



## **ADMINISTRATIVE COURT REMOTE HEARING RULES & PROCEDURES**

In response to the coronavirus pandemic and current public health guidelines, the following procedures require you to appear remotely for your City of Bloomington Administrative Court Case, including but not limited to the following cases: Ordinance Violation, Code Enforcement, Dangerous/Vicious Dog Appeals, Tow Hearing Appeals, and Park Ban Appeals.

### **I. ZOOM HEARING ATTENDANCE**

- (a) You must join the hearing on the date and time specified in the Notice of Hearing. The City will be using the Zoom video-conferencing program for these court proceedings, including trials. The preferred method to access Zoom is via an electronic device with both video and audio capabilities. You may also join the meeting by telephone. **The web link and call-in information for the accessing the Zoom hearings is set forth at the end of this document.**
- (b) You can sign up for a free Zoom account and practice using the app prior to your hearing which can be found at <https://zoom.us/>. You must ensure that your “screen name” is the same name that appears on your Notice to Appear to avoid extended wait times.
- (c) Please “appear” in the Zoom meeting/hearing’s waiting room approximately five (5) minutes before the scheduled hearing time.
- (d) In some instances, you might be required to wait in the “lobby” until your case is called.
- (e) All participants are strongly encouraged to be visible on camera when appearing for their hearing.
- (f) Please limit background noise and remain on “mute” until your case is called.

### **III. DEFAULT JUDGMENTS**

- (a) The Hearing Officer may enter a default judgment, for failure to appear.
- (b) If you are unable to attend your hearing, you must contact the Legal Department as soon as possible.

### **IV. OATHS**

Oaths may be administered by the Hearing Officer. This procedure remains the same as during a physical hearing appearance and if there is any question as to the identity of a participant appearing by Zoom, the Hearing Officer may require identification through a driver’s license or another form of identification.

**V. PROCEDURAL REMINDERS & GUIDELINES**

- (a) The court proceedings are on the record and will be recorded. All conversations can be heard by all of the other parties present and will become a part of the record.
- (b) Remember that this is a formal proceeding and treat it as if you were present in the hearing room.
- (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. Pressing \*6 may also unmute your phone.
- (d) When you want to speak, unmute yourself and identify yourself by stating your first and last name. If you have an objection, state the objection followed by your name or other identifying title. Wait until questions are completed before announcing an objection.
- (e) When you speak, please make sure that you speak slowly and clearly. Please do not speak over one another or interrupt one another.
- (f) Do not communicate with the witness through any format during the proceeding. Witnesses may not possess, hold or consult any notes or paperwork in their hands or otherwise while they are testifying, unless permission is granted by the Hearing Officer.
- (g) Video or audio recording of this proceeding by any party other than the City through any device or format is strictly prohibited.

**VI. EXHIBITS**

Parties may submit exhibits during the hearing through the Share Screen feature. All exhibits should be numbered and labeled accordingly and include an exhibit list describing each item, along with columns that can help all parties identify whether a particular item was admitted into evidence. At the request of either side, or in the event of a technological malfunction, the Hearing Officer can display the requested exhibit on the party's behalf through the Share Screen feature. The parties are encouraged to share proposed exhibits prior to the hearing where feasible. If an exhibit is entered into the record, a hard copy must be provided electronically for the hearing file.

**VII. WITNESSES**

The parties may call witnesses in the hearings by having such individuals join the hearing using the same Zoom information for the parties themselves. Witnesses will be subject to the same identification and oath provisions as parties that testify.

**VIII. PUBLIC & PRESS ACCESS**

Members of the press or public who wish to observe virtual proceedings may contact the Legal Department for the Zoom hearing information. Hearings will not be available on commercial streaming platforms such as YouTube at this time.

**IX. QUESTIONS**

If you have questions about joining the Zoom Hearing or have technical difficulties during your hearing time, please contact Andrew Coffey at the City Legal Department at 309-434-2213.

**X. ZOOM HEARING WEB LINK & CALL-IN INFORMATION**

- (a) To join the Zoom hearing directly online, enter the following link: <https://bit.ly/2UEiMQ5>
- (b) To join the Zoom hearing manually online, go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) and then enter the following Meeting ID and Passcode:

**Meeting ID:** 861 0988 9551  
**Passcode:** 990577

- (c) To join the Zoom hearing by phone for audio only, call either of the following toll-free numbers:

1-888-475-4499  
1-877-853-5257

You will then be prompted to enter the following Meeting ID:

**Meeting ID:** 861 0988 9551  
**Passcode:** 990577



## ADMINISTRATIVE COURT PAYMENT & SETTLEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

### **PAYMENTS PRIOR TO YOUR COURT DATE**

- ✓ Prior to your court date, you may pay the fine for your Ordinance Violation by any of the following methods:
  - (1) Mail to the Legal Dept, 109 E Olive St, Bloomington, IL 61701.
  - (2) Over the phone using Visa, Mastercard, Discover at 309-434-2509 x0; or
  - (3) In-person at the Hub, located inside the Government Center, 115 E Washington St.
- ✓ Payment prior to the court date on your ordinance violation will automatically settle your case and you **will not** need to appear for court.
  - This will also avoid the addition of court costs of \$110.00 to your case.
  - If your ordinance violation involves abatement of one or more property issues, abatement must also be completed and evidenced prior to the court date to avoid court costs.

### **PAYMENTS AFTER YOUR COURT DATE**

- ✓ After your court date, and once the total balance owed is verified either thru court paperwork or by speaking with a City staff member, payments for Ordinance Violations & property issues can be made by any of the following methods mentioned above, (1-3).

### **NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENTS**

- ✓ If you want to discuss a negotiated payment arrangement and/or settle your case in a manner other than a simple payment of the fine, please call the Legal Department at 309-434-2213 as soon as possible.
- ✓ You are strongly encouraged to communicate with City Legal in advance of the hearing to discuss possible settlements. Limited time will be available during the Zoom hearing for discussion about your case.
- ✓ Settlements will be executed via DocuSign. You will receive a copy of the order which you must sign electronically (DocuSign). A valid email address will be required to obtain your electronic signature.