



Microsoft Teams Q&A

The New York State Unified Court System has adopted Microsoft Teams as the standard for internal and external videoconferencing calls, including virtual court hearings. This guide is primarily for those outside of the court system who are new to Microsoft Teams. If you are already familiar with Teams, congratulations you may quickly scan through this document. If you have used Skype for Business or other videoconferencing platforms, you should be able to join a Teams meeting without too much effort.

Q1. What device do I need to participate in a Teams call?

A1. You can join a Teams meeting from a Windows 10 PC or a MacBook, or from a mobile device, such as iPhone/iPad or Android smartphone. Please review the hardware requirements: <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoftteams/hardware-requirements-for-the-teams-app>.

Q2. I don't have a Microsoft Office365 Account, can I join a Teams call?

A2. Yes, you can join a Teams call as a guest for free without subscribing to Microsoft's services. You can also sign up for Teams Free, a version that is limited in functionality compared with the paid version. If you are interested in signing up for Teams Free, follow the link <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/sign-up-for-teams-free-70aaf044-b872-4c32-ac47-362ab29ebbb1>.

Q3. What would you recommend for the best audio experience in a Teams meeting?

A3. First, you should try to situate yourself in a quiet room. A built-in speaker and microphone might be enough; however, we recommend the investment of a USB headset for echo and background noise reduction.

Q4. What would you recommend for the best video experience in a Teams meeting?

A4. When using your webcam in a Teams call, you should avoid windows/glass door behind you, which will make you look dark. It is a good idea to have a lamp shedding light on your face. Try to avoid clutter background. Please use Teams' "blur" or virtual background feature if appropriate. Before and during the Teams call, you should adjust your webcam or position yourself to have a nice headshot view.

Q5. Can I join a Teams meeting without an Internet/computer/smartphone?

A5. It is expected that the participants join the meeting from a computer/smartphone via high-speed Internet. If you are unable to meet the minimum requirements for videoconferencing, you may make a request to the court for a dial-in number with pin# so that you can participant audially.

Q6. This is the first time I heard about Teams. What should I do before joining a Teams meeting?

A6. (1) Download and install the Teams application by following the URL link: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/download-app?SilentAuth=1&f=255&MSPPError=-2147217396>

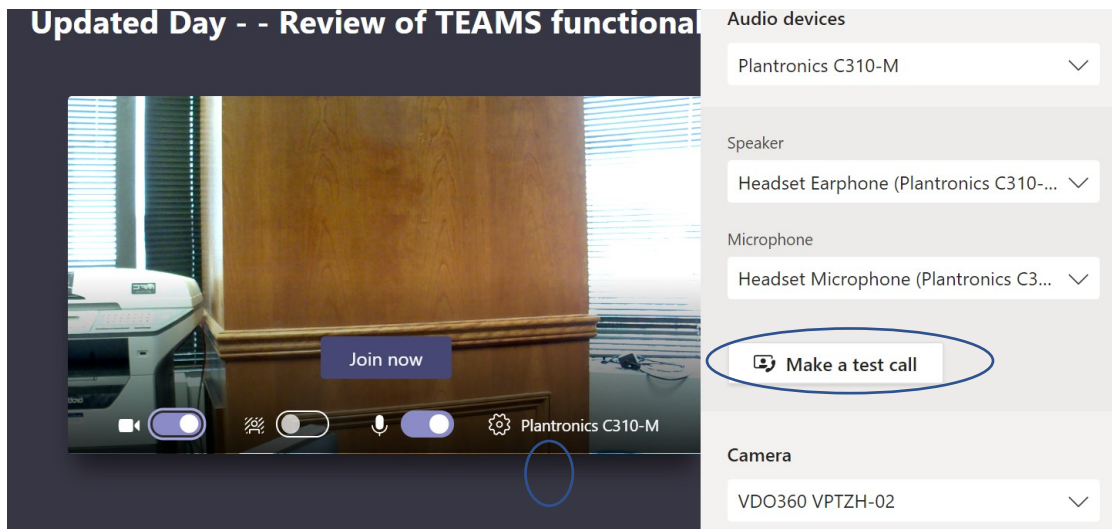
(2) Update your operating systems and apply security patches, reboot your computer.

(3) Close unused applications. Background jobs may tax your computer resources.

Q7. How can I test for a Teams video call?

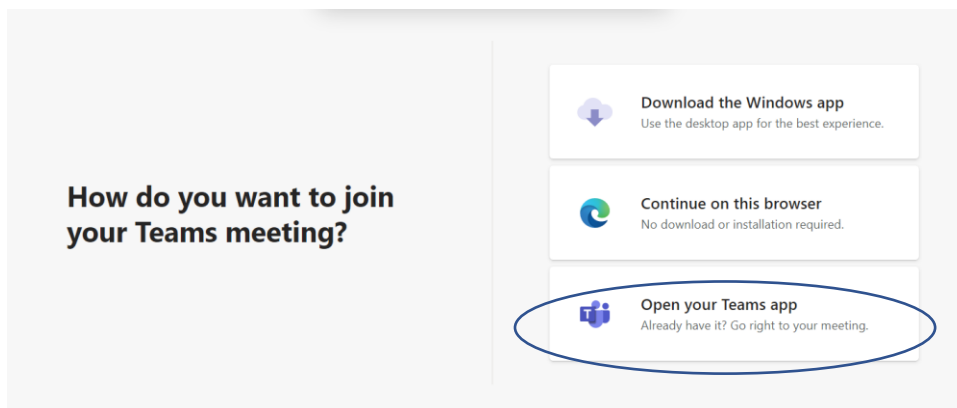
A7. If your company is using Teams, or if you have signed up for Teams free account, you will be able to perform a test call from the desktop app (Windows or MacBook) **before** joining a Teams meeting by clicking on the Gear icon, then

selecting “Make a test call” button. Please note that Microsoft is constantly updating Teams. The “Make a test call” function may work on desktop apps with guest access soon. **To be on the safe side, please join the meeting a few minutes ahead of time to make sure your audio device and webcam are working properly, and to get yourself familiar with the Teams interface.**



Q8. How can I join a Teams meeting?

