



MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT CIVIL DIVISION

Pursuant to the Administrative Order ADM20-8001 issued by Chief Justice Lorie S. Gildea on March 20, 2020 and as amended, the court may conduct hearings in civil cases types other than jury trials. Civil jury trial may not be heard before September 1, 2020. All case types are encouraged to be conducted remotely whenever possible. Hearing conducted in-person must comply with the Minnesota Judicial Branch Preparedness Plan.

Upon approval of the assigned judge, hearings for all case types may be held by a remote option, in person, or by review of the parties' submissions without oral argument, to the extent feasible, practicable, and in the interest of justice.

All civil hearings will use a remote option unless a judicial officer determines an in-person hearing is required. Limited civil case types (listed below) may be held in-person while other case types may be eligible for remote hearing options such as ITV or phone conference. Any request for relief that presents an immediate liberty concern, or when public or personal safety concern are paramount, may be heard in-person.

The court will prioritize resources and hearing types for the use of remote and in-person courtroom operations.

Remote Options

All currently available remote options are dependent on the internet, the court network and whether a record of the hearing needs to be made. Court administration will slowly increase the number of hearings and case types available for remote solutions to gauge the load placed upon the court's network. This will continue to require a phased approach to bring civil case types on-line for remote hearings.

- **Phone Conference**
This is the most commonly available solution to hold remote hearings. Parties may be requested by individual judges to coordinate and initiate conference calls for remote hearings. These resources will be devoted to high priority cases first and then will be used as available for medium and low priority cases.
- **ITV**
The district has limited ITV resources. The majority of available capacity will be dedicated to supporting high priority case types in other divisions. Civil Commitments are the only civil case type prioritized for ITV appearances.

- **Video Conferences**

The Second Judicial District has the capability to host Zoom video conferences for some civil court appearances. Video conference may permit the court to administer oaths and receive testimony under certain circumstance. Individual judges will determine if a remote hearing using Zoom video conference is appropriate. Parties will be notified by court administration of the necessary information required to attend a Zoom video conference.

Priority Cases – In Person

The Civil Division will give priority to hearings in the following case types:

- Commitments
- Emergency guardianships/conservatorships
- Garnishment exemptions
- Statutory emergency housing/evictions, and housing/eviction matters where there is a showing of individual or public risk to health or safety

High priority case types may be held in person. Remote options should be considered when feasible, except when the request for relief presents an immediate liberty concern, when public or personal safety concerns are paramount, or in garnishment exemption matters.

Hearing Type	Priority Level	Set Hearings	In Person Hearing	Remote Hearing Options		
				ITV	Phone	Zoom
Commitments	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emergency guardianship/conserv.	High	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Garnishment exemptions	High	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Emergency housing	High	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes*

*Emergency housing cases may be considered for remote video conference by Zoom at the discretion of the assigned judicial officer. Parties wishing to appear remotely must contact court administration at 651-266-8253.

Though these priority cases are eligible for remote hearings, the district is not required to make remote hearings available. Case types that have significant self-represented litigant participation may not contain enough party information to successfully connect through remote options. Necessary equipment, software, browsers, and internet services may not be available to all litigants.

Moreover, hearings that require sworn testimony, interpreter services, or the admission of exhibits, may make a remote hearing unworkable. In those instances, the court may consider alternatives to allow those hearings to go forward, such as the use of affidavits, stipulations, consideration on written submissions only, or an in-person hearing.

High or Low Priority Cases – Consideration on Written Submissions

Dispositive and non-dispositive motions in civil actions which have been filed or which will be filed under Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 115.01, et seq. and for which a hearing has been scheduled or will be scheduled, oral argument in such motions is suspended. All such motions shall be considered and decided upon the written submissions of the parties. With regard to motions for these civil actions, the parties shall follow the General Rules of Practice and applicable Scheduling Orders, to perfect timely briefing and any written submissions for consideration by the court. Matters shall be taken under advisement by the court as of the date of this directive or the date of the scheduled hearing, whichever is later.

Individual judges and judicial officers, in their discretion, may determine that a hearing to allow oral argument is essential and may provide direction to the litigants to schedule and hold such a hearing, either by a remote option or an in-person hearing.

