



**GREGORY S. McMILLAN**

CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE  
STATE OF TENNESSEE

CITY-COUNTY BUILDING  
400 MAIN STREET, SUITE M-44  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37902

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
DIVISION FOUR  
OFFICE: (865) 215-2399  
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March 31, 2020

Counsel/parties,

The Tennessee Supreme Court's Covid-19 Orders have kept the courts open but prohibited in-person hearings. The Supreme Court has instructed trial judges to use all available means to continue to hold hearings. As stated in the Supreme Court's March 25, 2020 Order, "This order expressly encourages and does not prohibit court proceedings by telephone, video, teleconferencing, email, or other means that do not involve in-person contact." The court system cannot stop serving the public. This Court will cease to be effective if it does not continue to address matters that are pending and set. To comply with the Supreme Court's Order to continue to hold hearings, this Court has adopted Zoom for use in hearings and trials. Zoom is a free app for download to computers, phones, and tablets and will permit live "in-person" testimony and cross-examination. If there is a lack of computer resources, the Court has a conference line where up to 8 participants can appear by phone after they dial into the conference at a number provided by the Court upon request. For Zoom, the Court will host the meetings and only needs each party's email address to invite them to the conference through a link sent by email. For those with a camera but no microphone, it is possible to appear by video but be connected to audio by a phone through Zoom. These details should be worked out in advance by counsel so that they and their clients can effectively participate in the hearing. There are numerous tutorials available on YouTube that demonstrate how the program works. No one is allowed to appear in person currently and it is not known when that may be permitted. It is impossible to put a month or more of trials and motions on hold to be heard when the ban is lifted because there are already cases set through July.

While there are a number of issues with this process, they can be worked around. Exhibits should be exchanged with the other party in advance of a hearing and filed with the Court. Proposed exhibits should be pre-numbered and each page numbered if they are multiple page exhibits. If there is a rebuttal exhibit or an exhibit that was not previously exchanged, there is a screen share capability on Zoom to show documents that are displayable on a computer screen (as a Word file, pdf, etc.) by the attorney who wishes to introduce the exhibit or use it as a demonstrative aid. If admitted as an exhibit, the document should be emailed to the clerk for printing and inclusion with the pre-filed exhibits.

If you wish to have a trial run, please let Ms. King know and I will be happy to send an email and initiate a conference call to work you through the basics of Zoom. Please do not reply to me regarding this email, but address matters with each other and Ms. King.



Judge, Fourth Circuit Court  
Knox County, Tennessee

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Judge Gregory S. McMillan  
Fourth Circuit Court  
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