

Message to the Community about Videoconferencing

September 10, 2020

The introduction of the Pilot Program for Videoconference Hearings has been met with overwhelming enthusiasm. Feedback from the PIP community has ranged from comments extolling the convenience of video for larger, consolidated cases and eliminating the need for parties to arrange conference calls, to feelings of normalcy by having the opportunity to see each other again. Forthright is pleased to provide this enhancement and will continue to provide additional DRPs the capability to conduct videoconference for in-person hearings.

Forthright would like to remind parties and representatives of a few aspects of the pilot program:

Whether your case has the videoconference capability is determined by which DRP is assigned to the case. As of September 11, thirty-seven of the DRPs have the capability to conduct videoconference hearings. Eventually all DRPs and cases will have the videoconference appearance option. By checking your Case Management page within two weeks of the scheduled hearing, you will be able to determine if the videoconference option is available, indicated by a Zoom meeting hyperlink in the upper left-hand side of the page. This link will automatically connect you to the Zoom meeting for that cases in-person hearing. You will also have received a Zoom notification email. (FAQ 5)

Some users asked if Forthright could notify them if their adversary intends to appear by videoconference. Forthright cannot. Why? Because the ability to appear by videoconference is an option made available to the users, and Forthright would have no way to know who intends to appear in that manner. If you prefer to appear by video, we suggest you appear by video for every hearing, since it is more convenient, provides clearer communication with the DRP and other participants, and allows the hearing to proceed efficiently. (FAQ 9)

But some attorneys simply do NOT want to be seen during the hearing. If that is the case you can still use the Zoom hyperlink and simply disable your video by clicking the stop video icon on the lower left part of your screen. You will still be able to see and hear the videoconference and the participants will be able to hear, but not see you. (FAQ 11) In the alternative, you can join the hearing by using the Zoom telephone number and the meeting code. Connecting by Zoom (either audio only or by telephone) will provide you with better audio capability than if you called the DRP's hearing telephone number

And finally, Forthright Videoconference Hearings cannot be recorded through Zoom. (FAQ 16)

The answers to many other questions are available by going to the Forthright website (www.nj-no-fault.com) and clicking on the **Appearance by Video Pilot Program FAQ** hyperlink.

Stay safe.