

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO**

**PROTOCOL FOR MAINTAINING PUBLIC ACCESS TO COURT
PROCEEDINGS DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

Pursuant to General Order 2020-06, Chief Judge Patricia A. Gaughan authorized the use of video conferencing, or telephone conferencing if video conferencing is not reasonably available, for criminal proceedings under the CARES Act. Any criminal proceedings that continue to take place are now being conducted by telephone or video conference in order to protect the health and safety of the parties, counsel, court staff, law enforcement, and security officers.

The Court remains ever mindful of the need for public access to its proceedings and particularly of a criminal defendant's right to a public trial. The Court also notes the prohibition against broadcast and recording of court proceedings under Local Civil Rule 83.1, Local Criminal Rule 53.1 and General Order 2009-21. Judicial Conference policy also generally prohibits the broadcasting of proceedings in federal trial courts, JCUS-SEP 94, pp. 46-47, *Guide to Judiciary*, Vol. 10, Ch 4.

In order to protect public health and safety during the coronavirus emergency, the public may be permitted to access, to the fullest extent possible considering technological restraints, public video or telephonic proceedings. The Court adopts the following protocol:

1. **Docket Entries – Video/Teleconference.** If a judicial officer intends to conduct a public proceeding by telephone or video conference, that fact should be indicated on the docket.
2. **Call-In Number Not Docketed.** The call-in telephone number or video conference link should only be provided to counsel and other participants

(such as interpreters, court reporters, counsel and law clerks). It should not be publicly listed on the docket.

3. **No Remote Access to Video.** Members of the public (including media, family members, victims, and the general public) may attend public remote hearings only by telephone and not by video conference. They may, however, attend video conferences by telephone or other audio connection.
4. **Requests for Remote Access.** If members of the public (including media, family members, victims and the general public) request remote access to public telephone or video conference proceedings, such requests should be made at least 24 hours in advance of the proceeding using the online form at:

<https://www.ohnd.uscourts.gov/content/request-courtroom-seatingteleconference-access>

Same day requests or requests made with less than a 24-hour notice may not be honored.

5. **Bridge Access Telephone Number.** The courtroom deputy will provide a notice containing the date and time of the public proceeding, the bridge line access telephone number and a reminder of prohibition on broadcasting or recording.

The Court may modify this protocol as may be necessary and appropriate to protect the public health and safety while maintaining a reasonable degree of public access to its proceedings.

Adopted this 21st day of April, 2020.



Patricia A. Gaughan
Chief Judge