



NEW BRUNSWICK ENERGY & UTILITIES BOARD

COMMISSION DE L'ÉNERGIE ET DES SERVICES PUBLICS NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK

Effective Date: January 8, 2021

Practice Directive No. 2

Video Conferences – Participant Guidelines

Introduction:

This Practice Directive is issued pursuant to Rule 1.4 of the Board's [Rules of Procedure](#).

This directive provides instructions on how to use the Zoom platform to participate in procedural conferences, stakeholder sessions, hearings and other similar processes (video conference).

Images from the Zoom platform used in this directive may appear differently on your own web browser. Features may be in different placements; please follow instructions carefully.

Directives:

The Board may, on a case-by-case basis, hold a video conference. A link to join a video conference will be emailed to all parties to a proceeding (as defined in the *Rules of Procedure*) prior to the video conference.

Subject to hearings or portions of hearings that are subject to the Board's rules regarding confidential information, non-participant to a video conference may contact the Board's Chief Clerk to receive the link.

Non-participants will be enabled to view and hear the proceeding (excepting the viewing or hearing of confidential evidence), but will be disabled from participating orally or by video.

1. How to Join a Video Conference

A. What You Will Need

A video conference on the Zoom platform is called a Zoom meeting. Joining a Zoom meetings are enabled by a link that is provided by the meeting organizer (typically Board staff) by e-mail. Joining a Zoom meeting is free and does not require an account. A computer (e.g. laptop or desktop) is recommended, although a tablet or smartphone can be used. The following is suggested:

- a) A stable internet connection (preferably 1.5Mbps; you can test this [here](#));

Overview

You can join a test Zoom meeting to familiarize yourself with Zoom, in addition to testing your microphone/speakers before joining a Zoom meeting. You can also test your video or audio while in a Zoom meeting.

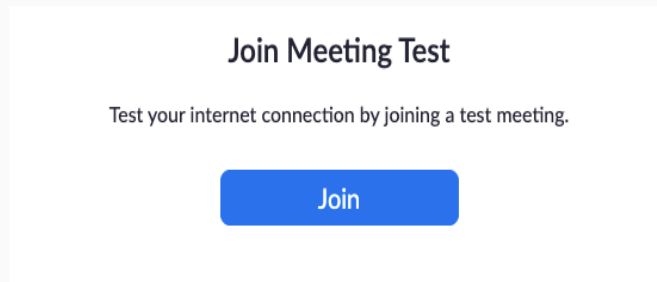
Note: If you are using the Zoom mobile app, you can visit <http://zoom.us/test> to join a test meeting, then follow the instructions to test your video or audio.

Prerequisites

- Zoom desktop client

Instructions

1. Visit <http://zoom.us/test>.
2. Click the **Join** button to launch Zoom.



- b) Headsets **must** be used by participants, unless joining as a non-participant (observer);
- c) A webcam and microphone (built-in or USB plug in), unless joining as a non-participant to the video conference; and
- d) The Zoom meeting invitation received by email from the Board. The link should not be shared with others, in order to avoid unauthorised persons from joining the video conference and disrupting the proceedings. The public and media can request access by following the instructions in the Guide for the Public and Media.

B. Preparing for the Video Conference

One day in advance, click on the Zoom meeting link.

For first-time users of the Zoom platform, click on “download & run Zoom.” Otherwise, click directly on “Open Zoom.” For more information on how to download Zoom, click [here](#).

Zoom Desktop Client (PC, Mac, or Linux)

Zoom provides a pop-up notification when there is a new mandatory or optional update within 24 hours of logging in.

You can also manually download the latest version by:

- Clicking on **download** from the link at <https://zoom.us>
- Directly from one of the following links
 - <https://zoom.us/support/download>
 - <https://zoom.us/download>
 - <https://zoom.us/download2>

Note: <https://zoom.us/download> is hosted on cloudfront.net while <https://zoom.us/download2> is hosted on zoom.us

Test your audio and video by clicking [here](#), or by joining a hearing by clicking on your Zoom link as shown in the picture below and clicking “Test speaker and microphone.”

Join Meeting Test

Test your internet connection by joining a test meeting.



Join

If you are unable to join the meeting, visit [Zoom Support Center](#) for useful information.

Check Your Surroundings and Consider the Following:

- What will other participants see? It is best to arrange your camera to display a “head and shoulders” view of yourself. Avoid any distracting background images and ensure that lighting allows for a clear image of yourself.
- Ensure that you arrange to minimize the risk of unwanted disruptions to the video conference (e.g. barking dogs, family members inadvertently intruding).
- Have a way to communicate with colleagues outside of the Zoom platform.
- Make sure you have the meeting ID and password from your Zoom invitation and download the Zoom application on a second device (e.g. your computer, tablet or smartphone), if possible. In the event of a technical difficulty you will be able to join

the conference using another device. Alternatively, use the telephone number from your Zoom invitation, so you can call in.

