

TIPS FOR TELEPHONIC APPEARANCES

Following is some guidance for telephonic appearances at hearings. Some of this guidance may also be helpful for video hearings. We ask that you follow this guidance to ensure an accurate transcript and to assist the judges in hearing and understanding what is said during a telephonic hearing.

1. Use a landline telephone whenever possible.
2. Do not use a speakerphone. This creates an echo which makes it harder to hear.
3. Do not use a voice-activated system because it can cut off words. If you have a voice-activated landline telephone, use a cell phone instead.
4. Wear a headset if you need your hands free.
5. Please join the conference call five minutes before the hearing is scheduled to begin for a sound check
6. In multiple-attorney cases, let the court reporter know ahead of time who will be speaking during the hearing.
7. If multiple attorneys from the same law firm are appearing, they each need to be on a separate phone line
8. Identify all parties present before the hearing begins, even if they do not intend to speak.
9. Introduce yourself before you begin speaking; for example, “This is Sam Smith. Thank you, Your Honor, for allowing me to appear by telephone. . . .”
10. Identify yourself each time you speak; not just the first time. The court reporter does not know your voice.
11. Only one person should speak at a time.
12. Speak directly into the telephone’s microphone.
13. Mute the telephone when you are not speaking. This cuts down on the rustling of papers and heavy breathing. Don’t forget to unmute your phone when it is your turn to speak.
14. Spell proper names and case citations. Be mindful of numbers, letters, and contractions. Examples: “16” and “60.” “V,” “D,” and “B.” “F” and “S.” “Did” and “didn’t.”
15. Speak slowly and distinctly. If the court reporter stops you, find out where the court reporter left off before you start up again.
16. If you hear a beep or musical chimes, that usually means someone has joined or left the conference call. Identify yourself before leaving or upon entering the conference call. The judge may confirm the court reporter is still on the line whenever someone joins or leaves the conference call.

For more tips and reminders about making a clear record, see [Making the Record – A Guide For Attorneys](#), published by the National Court Reporters Association.