

Standing Order Regarding Trials for SC, LM, and MR Cases

1. Enforcement of Local Court Rule 3-1.03B will be temporarily suspended. Trials will not automatically be set 14 days after the Defendant files an Appearance until further order of court. All parties are expected to appear at the return date, and a trial date will be set on the return date.

2. On the scheduled trial date, the parties will enter the courtroom through the courtroom link on the court's website, www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us. Each party is responsible for making sure that their witnesses have the information to join the proceeding at the appropriate time. Witnesses should remain in the Zoom virtual Waiting Room until they are called in to participate.

3. Admonishments
 - A) Remember that this is a formal proceeding. Treat it as if you were present in the courtroom.
 - B) The public is able to view these proceedings as a Livestream on YouTube.
 - C) There are multiple participants in this proceeding. If you are not speaking, mute yourself so we do not pick up background noise or unwanted audio feedback. Please take a moment to locate the mute button on your screen. Clicking the microphone will enable you to mute and unmute. If the Court mutes you, the judge will let you know.
 - D) Please do not speak over one another or interrupt one another.
 - E) The Court will admit witnesses into the virtual Courtroom from the Waiting Room one at a time. Do not allow or encourage witnesses to watch the Livestream during the hearing or assist them in any way in violating this rule. Do not communicate with the witness through any format during the proceeding. Witnesses may not hold any notes or paperwork in their hands while they are testifying.
 - F) If a participant or witness has limited internet access or experiences problems with an internet connection during these proceedings, they should immediately dial in using the dial-in information and meeting code provided in the Zoom invitation that they were given. Once dialed-in they will be admitted through the Waiting Room.
 - G) Video or audio recording of this proceeding by any party through any device or format is strictly prohibited. Failure to comply with this admonishment may result in the imposition of sanctions or in a finding of contempt.

In a proceeding using a court reporter, please see admonishments detailed in Section 2 of the Protocol for Remote Civil Bench Trials and Arbitration Hearings.

4. As each witness is called, the Judge will admit the witness from the waiting room for testimony. Witnesses should only be admitted one at a time as they are called to testify.
5. Once the witness is admitted they will be sworn-in by the Judge. If there is any question as to the identity of a participant appearing by Zoom, the Judge may require identification through a driver's license or other form of identification. If a party is unable to appear by Zoom and is present by telephone only, the Judge must verify that the participant is the person s/he claims to be, by asking identifying questions. If verification is established, the oath can be administered as set forth above.
6. Exhibits must be exchanged between the parties at least two (2) days prior to the trial date and shall be provided to the court 2 days before the trial date. All exhibits are to be pre-marked identifying the party offering the exhibit and the exhibit number. During the trial, the previously disclosed exhibits will be presented utilizing the Zoom Share Screen feature. This feature is only available during a Zoom video conference. (The parties download the necessary documents/exhibits to their computer and present them to the Court and the parties to the trial via Share Screen.) The Court will not allow an exhibit to be shown on Share Screen without permission. At the end of the trial each party is to withdraw and retain their exhibits.
7. Once a witness who is not a party has completed their testimony, the Court may require that they exit the proceedings.
8. The Judge can move participants to separate Breakout Rooms for privacy and when otherwise appropriate. The Judge may use the Breakout Room with the attorneys for a side bar, to rule on objections, or a Breakout Room may be used by an attorney to consult with their client. Interpreters should be included in the Breakout Room when appropriate.
9. At the end of the trial, the Judge will conclude the matter in the same manner as if physically in court. Before concluding, the Judge will reaffirm that the participants were present for the entire virtual proceeding and that they were able to hear what was said.
10. At the conclusion of the trial, an appropriate order will be entered reflecting the Court's ruling. The Judge may prepare the order himself or herself or designate a party to prepare the order and email it to the courtroom clerk for signature.