High or Low Priority Cases -- Remote

For all civil actions which do not involve dispositive or non-dispositive motions filed under Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 115.01, et seq., remote hearings may be heard upon approval of the assigned judge for the following case types:

- All civil matters not covered by the previous section and already assigned to a judge
- All probate cases to be heard by a referee
- Forfeitures (including 96-hour forfeitures, but excluding conciliation court forfeitures)
- Informal probate
- Asbestos
- Motions for temporary restraining orders or other extraordinary emergency relief¹
- Trust
- Name Change Requests
- Examiner of Titles
- Consumer Credit

¹ TRO motions are considered a high priority and will take priority over other civil matters.

Hearing Type	Priority Level	Set Hearings	In Person*	Remote Hearing Options		
				ITV	Phone	Zoom
TRO	High	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Asbestos	Low	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Forfeitures	Low	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Informal probate	Low	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Judge assigned cases	Low	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Probate (Referee)	Low	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Trust	Low	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Name changes	Low	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Examiner of Titles	Low	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Consumer Credit	Low	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Conciliation Court (excluding trials)	Low	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

* The assigned judge may approve an in-person hearing if a remote hearing option is unavailable or deemed insufficient for the hearing or case type.

Low Priority Cases – No Hearings Set

The following case types will be considered for hearing after June 12, 2020.

- Conciliation Court Trials
- Non-emergency housing/eviction matters
- Implied consent
- Non-assigned minor civil cases

Court administration will continue to explore remote and in-person hearing options for these case types. Typically, these calendars involve a high percentage of self-represented litigants, may only resolve through in-person negotiation, and resolution must be memorialized before the conclusion of the hearing. These types of calendars present logistical difficulties, which make remote hearings an extraordinary challenge. Hearing conducted in-person must comply with the Minnesota Judicial Branch Preparedness Plan.

Non-emergency housing/eviction matters are suspended by Executive Order 20-14 signed by the Governor of the State of Minnesota on March 23, 2020 and by Administrative Order ADM20-8001 issued by Chief Justice Lorie S. Gildea on March 20, 2020 as amended.

				Remote Hearing Options		
Hearing Type	Priority Level	Set Hearings	In Person	ITV	Phone	Zoom
Conciliation court trials	Low	No	No	No	No	No
Conciliation forfeiture trials	Low	No	No	No	No	No
Non-emergency housing/eviction	Low	No	No	No	No	No
Implied consent	Low	No	No	No	No	No
Non-assigned minor civil cases	Low	No	No	No	No	No

Court administration will continue to evaluate available options for hearing all case types where permitted and as new solutions and opportunities are identified.

Attendance In Person

Pursuant to the Administrative Order Pertaining to Courtroom Access during COVID-19 Emergency issued by Chief Judge John H. Guthmann on March 21, 2020, if your hearing is held in-person, attendance is limited to:

- parties in the case who are participating in the hearing,
- attorneys who represent those parties,
- any necessary court staff, or
- other individuals the presiding judge deems necessary to conduct the hearing.

Representatives of the media are permitted to attend hearings held in courtrooms. Media representatives requesting to attend any hearing must coordinate their request with the Judicial Branch Court Information Office at least 24 hours before the scheduled time of the hearing.

Persons attending a hearing in the courtroom shall observe social distancing practices, wear a mask as directed by the judicial officer, and maintain 6-feet of separation from other attendees whenever possible, including when seated in the gallery.

Anyone exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 is precluded from entering a courthouse facility.

The Ramsey County Sheriff is authorized to bar or remove persons from the courtroom to ensure compliance with these requirements.

Court Administration Contact Information

For cases assigned to a district court judge, contact the judge's case manager to determine if your case may be set for hearing. The case manager will provide instructions on how the hearing will be held.

Assigned Judge	Case Manager Email Link	Phone Number
Hon. Leonardo Castro	Submit a scheduling request by email	651-266-8252
Hon. Thomas A. Gilligan	Submit a scheduling request by email	651-266-8252
Hon. Sara R. Grewing	Submit a scheduling request by email	651-266-8307
Hon. John H. Guthmann	Submit a scheduling request by email	651-266-8249
Hon. Lezlie O. Marek	Submit a scheduling request by email	651-266-8306
Hon. Laura E. Nelson	Submit a scheduling request by email	651-266-8309

If your case has not been assigned to a judge, or if you are not sure, please contact 651-266-8253 and court staff will assist you regarding the status of your case.