Suggested Tips:

- Position the camera at eye level. When speaking, try to look directly at the camera, rather than the screen.
- Face a window or a light so others can see you. It is better if the light source is behind the camera, or coming from the side.
- Headsets must be used, rather than your computer's speakers and built-in microphone, unless joining as a non-participant (observer).
- If possible, use a hard-wired internet connection instead of Wi-Fi.
- Think of how you will set up your space to have access to the video screen and your documents, whether paper or electronic. Having a separate screen if possible, or splitting your screen, may help.
- Think of how you will take notes during the conference.
- When considering your set up, be aware that while Zoom allows you to be on a meeting on your cellphone, laptop or tablet, it will not let you sign in on two devices of the same type. Please inform the Chief Clerk of who is participating in the video conference.

C. Day of the Video Conference

Things to Check Before the Start of the Video Conference:

- Do you have easy access to all the documents you need?
- Is your computer or laptop plugged in so you do not run out of power?
- Have you closed any programs which stream video or VPN connections?
- Do you have a glass of water available, as you would in a regular Boardroom?
- Are you appropriately dressed for the video conference, according to the formality of the meeting?

Approximately 15 Minutes Before the Video Conference:

- Click on the Zoom meeting link.
- Click “Open Zoom.” You will be in a “waiting room” until the Chief Clerk or Board IT Staff admits you to the meeting.
- You can test your audio and video once again while you wait by clicking on “Test Computer Audio.”

Once you are on the call, a floating ribbon at the bottom of the screen will allow you to:

- Mute/unmute your microphone;
- Stop/start your video;
- See a list of participants;
- Share your screen (this may allow you to share documents on your screen);
- Chat with other participants (Click “More” if it does not appear); and
- Leave the meeting.

If you do not see the ribbon, hover your mouse near the bottom of your screen.

It is suggested that you indicate your name and whom you are representing, if applicable. To rename yourself, click on “participants” on the ribbon, then click “rename” next to your name.

You can change the way in which you see the participants on your screen, by clicking, at the top right of your screen. In “Speaker View”, the person speaking will fill the majority of the screen, and the others will be minimized and appear in a row at the top of the screen. The “Gallery View” will show all video participants in the same size.

You should join the Zoom meeting 15 minutes before the scheduled time to allow the host to test the connection, audio, and video, and ensure there are no problems. Once that is done, you can mute your microphone and stop your video and finalize your set up before the conference begins. The host will be the moderator or “host” of the video conference.

Suggested Tips:

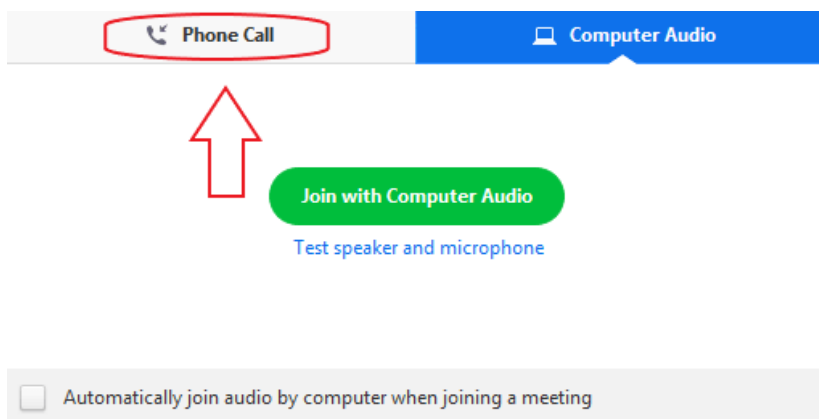
- Keep in mind that while you may mute and unmute yourself, or enable and disable your camera, the host (the Chief Clerk and/or Board IT Staff) will also be able to do this. It is always a good idea to mute yourself when not speaking to avoid background noise.

- You should not post confidential or sensitive information, even in messages sent “privately” to only one individual. Keep your chat messages professional and only use them to communicate with the host or opposing counsel about technical details relating to the conference.
- If you need to discuss anything confidential with co-counsel, or your client, you should do it through other means (email, texts, etc.). Do not use the chat feature unless necessary, to avoid distractions during the hearing.
- If the file contains material that the Board has ordered be kept confidential, please refer to it indirectly, for example, by referring to paragraphs and page numbers.

Any confidentiality concerns you may have, regarding documents or persons in the virtual room should be raised ahead of the conference with the presiding Chair.

D. What to do if Your Zoom Meeting Disconnects

- Try reconnecting by clicking on the “Zoom” icon at the bottom of your screen.
- Try reconnecting by using the same steps described above to join a Zoom hearing.
- Call-in using the “Joining the Zoom meeting by telephone” option below.



