



Macomb County Probate Court

Probate Judges:

JAMES M. BIERNAT JR., *Chief Judge*
SANDRA A. HARRISON, *Presiding*
SARA A. SCHIMKE

Deputy Court Administrator/Register

JOHN D. BRENNAN

VIRTUAL/REMOTE COURT HEARING INSTRUCTIONS, PROCEDURES, AND POLICIES

- Remote hearings with the Macomb County Probate Court will take place using two-way interactive technology through **Zoom**, a teleconference and video conference program. **Failure to comply with the Court's hearing procedures and local court policy may result in the matter being dismissed or adjourned, rescheduled for an in-person hearing, and/or loss of remote hearing privileges for the duration of the case.**

Technical Responsibilities.

- It is the participant's responsibility to have the proper equipment and networking needed for a successful remote hearing.
- The court does not provide technical assistance for testing or troubleshooting.
- The court does not provide time during court proceedings to troubleshoot issues.
- It is the participant's responsibility to use a good WiFi/Internet connection to ensure a quality connection, and that the WiFi/Internet connection works prior to the hearing.
- It is the participant's responsibility to become familiar with the controls, and test the video, microphone, and speaker controls on the device prior to the hearing. See: <http://zoom.us/test>
- If you have technical difficulties, you should review Zoom training and support materials at Zoom.us prior to the hearing. Zoom is an independent service provider and will have NO knowledge of your court case or legal issues.

Zoom Hearing Procedures.

- Zoom participants must appear for the Zoom meeting at the appointed time, as indicated on the Notice.
- Zoom participants are required to indicate their full name on their Zoom screen.
- Zoom participants will be checked in by the Court's clerk.
- Once checked in, participants must wait for their matter to be called by the Court.
- Failure to remain in the Zoom meeting and be immediately available when your case is called may result in the case being dismissed or adjourned.

Local Court Policy.

- Pleadings may not be filed via email. All filings are accepted in-person or via US mail only.
- Failure to submit your proof of service and order to the Court Analyst prior to the hearing day may result in your matter being adjourned or dismissed. Fax to 586-783-0929.
- All virtual court appearances are an extension of the courtroom; therefore, all parties must adhere to proper conduct and appropriate attire is expected and required.
 - Traveling in a vehicle, walking, eating, and smoking during a court hearing is strictly prohibited.
 - Tank tops, pajamas, shorts, cut-off jeans, and clothing with words or pictures are NOT appropriate.
- Remote participants must use a private and quiet room that is free of interruptions. Outdoor, vehicle, or public places are not permitted. A participant who is in a moving vehicle will be removed from the hearing.
- If the court determines the quality of the video/audio experience is not acceptable, the court has the authority to terminate the call.
- The judge has full power and authority (including but not limited to contempt power) over remote participants as if they were present in the physical courtroom.
- Zoom hearing participants are prohibited from recording or otherwise copying court proceedings. Recording or copying a hearing may result in the responsible individual being held in contempt.

Types of Hearings on Zoom

The Notice of Hearing will indicate whether the hearing is on Zoom and will have the proper Zoom ID, hearing date, and hearing time. Generally, the types of hearings listed below will be on Zoom.

- Mental Health hearings.
- Developmentally Disabled guardianships
- Minor guardianships, initial hearing
- Minor conservatorships, initial hearing
- Motions for summary disposition (time limit: 15 minutes each side), or must request in-person hearing
- Petitions for instruction
- Modification of adult guardianships (if ward is petitioner, the hearing will be in-person)
- Modification of adult conservatorships (if ward is petitioner, the hearing will be in-person)
- Special Needs Trusts – initial petition
- Review hearings
- Status conferences
- Pre-trial hearings
- Early scheduling conferences
- Case evaluation

Litigants may always choose to appear in person for their hearing, even if it scheduled to be a Zoom/remote hearing. All requests for change to a Zoom hearing must be directed to the Judge's Secretary via email.

Gail Stevens, Secretary for Judge Harrison	gail.stevens@macombgov.org
Kelly McIlhargey, Secretary for Judge Schimke	kelly.mcilhargey@macombgov.org

Zoom Information

Judge/Court Attorney	Meeting ID
Hon. Sandra A. Harrison	926 860 1447
Hon. Sara A. Schimke	602 662 0350
Renee Tegel, Court Attorney for Judge Harrison	297 621 8345
Julie Strawn, Court Attorney for Judge Schimke	950 598 3879
Erika Peabody, Court Attorney	953 630 4889 Passcode: 54321

Connecting with Zoom

Apple and Android Tablets or Phones (voice and/or video).

- Download the "Zoom Cloud Meetings" app onto your smartphone. (This is a free app, you are not required to sign up.)
- Click "Join a Meeting" located at the bottom of your screen.
- Enter the Meeting ID Code and click "Join".
- Change your name to "[First, Last]" under the meeting id box.
- You will be entered into the hearing/meeting.

Computer with Camera (voice and/or video).

- Go to www.zoom.us
- Click "Join a Meeting" in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.
- Enter the Meeting ID Code.
- Change your name to "[First, Last]" under the meeting id box.
- You will be entered into the hearing/meeting.