

BRAZOS COUNTY ASSOCIATE FAMILY COURT **RULES FOR REMOTE HEARINGS**

Associate Family Court will be using Zoom for all hearings until directed to do otherwise by the Texas Supreme Court or Court of Criminal Appeals. Zoom is free and can be downloaded at zoom.us or you can download the app directly to your phone or tablet. The device you use must have internet access, a video camera and a microphone. If you do not have access to the internet, notify the Court Coordinator at (979) 361-4683 and you will be provided a call-in number to participate by phone.

In order to comply with the Texas Open Courts provisions in the Constitution, the public can view a hearing via YouTube by going to the Office of Court Administration website, clicking on the Information on COVID-19 and Texas Courts, under the first paragraph on that page, you can select Court YouTube Channel Directory. You can then select the Court you wish to view. IF YOU VIEW A HEARING FOR ASSOCIATE FAMILY COURT IN BRAZOS COUNTY, TEXAS VIA THE YOUTUBE CHANNEL OR ANY OTHER MEDIUM, YOU ARE ORDERED NOT TO RECORD ANY PART OF THE HEARING, NEITHER USING AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING OF ANY MEANS. A VIOLATION OF THIS ORDER COULD LEAD TO BEING HELD IN CONTEMPT OF COURT WHICH MAY INCLUDE A FINE OF UP \$500.00 AND/OR UP TO 6 MONTHS IN JAIL FOR EACH VIOLATION.

The Court will send out setting notices to the most current email address on file with the Court. You will also receive an email link to Zoom for your hearing. The judge will be the “host” of all hearings. It is your responsibility to connect to Zoom at the set time. **It is also your responsibility to notify your clients and witnesses of the unique meeting ID number and password for the hearing. They will need the number and password to join the Court hearing.** If you are having difficulties, you can let Debbie Reed know and she can give you alternate directions. Make sure that your device is fully charged prior to your Zoom hearing.

If you are participating in a hearing, understand that you are in court and all rules will apply, including dress code.

Parties must speak one at a time. When you are not speaking, please mute yourself to limit the amount of background noise.

If you intend to introduce exhibits, you MUST email all exhibits you intend to offer to all parties and to the Court’s DropBox at flac@brazoscountytexas.gov by 3pm the day before the scheduled hearing. The subject of the email should be the cause number and “Petitioner’s Exhibits”, “Respondent’s Exhibits”, etc. Failure to do this will result in the evidence not being admissible, absent an agreement by the other parties. Exhibits can be shared via Zoom. ANY EXHIBIT THAT IS PUT ON ZOOM WILL ALSO BE SHOWN ON YOUTUBE. PLEASE USE DISCRETION WITH CONTENTS INCLUDING PERSONAL INFORMATION AND IMAGES.

Any document (excluding evidence, see above) that is efiled with the District Clerk less than 48 hours before the hearing should also be emailed in .pdf format to the Court. ALL DOCUMENTS MUST BE EFILED except caselaw. Caselaw provided for the judge does not need to be efiled and should be emailed to the Court at least 4 hours before the hearing.

Judge Wendy Wood Hencering