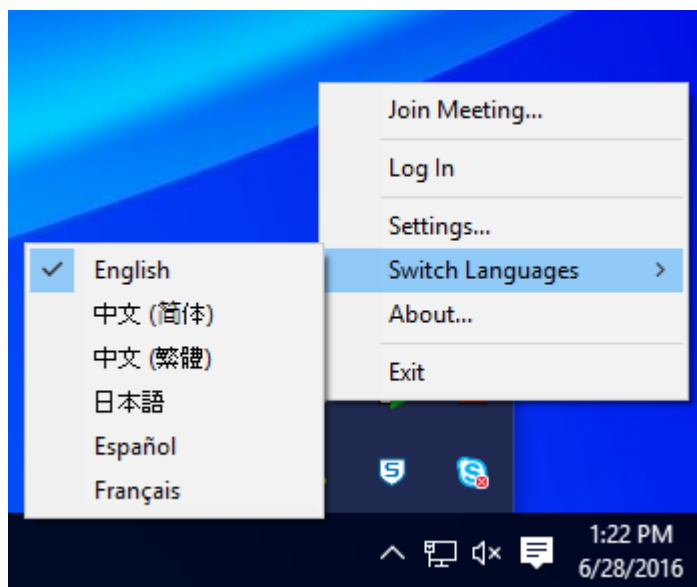
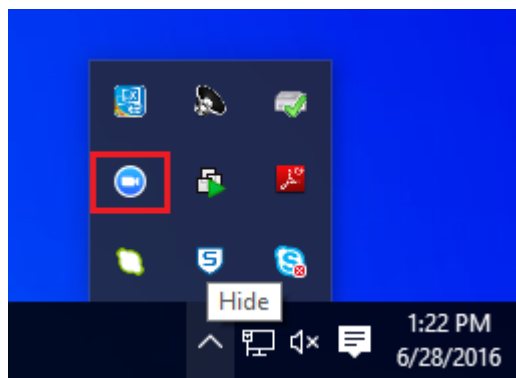
- If you have the application on your cellphone or another device, enter the meeting ID and password from the e-mail invitation to join the video conference.
- Call the Chief Clerk (you should have been provided a number just before the video conference).

E. How to Change the Language of Zoom

- Search for “Zoom” in your Start menu to launch the program.
- Select the “^” in the Windows task bar.



- Right click the “Zoom” icon and hover over “Switch Languages.” Select the desired language.



2. **Filing Documents:** Participants should refer to the [Rules of Procedure](#) for more details regarding the filing of documents, as well as e-filing, and filing of confidential documents.

3. **Witness Panel:** In the event a witness within a witness panel wishes to confer with another witness from the same panel before responding to a question, the following procedure is applicable:
 - a. They are responsible for muting their own microphone(s) so as not to be overheard by other participants.
 - b. Once ready to respond to the question, their microphone needs to be unmuted.
 - c. As with physical hearings, outside assistance of any kind during testimony or when conferring is **NOT** permitted.

Should counsel wish to confer with their client, the Board Members will be removed from the virtual hearing room in to a waiting room.

If counsel and the client are at dispersed locations, they may confer by telephone. They are to do so in a manner that will not unduly delay the proceeding (e.g. have a teleconference open and ready if needed).

Should counsel wish to interject with an objection or procedural issue, they should indicate who is speaking to avoid confusion (e.g. "Excuse me Mr. Chair, this is John Smith, could we ...").

4. **In Camera Session:** Should an *in camera* session be needed, it must be arranged as a separate video / teleconference session completely distinct from the main proceeding.
5. **Hearing Decorum:** All participants are expected to respect hearing decorum despite the virtual setting of the hearing.

This includes choosing quiet and private spaces where there is little risk of interruption, if possible. The Board understands that participants may be situated in shared living spaces. They should make a reasonable effort to find a quiet, private space to make their submissions. The Board anticipates and understands however, that there may be some unavoidable interruptions.

Counsel are required to have their camera on during the proceeding. When participating by video, the background should be consistent with the decorum of the Board, and ideally neutral. Information on how to use a virtual background can be found [here](#).

Counsel and parties should appear before the Board in business attire.

6. **Recording and Broadcasting Policy:** Recording and/or broadcasting video conferences are prohibited, except under certain conditions outlined in section 5.3 of the [Rules of Procedure](#). Parties who use Zoom to view the video conference are expected to follow this Policy. By clicking on the link to join the conference, it is acknowledged that these terms are accepted.

7. **Interpretation Services and Self-Represented Parties:** The Board’s current policies and resources remain in place. The Board will make simultaneous interpretation services from one official language to the other available.

Self-represented parties are encouraged to consult the resources available on the Board’s website.

8. **Helpful Links:** The following links may also assist participants:

- a. [The Board Website](#)
- b. [Practice Directive](#)
- c. [Procedural Forms](#)
- d. [Helpful Guides](#)
- e. [Zoom Technical Support](#)
- f. [Additional Audio Help](#)
- g. [Virtual Background Information](#)
- h. [Zoom FAQ](#)

Comments

We welcome your feedback and suggestions on this Practice Directive. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them by email to general@nbeub.ca.