A8. For most meeting participants, you will be joining the Teams meeting by clicking on the “Join Microsoft Teams Meeting” link on your email invitation. In Windows 10, you will be prompted for how you want to join the meeting. Please select “open your Teams app” because the web app has severe limitations on functionality. If you did not download the desktop app as described on Q4, you should select “Download the Windows app”. To learn more about how to join a Team meeting: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/join-a-meeting-in-teams-1613bb53-f3fa-431e-85a9-d6a91e3468c9>.



Q9. When I join a Teams meeting as a guest, the app asks me to enter name. What should I enter?

A9. Except for protecting the identity of an at-risk witness, we recommend the guests to enter their full names. In virtual court proceedings, it will be very helpful for the participants to add their roles to their names. For example, “John Doe, ADA”, “Jane Smith, Defense”.

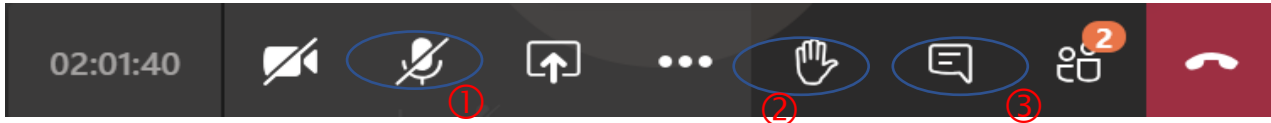
Q10. Why do I see the “Someone in the meeting should let you in soon” message after joining the Teams meeting?

A10. Many of the Teams meeting were set up with the “lobby” feature. For instance, in a virtual court hearing, you would wait in the “lobby” until the judge is ready to hear your case. For a regular videoconference call, you would wait in the “lobby” until the host is ready to start the meeting.

Q11. What are the best practices when you are at a Teams meeting or virtual court hearing?

A11. Here are a few common practices you should observe:

- 1) Per court rule, no audio or visual recording of court proceedings is allowed.
- 2) Mute your mic unless you are ready (or are asked) to speak. ①
- 3) If you have questions, you may raise your hand if that option is available. ②
- 4) You can also pose questions via meeting chat though your message is viewable by all participants. ③



The Teams Meeting Control Bar is where you can manage your meeting experience during the call. University of Wisconsin Green Bay developed a nice cheat sheet about it: <https://uknowit.uwgb.edu/page.php?id=100667>

Q12. May I have a separate private conversation with my client (or another meeting participant) in the middle of a Teams call?

A12. Be sure you ask the judge or meeting host for permission to break away from the main meeting to have a private conversation. Until Microsoft release the “Breakout Room” feature in Teams, expected in late Fall 2020, you may have a private conversation in two somewhat tedious ways:

- 1) The parties who want to have a private conversation will have to mute their microphones on the Teams meeting, then use their phones for their private call. When it is over, the parties will rejoin the main meeting by unmute themselves.
- 2) The court might create a separate Teams call for the parties who wish to have a private conversation. The parties will have to join the new call via an URL created by the court (which will put the original Teams call on hold). Again, when the private call is over, the parties can rejoin the main meeting.

Q13. How can I change the view in a Teams meeting?

A13. Sometimes you might want to focus your view on an individual(s) in a Teams meeting, or you want to adjust the camera viewing area, here are the instructions: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/adjust-your-view-in-a-teams-meeting-9825091c-0e7d-4c2b-95f5-eba644f19175#:~:text=Pin%20a%20video,click%20again%20and%20hit%20Unpin.>

Q14. Can I share content, including video, in a Teams meeting?

A14. Yes. First, you should ask the meeting organizer’s (or the judge in the case of virtual hearing) permission to present. Then you can share your contents following the steps outlined here: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/share-content-in-a-meeting-in-teams-fcc2bf59-aecd-4481-8f99-ce55dd836ce8>

Q15. I am using SSL VPN. Why no one can hear me, and I cannot hear anyone?

A15. When you are connected to your office computer remotely via SSL VPN, Teams is running on your office computer. As a result, the audio playback and mic input occur at the far end. To rectify the problem, please disconnect from the VPN connection, and run Teams locally on your computing device.

Q16. Can I join the same Teams meeting from two devices in the same room?

A16. We do not recommend it because it may cause audio feedback. However, if you have to join a Teams call using two devices in the same room (e.g. you and witness may participate in a Teams meeting across the conference table using separate computers or mobile devices), make sure you mute the microphone and speaker of the person who is not talking. At any given time, microphone and speaker are enabled for **only** one device.

Q17. Where can I learn more about Microsoft Teams?

A17. For the latest update on virtual court technical resources, please look at: <https://portal.nycourts.gov/knowledgebase/article/KA-01047>. You can also check out many live and on-demand Teams classes offered by Microsoft: <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoftteams/instructor-led-training-teams-landing-page>