



In accordance with Tex. Fam. Code § 54.012 the Comanche County Court, sitting as Juvenile Court, adopts the following plan for remotely-conducted detention hearings held in Comanche County:

1. This plan only applies to juvenile detention hearings. Participants in adjudication and disposition hearings will be required to appear in person. For the purpose of this plan, “remote hearing” means a juvenile detention hearing where one or more participants appears remotely.
2. After giving notice to all parties and receiving permission from the court, any participant may appear remotely in a detention hearing. Likewise, the Court may require that any or all participants appear remotely. The Court will use Zoom software to conduct all remote hearings. The Court will email a hearing invitation to the attorneys, who are then responsible for providing it to their client and witness(es). The Court will be the “host” of all remote hearings.
3. Each attorney will ensure that their client or witness(es) will have access to an internet connected device with audio and video capabilities PRIOR to that individual’s remote appearance. Only those witnesses who are visible on camera will be permitted to testify remotely. Non-party witnesses who appear remotely should be prepared to present a valid form of identification to verify identity to the Court. Witnesses who are not on camera will not be permitted to testify under most circumstances.
4. The court will ensure that each remote participant has the ability to see and hear the people participating in the courtroom. The court will ensure that a video feed will be provided to courtroom participants so that the remote participants can see the attorneys who are asking questions and the witnesses who are testifying. The hearing will be broadcast on a TV or monitor in the courtroom so that all the courtroom participants can see and hear the remote participants.
5. Attorneys will email all exhibits expected to be offered during a remote hearing to opposing counsel and the Court Coordinator no later than 24 hours before said hearing. The subject of the email should be the full cause number and the party’s name. The only accepted formats are: PDF for documents; JPG for images; and MP4 for audio/video. No DOC formats or executables will be accepted. Exhibits should be saved as the party’s designation and exhibit number (ex: “State’s Exhibit 1”, “Respondent’s Exhibit 2”, etc.). The Court will not consider any exhibits not emailed to the court coordinator or opposing counsel in a timely manner. If you fail to follow this requirement, the court reporter will not maintain these documents in the record.

6. The presentation and offering of physical evidence in remote hearings will be conducted in the following manner: 1) if the presenting attorney is in the courtroom and the witness is remote, the Court Coordinator will share the file via Zoom using the “Share Screen” option; 2) if the presenting attorney is remote and the witness is in the courtroom, the Court Coordinator will print and provide copies to the witness; 3) if both the presenting attorney and the witness are remote, the attorney share the file via Zoom using the “Share Screen” option; 4) if both the attorney and the witness are in the courtroom, presentation and offering of evidence will proceed as usual. The Court will not consider any physical exhibit that is shared via Zoom prior to its admission into evidence.
7. In an effort to keep the court open and available to the public, all remote hearings will be conducted from the courtroom. If a situation arises that requires the Court to conduct an entirely remote hearing (with ALL participants appearing remotely), the hearing will either be broadcast on a TV or monitor in the courtroom, on the Court’s YouTube Channel, or both. The YouTube stream will only be available while court is in session; they will be deleted shortly after the hearing or docket has concluded. **IN THE SAME MANNER THAT IT IS ILLEGAL TO RECORD COURTROOM PROCEEDINGS WITHOUT THE COURT’S PERMISSION, IT IS ILLEGAL TO RECORD THE VIDEOCONFERENCE OR LIVE STREAM WITHOUT THE COURT’S PERMISSION.**
8. Dress codes have not changed. All participants who appear remotely should dress appropriately.

This plan will be submitted to the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System.

ADOPTED on October 17, 2023.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephanie L. Davis". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Hon. Stephanie L. Davis
Comanche County Judge