to the date of the proceeding, each party, including each anticipated witness, has the option of receiving technology support from the IT Department of CPA Ontario to test the functionality of Zoom with their technology and to walk through a virtual proceeding. Should a party or anticipated

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witness wish to receive this support, they may contact the Tribunals Office (tribunals@cpaontario.ca) to make the request.

It is critical that each participant use the same devices and physical space for the proceeding and the test to avoid any degradation of functionality. For both the test and the proceeding, all other uses of the participant's internet system (such as gaming and streaming) should be minimized or eliminated.

Just prior to the commencement of the proceeding, a further technology check may take place at the request of a participant, and an IT resource will be available throughout the proceeding to troubleshoot any emergent issues.

Using Zoom

Joining Zoom Proceedings

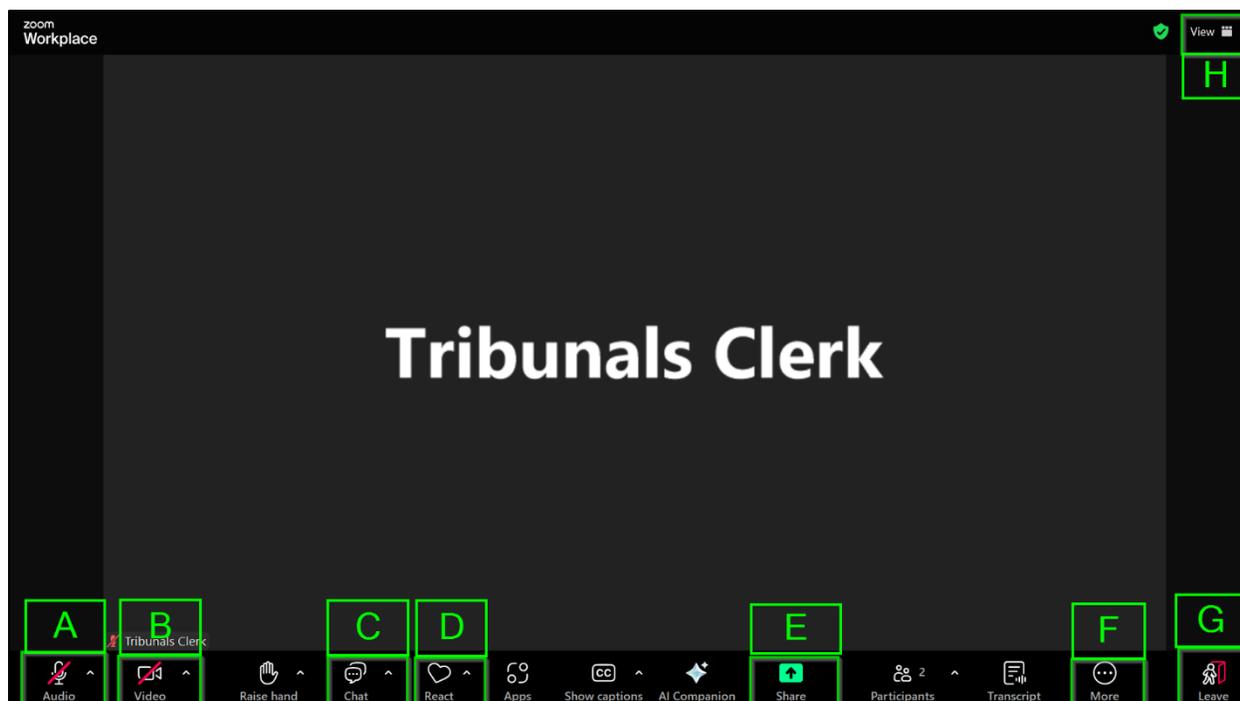
Zoom proceedings can be joined by accessing the link contained in the Outlook invitation sent by the Tribunals Office to participants of the proceeding. If the Zoom desktop application is installed, participants may be prompted to allow their web browser to access the program.

Alternatively, proceedings may be joined by accessing <https://zoom.us/join> or opening the Zoom desktop application, selecting **Join Meeting**, and entering the **Meeting ID** provided in the Tribunals Office Outlook invitation.

If prompted to enter a display name, please enter your first and last name. If there are multiple people attending via the same device (for example, legal counsel is attending with their client(s)), please enter the first and last name of each participant. For example: John Smith and Jane Doe or John Smith, Jane Doe, and Jake Jones.

