A short guide to video conferencing etiquette

An important objective of the Court is to reduce the number of people physically attending the Court. Video conferencing technology, including Webex and Zoom will be used to meet this objective.

This guide on video conferencing etiquette includes a list of key tips and suggestions participating in a video conference.

Top tips and best practices for virtual hearings

To avoid any issues with latency such as screen freezing and poor audio quality, ensure your device has a suitable internet connection. *This cannot be overstated – remember, you cannot advocate if you cannot be heard or seen.*

Be mindful that sensitive microphones will pick up sounds of keyboard tapping, paper shuffling, sneezing and coughing. These sounds can easily distract other participants.



Reduce environmental (background) noises – close windows and doors and mute your phone.

For best results, consider investing in a headset with a microphone instead of the inbuilt microphone and speakers in your device (this will help reduce background noise and unnecessary feedback).



Mute the microphone when not speaking to avoid distracting other participants.

It is not necessary to shout; however, speaking softly, and mumbling should also be avoided – speak in your normal voice.

DO NOT TALK OVER OR INTERRUPT WHEN ANOTHER PARTICIPANT IS SPEAKING.  
Instead, use the “raise your hand” feature when you want to speak. This will avoid participants speaking over one another, the need to repeat questions, and will assist with transcribing.

Test your technology and layout ahead of time (viewing, speaking and hearing) – to help participants check their technology is working correctly, the Court will endeavour to start the virtual hearing 10–15 minutes before the start-time. This will ensure everything runs smoothly during the hearing.

Make sure you try to position the camera, so it sits at eye level and in a way that feels natural and allows you to look directly at the camera when speaking.

Adjust the lighting – make sure you have suitable lighting in your room/area – close your blinds to reduce glare and doors to reduce noise.



Ensure you have a clean neutral background – consider applying one of the offered [virtual backgrounds](https://www.countycourt.vic.gov.au/going-court/virtual-hearings-and-trials).