



Justice of the Peace Court No. 4

The Honorable Christopher "Chris" Gregory

RE: HEARINGS

During the COVID-19 state of disaster, the Justice of the Peace Court No. 4 will conduct both ZOOM hearings (Preferred Method) and in-person for litigants who are unable to successfully participate in remote hearings for reasons beyond the court's control. You may choose the method you are most comfortable with. ***Failure to indicate a choice will default to an in-person hearing.***

Option 1:

In-Person Hearings:

To Appear In-Person:

1. Please indicate at the bottom of this form if you would like to appear in-person for your hearing due to being unable to successfully participate in a remote hearing beyond your or the courts control.
2. Masks must be worn in the Court unless the Judge or bailiff requests that you remove them. Social distancing protocols are to remain in effect at all times.

Option 2:

To Appear by Zoom:

1. Please indicate at the bottom of this form if you would like to appear via Zoom.

2. Hearing requests via Zoom SHALL include the following:
 - a. Name of the requestor;
 - b. Email and phone number of the requestor;
 - c. For any witnesses appearing via Zoom, you will need to include their full name, email and telephone number.

2. You can **DOWNLOAD** the free Zoom App on your smartphone (ANDROID OR APPLE) or computer at <https://www.zoom.us> prior to your hearing date and time.

3. On the date and time of your hearing listed in the Notice of Hearing/Order, **OPEN** a web browser of your choice, then **ENTER** the Zoom link information that was sent to you in a separate email.

4. Once you connect, please **WAIT** to be checked in. You will be placed in a “waiting room” and on mute or silent until your hearing begins.

5. Exhibits – hearing/trial exhibits, except for rebuttal or those that can not be anticipated, SHALL be pre-marked, exchanged with counsel/self-represented parties, and EMAILED to the court as separate PDF files **at least three (3) days prior to the Zoom Hearing**. Exhibits shall be saved as separate files, in PDF, MP4 or JPEG format named and marked using the following FORMAT:

Cause Number-Party Designation-Exhibit Number-Hearing Date

EXAMPLE: JP04-20-DC0001234-Petitioner-Exhibit 12- 12-01-2020

6. Zoom proceedings are actual court proceedings conducted in a Virtual Courtroom. Hearings will be lived streamed to the public, so participants must treat Zoom proceedings with the same respect as in-person court proceedings. All of the usual in person courtroom decorum, demeanor and dress code rules shall apply.

7. IT IS ORDERED THAT RECORDING ZOOM PROCEEDINGS IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN. Attorneys, self-represented parties, witnesses and attendees participating in remote hearings, or members of the public viewing a live stream, are prohibited from recording, capturing, saving, broadcasting, televising or photographing the

proceeding in any manner. **FAILURE TO ABIDE BY THIS ORDER MAY RESULT IN CONTEMPT OF COURT PROCEEDINGS.**

8. You must review the Tarrant County Justice Court, Prct. 4 Rules and Procedures for E-Hearings/E-Trial Documents, which provides you with necessary additional information.

-To access required forms, please visit our website at: <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/en/justice-of-the-peace-courts/justice-4.html>

JP4 is performing in-person hearings as well as using the Zoom video conference platform (Preferred Method). You do not need an account to use Zoom and the service is free. You may use a cellphone, tablet, or computer. The court is able to swear in witnesses and parties over Zoom; please have a picture identification with you to show the Court. Please review the tips below for your video hearings.

COURT HEARING VIDEO CONFERENCING TIPS

- Dress and look like you are going to court. No hats please.
- Do your best to have a stable internet connection. Ask others in your house or office to avoid large data use (game streaming; video streaming; etc.) while on a videoconference call.
- Use your full real name. Avoid using nicknames or the device's default name setting.
- Be as still as possible while speaking and waiting to speak.
- Do your best to have a solid or non-distracting background, or utilize a virtual background.
- Have the camera face you straight on. Avoid leaning in or away from camera.
- Be aware of your microphone and audio set up. Mute your microphone unless you are speaking. (Wireless earbuds are less distracting than large headphones and exclude outside noise. Wired earbuds can be distracting and the built-in microphone often rubs on your clothes.)
- Speak slowly and clearly. Avoid speaking over others.
- Avoid typing, eating or drinking during the conference.
- Do your best to ensure privacy during the conference; everyone understands children, pets, and other members of the household might wander in.

HEARING TYPE REQUESTED:

****Return this form with your choice of hearing either in-person or by email to: Jp4court@tarrantcounty.com***

_____ OPTION 1: I WOULD LIKE MY HEARING TO BE CONDUCTED IN-PERSON. I WILL ADHERE TO THE COURT'S COVID-19 GUIDELINES.

_____ OPTION 2: I WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST THAT MY HEARING IS CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM.

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

By signing below, I indicate that I have selected my option for an in-person or Zoom hearing. I understand that the court has provided both options to me.

Case Number # _____ Plaintiff Defendant

Party Name: _____

I _____ consent for Justice Court, Precinct 4 to communicate with me and to serve ALL Court Documents electronically at the email listed below.

Email Address: _____
(Print Legibly)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

By submitting your request, you are aware and acknowledge there is some risk that third parties may read unencrypted emails. You understand that it is your responsibility to provide the Justice Court, Pct. 4 any updates to your email address. Finally, you authorize Justice Court, Pct. 4 to send all Court documents electronically to you and are aware that Justice Court, Pct. 4 is not responsible for any undelivered emails. If you wish to withdraw your consent for electronic communication, please e-mail JP4court@tarrantcounty.com.

WITNESS REQUEST FOR ZOOM ATTENDANCE:

Cause No.: _____

WITNESS #1:

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

WITNESS #2:

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

WITNESS #3:

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

WITNESS #4:

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

WITNESS #5:

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

PLEASE FILL OUT THE ATTACHED FORM AND RETURN TO THE COURT IN-PERSON OR BY EMAIL AT: JP4COURT@TARRANTCOUNTY.COM AT LEAST 3 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR HEARING.