

TWENTY-SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT
DOLORES AND MONTEZUMA COUNTIES

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2024-09

WEBEX VIRTUAL COURTROOM PROCEDURES

Authority. Pursuant to the authority granted to Chief Judges of the judicial districts of the State of Colorado by Chief Justice Directives ("CJD") 95-01 and 23-03, the undersigned enters the following Chief Judge Administrative Order 24-09, Webex Virtual Courtroom Procedures.

Background. As recognized by CJD 23-03, the implementation of virtual proceedings has resulted in benefits to parties, attorneys, and other court participants.

There are challenges in the use of virtual proceedings. There is a loss of courtroom decorum and solemnity. Additionally, the operation of the virtual appearance platform used by the Judicial Department, Webex, requires ongoing attention from both the judicial officers and staff throughout proceedings. Virtual proceedings have made the work of judicial staff and judicial officers more difficult and time consuming. Of concern, there appears to be a coordinated statewide effort to disrupt many virtual courtrooms with profane, explicit and obscene conduct.

CJD 23-03 does not limit a judicial officer's discretion to implement reasonable tools within the virtual courtroom to ensure appropriate decorum and ensure an appropriate experience for participants. CJD 23-03 provides that Chief Judges may adopt local policies to further delineate the continued use of virtual proceedings in their jurisdictions.

Procedures Applicable to all Criminal and Civil/Domestic Relations Proceedings. The following procedures shall apply to all Webex virtual proceedings within the 22nd Judicial District, including initial advisement and bond setting hearings:

- A. All Webex virtual proceedings will be locked.
- B. Parties desiring to participate in any criminal proceeding virtually or in civil/domestic relations proceedings not listed in paragraph E below, must file a written request to appear virtually by Webex at least 48 hours prior to the hearing. If the request is granted by a judicial officer, the party may appear by Webex. If the written request is denied, the party must appear in person.
- C. Parties desiring to have witnesses appear to provide testimony in any proceeding via Webex must file a written request for the witness to appear virtually by Webex in accordance with the applicable rule. If the request is granted by the Court, the witness may appear by Webex.
- D. Parties and witnesses participating virtually by Webex shall enter their full name when logging on through a computer or web-based application. If the Court does not see the name displayed on the docket, that person will not be permitted to join the virtual courtroom.

Civil and Domestic Relations Proceedings.

- E. Civil and domestic relations proceedings may be conducted virtually, and parties and witnesses may appear virtually at the discretion of the presiding judicial officer except that parties may participate virtually at the following civil proceedings without a written request or order:

Eviction hearing or trial (except jury trials);
Civil case management conference;
Civil status conference;
Domestic relations initial status conference;
Domestic relations case management conference;
Domestic relations pre-trial conference;
Domestic relations status conference;
Domestic relations uncontested hearing;
Garnishment hearing;
Court setting hearing (when no other hearing purpose is scheduled);
Temporary protection order hearing;
Non-evidentiary proceeding in a Dependency and Neglect, Juvenile Delinquency, or Truancy case;
Uncontested relinquishment of parental rights proceeding;
Emergency guardianship or conservator proceeding;

*Uncontested permanent orders for a guardianship or conservatorship; and
Uncontested informal probate proceeding.*

- F. In civil or domestic relations cases, spectators will not be permitted to join by Webex in the virtual courtroom. Civil and domestic relations cases will not be streamed on the live stream unless a judicial officer makes specific findings and determines that live stream is appropriate. Persons wanting to observe non-criminal proceedings must attend at the courthouse. The courtrooms of the 22nd Judicial District are open to the public and spectators in civil or domestic relations cases may attend at the courthouse.

Criminal Proceedings.

- G. All criminal proceedings will be conducted virtually by Webex in accordance with CJD 23-03. Judicial officers may determine that a criminal proceeding should not be live streamed for good cause.
- H. If a victim with the right to be present pursuant to the Victim Rights Act would like to join a virtual criminal proceeding, they are required to provide their full name and the case number when logging into Webex. This will allow the Court to reference the specific case prior to admission to the virtual courtroom. The District Attorney shall provide written notice to the Court that a victim will be participating by Webex at least 24 hours prior to the hearing. The full name of the victim shall be provided in the written notice. The District Attorney shall inform victims in criminal cases who wish to appear via the virtual courtroom of this Order.
- I. Spectators may view live streaming coverage of criminal court proceedings and will not be permitted to join the virtual courtroom. Spectators include office staff of attorneys.

The live stream link is: <https://live.coloradojudicial.gov>.

The courtrooms of the Twenty Second Judicial District are open to the public and persons wanting to observe criminal court proceedings must use the live stream or attend court proceedings at the courthouse.

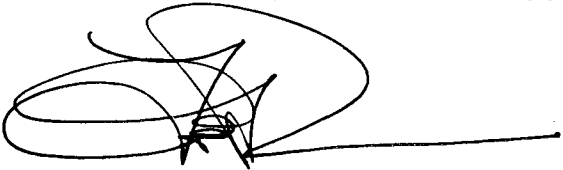
- J. Defense attorneys in criminal cases shall inform their clients who wish to appear via the virtual courtroom of this Order. Parties who do not attend as ordered above will be

considered failing to appear, and warrants will issue based upon the non-appearance. Parties appearing by Webex without Court permission to appear virtually, will be considered failing to appear.

Additional Procedures Applicable to All Proceedings.

- K. Parties, victims, or witnesses appearing by Webex shall appear by logging on through a computer or web-based application and the person appearing shall insure that they have sufficient connection and technology. It is the responsibility of the person appearing to operate the technology without assistance from the Court or court staff. Parties, victims, or witnesses appearing by Webex must appear by video. Appearance by video allows the Court and parties to identify the individual appearing.
- L. Unless a court grants express permission, no proceeding conducted virtually may be recorded. Any recording in violation of this Order may result in contempt proceedings.
- M. Parties, victims and witnesses appearing by Webex shall appear in appropriate attire and behave appropriately - as they would if appearing personally in a courtroom.
- N. Nothing in this Order shall limit a judicial officer's discretion to modify or deviate from the above procedures.

SO ORDERED, this December 30, 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Jay Plewe", written over a horizontal line.

Todd Jay Plewe
Chief Judge, Twenty-Second Judicial District