



AAA-ICDR® Videoconference Mediation Guide for Parties and Mediators

Optimizing the Videoconference Mediation Experience¹

- Use a PC or laptop computer with fully functional video and audio systems. Check that the video and audio features work prior to the mediation.
- Use a good quality webcam if possible, and check lighting conditions. Backlighting is generally not desirable.
- The device/screen that you are using to participate in the videoconference will not be available for other purposes, such as taking notes or reviewing documents; arrange for alternative means of doing so.
- Do not use an iPad, tablet, kindle or cell phone to participate in the mediation. Those devices usually don't have the bandwidth to make the mediation meaningful. Additionally, a larger monitor/screen will be important, particularly for mediations with many participants. Cell phone use should be limited to the unlikely event of loss of internet connection or computer failure.
- Participants should use secure internet connections and should not attend the mediation from public locations or in circumstances where non-participants could hear or see the mediation proceedings.
- If necessary, download and install the platform for the videoconference mediation session.
- Participants may want to familiarize themselves with the features and operation of the videoconference platform. Most platforms have helpful video tutorials available on their website.
- At least a week before the mediation session, the participants should conduct a brief test of the platform to address any issues such as video and audio systems, camera settings, connectivity issues, lighting, clarity, backgrounds, and sound disruptions. During this test videoconference, participants may want to confirm the mediation attendees and their contact information and confirm the number of breakout rooms that will be needed for the mediation sessions. The participants also can discuss how any settlement agreement agreed upon will be executed.

What to Expect at the Videoconference Mediation

- Before the session begins, all participants should turn off or silence their phones and computers, including any notifications and alerts.
- Participants should take all reasonable measures to ensure they are in a separate, private room, if possible, and that they will not be interrupted during the online mediation session.

¹ Please note that video hearings or proceedings are conducted through third party platforms. The use of such platforms for proceedings is subject to the platform's terms and policies. The AAA-ICDR does not endorse any one platform over another nor does the AAA-ICDR guarantee the suitability or availability of any platform.



- Participants should log into the mediation session no less than five (5) minutes before the scheduled start time, so that any technology issues can be resolved and the mediation session can start on time.
- Mediator impartiality is a core principle of mediation. To make sure no one feels someone else has gained an advantage in the mediation by joining the session early, each participant joining the session will enter a **“virtual waiting room.”** No participant can see any other participant while in the waiting room. Once all parties have joined the mediation session, the mediator will bring everyone into the session at the same time (unless the parties have agreed in advanced not to begin with a joint session).
- It is important to allow each participant to finish their comment or statement before responding. In addition, some videoconferencing platforms may amplify and exaggerate sound so maintaining a regular speaking voice is important. Finally, please remember that the camera does not always transmit hand gestures or non-verbal cues, so it is important for participants to verbalize all communication during the videoconference session.



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