The Zoom Interface

Once in the proceeding, the interface will appear similar to the below image. Views of individual participants may be different depending on the zoom settings and participant permissions given.



- A. Mute or unmute microphone.
 - a. Select the arrow to open more sound options, such as which microphone or speaker to use.
- B. Start or stop camera.
 - a. Select the arrow to open more video options, such as camera blurring or video source.
- C. Open or close the chat pane.
- D. React using emojis or use the **raise your hand** function.
 - a. Raising your hand will indicate to other participants that you would like to speak.
- E. Share screen.
 - a. Clicking this will allow you to share your entire screen or a specific window.
- F. View more options. The previous settings listed may be nested under this menu. Closed captioning will also be listed here if available.
- G. Leave the proceeding.
- H. Change the view. Options include
 - a. Speaker view: The person who is speaking will be highlighted in a larger window.
 - b. Gallery view: View all participants in a grid view across the entire screen.
 - c. Multi-speaker view: Several participants who are speaking are shown in a larger view, with others arranged in a smaller gallery view below.

Breakout Rooms

Breakout rooms are sessions separate from the main Zoom proceeding. These sessions allow participants to meet in smaller groups and are isolated from the main session.

When breakout rooms are opened, a pop-up will appear inviting participants to **Join** the breakout room. Select this option to enter.

When breakout rooms are ended, participants will be notified via a pop-up. An option will be given to return to the main room immediately, or wait 60 seconds to be moved automatically.

Environmental Requirements

Privacy: A private area is to be used by each proceeding participant.

Noise: Ambient noise is to be minimized.

Background: Participants should ensure that any background visible onscreen is appropriate for a proceeding. Use of the Zoom “blur” background feature is strongly encouraged. Use of filters or virtual backgrounds is not permitted.

Camera: The camera should be placed so that it is at the participant’s eye level with the participant centred in the picture and, except for witnesses, should not contain any desk surface. Witnesses must ensure their hands and any surface are visible to ensure the integrity of testimony. Lighting is to be from the front or side of the subject so that expressions are visible.

- **Pin function:** Zoom has a “pin” function, which can be used to ensure certain images of participants remain in static position on the screen. The use of pinning is at each participant’s discretion.

Etiquette: The same formal etiquette and protocol of in-person proceedings is expected at an electronic hearing. All participants are reminded that a professional appearance is expected.

During the Proceeding

Entering the proceeding: Parties and their witnesses will arrive at the videoconference proceeding in a virtual “lobby” and will remain there until admitted by the Tribunals Clerk. Witnesses, unless the Panel orders otherwise, shall only attend the proceeding to give their evidence and shall otherwise remain in the lobby until dismissed.

- The proceeding, if it is a hearing or a motion, will be recorded by the Tribunals Office, and all participants will be so advised. Pre-hearing conferences are not recorded.
- The following participants shall have their cameras on at all times:
 - The Chair;
 - Members of the Panel;
 - The parties;
 - Counsel for the parties; and
 - Any witness while testifying.
- To reduce unnecessary use of bandwidth, the following persons shall participate in the proceeding without having their cameras on:
 - Tribunals Clerk;
 - Independent Legal Counsel (ILC) to the Tribunal (unless providing legal advice); and
 - Observers.

Muting of microphones: All persons, with the exception of the Chair, shall mute their microphones when not speaking.

- A participant wishing to object, raise a point of order, assist the panel, or other similar matter, shall signal the intent to do so by interjecting “Mister/Madam Chair” or by using the “Raise Hand” function and then waiting to be recognized by the Chair. To facilitate this, all other persons shall cease speaking.

Affirmation of witnesses: Witnesses will be affirmed by the Chair immediately prior to giving evidence.

Public Attendance: Members of the public are permitted to attend proceedings as observers, unless the proceeding or a portion of the proceeding is not open to the public.

Breaks: There will be regular breaks during the proceeding. If additional breaks are needed, they can be requested from the Chair.

Break out space: The Tribunals Clerk will arrange for Breakout Rooms for the parties to use during breaks.

Documents and Evidence

All documents filed with the Tribunals Office are to conform with the *Practice Direction on Filing of Electronic Documents*.

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All documents intended for use during the proceeding are to be filed with the Tribunals Office on the timeline directed by the Chair of the pre-hearing conference, or as required by the Tribunals Office.

Should any party wish to bring a document or portion of a document to the attention of the Panel, that person may share or request the Tribunals Clerk to share that document on the screen.

For additional information, please contact the Tribunals Office at tribunals@cpaontario.ca.