

Zoom for Parties in Mediation

What Device is Needed

You can access Zoom using any of several devices: a desktop or laptop computer, a tablet or a smartphone; as long as they can connect to the internet. It is also possible to join a Zoom meeting using an ordinary telephone line, although with this device you will not be able to see the other participants and they will not be able to see you but audio communication is possible.

Your device should have an in-built camera, microphone, and speakers. However, it is also possible to use an external webcam and set of headphones with built in microphone on some devices. Sometimes, people prefer to use headphones if they have problems of sound feedback from the speakers to microphone.

Please ensure that your device can operate and connect to the Internet from a private space where you will not be interrupted during the mediation.

As a back-up we ask each participant to provide us with a mobile phone number on which we can communicate if any problems occur with Zoom communications such as unstable broadband connections.

Accessing Zoom

For a mediation, a pre-mediation meeting or a Zoom familiarisation meeting, you will receive an invitation from your mediator which will have the following information in it:

- Meeting URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> (URL link to Zoom workspace)
- Meeting ID: xxx xxxx xxxx (11 digit number)
- Password: xxxxxx (6 digit number)

If you are joining by audio telephone you will also receive a phone number, meeting ID and password to make a conference call.

On your computer, when you click on the Meeting URL, you will be taken by your web browser to the Zoom workspace and prompted to download and install the Zoom app. You can also download the Zoom app before you receive the invitation by clicking on: [Zoom Download Center](#). If you are using a smart phone or tablet, you can download the Zoom app from either the Apple or Android App Stores. If you download Zoom in good time before the meeting starts you will be able to familiarise yourself with its features by clicking on [Zoom Test Meeting](#).

When the Zoom app has downloaded on your device it can be installed on your computer in the normal way by clicking on the dialogue box, 'Allow Zoom to make changes to your computer', or if using a smart phone or tablet, by clicking on the OPEN button in the App Store. Instead of using an app you can open Zoom on your web browser. We suggest that you download and use the Zoom app as there may be several meetings as part of one mediation and you can then access each of the meetings using the Meeting ID and Password which the mediator sends you for the particular session.

When you have the Zoom app on your device you will click on the button Join Meeting which will trigger a prompt for you to enter your Meeting ID after which you will be prompted to enter your Password. Copy both from your meeting invitation into the relevant boxes and, depending on your device, you may be asked if you wish to use your computer microphone and camera. Once you have confirmed this you will be taken to the virtual meeting space.

The Virtual Mediation Space

The virtual mediation space comprises a Waiting Room, the Main (Joint) Meeting Room and a number of Private Rooms. The mediator who is the Zoom host can allocate the different rooms for the use of the parties in a flexible way depending on the needs of the meeting.

When you enter the virtual mediation space you will do so by the Waiting Room. Your mediator will know you are there and will admit you, via the main room, into one of the private rooms where you will be able to have meetings with all your team in a confidential setting. There may be a few minutes wait while the mediator is admitting the other party to their private room along with their team. However, it should only take a few minutes to allocate each party to their private room and the mediator will then move from one room to the other to welcome each party to the mediation and prepare for the first joint meeting.

When the parties and mediator are ready to move to the first joint meeting, the mediator will be able to use the Zoom controls to admit everyone into the main room. During the course of the mediation the participants may spend some time in their private rooms, some in the main (joint) meeting room and if, for example, a meeting of advisers is desired, then a room can be set up for the particular advisers to use.

Using Other Zoom Features

In addition to virtual rooms Zoom has features which can assist communication and how we move forward in the mediation. These are: Call for Help, Share Screen, Whiteboard, Chat, Mute and Raise Hand.

Ask for Help: this is a button which appears on the screen of a smart phone and on the bottom control bar of a computer when a participant is in the private room. It enables a participant in one private room to ask the mediator to join them when the mediator is in the another room.

Share Screen: this enables a participant to show other participants a document which is on their computer. The mediator can also use it to facilitate discussion of elements of the dispute; and, as the mediation draws close to a settlement a heads of terms can be drafted on a shared screen.

Whiteboard: this is part of the Shared Screen feature and gives participants a way of communicating about issues or topics in a similar way that we can in a face-to-face meeting by using a flipchart or whiteboard.

Chat: Participants can use this feature to send a short text message, either to all the participants or to a selected participant. This can be useful to pass a note from one participant to another. For example, an adviser may think it is a good time to have a private meeting and wishes to suggest this to their client before putting the request to the meeting or maybe would like to make the suggestion privately to the mediator.

Mute: In meetings with a larger number of participants it is useful if people who are not speaking put themselves on mute to reduce distortion that can result from background noises being picked up by their microphone. As only one person can speak on Zoom at a time and there can be a slight delay in audio there is a need to for participants to take speaking turns and not talk across each other.

Raise Hand: Using this virtual symbol is how a participant indicates to the mediator that they wish to speak, which can also be done by holding their hand up so it can be seen on the video screen. This assists the mediator to chair the meeting so everyone can engage fully with the other participants.

Join Us for a Zoom Familiarisation Session

If we have arranged a Zoom familiarisation session, you and other participants will be able to practice using the Zoom features. A familiarisation session is focused on the Zoom processes and will not discuss the merits of the case, so it can involve people from both parties, if they are happy with such an arrangement. We wish to support all participants to be comfortable using the technology on the mediation day and we tailor these sessions to participants' experience with Zoom. They are designed to ensure that, using Zoom, the virtual medium becomes the platform for communication and not the impediment of communication.