



## United States District Court District of Minnesota

John R. Tunheim, Chief Judge  
Kate M. Fogarty, Clerk of Court  
612-664-5080

Warren E. Burger  
Federal Building and U.S.  
Courthouse  
316 North Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Edward J. Devitt  
U.S. Courthouse and  
Federal Building  
118 South Mill Street  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537

Gerald W. Heaney  
Federal Building and U.S.  
Courthouse and  
Customhouse  
515 West First Street  
Duluth, MN 55802

Diana E. Murphy  
U.S. Courthouse  
300 South Fourth Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

September 8, 2021

### NEWS RELEASE

#### United States District Court, District of Minnesota Public Access Guidance for Media, Public and Attorneys in Cases of Interest

Public access to all court proceedings in the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota is vitally important and the Court provides public access to the fullest extent possible. However, proceedings held in the Court are subject to the [rules](#) mandated by the U.S. Judicial Conference, which prohibit broadcasting in any form. This means that streaming, either live or after the fact, photography, or audio recording are strictly prohibited, including in virtual proceedings.

**Streaming cannot be offered by the Court in any case** and streaming or recording by case participants and members of the media or sharing of virtual log in information to others is strictly prohibited.

#### General Public

##### *Virtual Proceedings*

The Court grants real-time **audio only** access to all interested members of the public for virtual proceedings because there is no courtroom access for interested people to attend. Dial-in information for any proceeding may be found up to one week in advance on the public calendars here: <https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/court-schedules>.

Schedules are posted by courthouse – Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and Fergus Falls – and interested parties may need to view the calendars of multiple courthouses to find proceedings.

##### *In-Person Proceedings and Trials*

Because of the Court's requirements for social distancing to protect the health and safety of the parties, counsel, Court personnel, and the public, there is limited seating in the gallery of the



courtrooms. For high profile proceedings, seating will be first designated for parties connected to the case, credentialed media, and then the general public. However, in proceedings and trials in high demand, if necessary, the Court will plan for a live feed of the proceedings to another location in the courthouse to allow for additional viewing.

## Media

### *Virtual Proceedings*

Because there is no courtroom in which the media can sit and observe, members of the media who have received their [credentials](#) from the Court may request to observe proceedings virtually by completing the [form](#) on the Court's website by 12:00 p.m. the business day before the proceeding. Media interested in following cases within the District of Minnesota are also encouraged to obtain an [ECF Media Account](#), which is independent from being credentialed and will allow them to sign-up for alerts in any case.

Information on initial appearances will be posted in the morning on the day of the appearance to the Court's [calendars](#). Due to the nature of initial appearances, the Court does not have advanced notice of appearances, so calendars are updated as soon as the schedule is finalized. Virtual access may not always be possible; in the event video access is unavailable, credentialed media should join the proceeding via the dial-in information listed in the "General Public" section above. Additional information on initial appearances may be obtained from the [U.S. Attorney's Office](#).

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## Attorneys

### *Virtual Proceedings*

Counsel of record may request virtual access for individuals who are closely connected with either side (for example, family members of the Defendant, or individuals alleged to be victims of the crimes charged in the indictment) by emailing the presiding judge at least 72 hours in advance for consideration. The request should include the first name, phone number and



connection to the case of the person access is being requested for so that Court staff can accurately admit them into the virtual proceeding.

Additional colleagues who are not of record, or client(s) or client representative(s) who wish to attend the hearing, should join the proceeding via the dial-in information listed in the “General Public” section above. Information on preparing for virtual proceedings can be found here: <https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/virtual-hearings>.

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### Live Audio Streaming Pilot Project for Civil Proceedings

The United States District Court, District of Minnesota is excited to announce that we are participating in a two-year pilot program that permits a limited number of district courts across the nation to livestream audio of qualified civil proceedings with the consent of the parties. The pilot program is intended to test the feasibility of live audio streaming for the future.

Under the pilot project, only civil cases meeting specific criteria are eligible for live audio streaming. A judge, on their own, or upon request of a party made through the judge’s courtroom deputy clerk or other designated staff member, may identify a proceeding as potentially eligible for live audio streaming. The Court then will provide the parties a form to complete jointly and file to confirm that the proceeding meets the requirements of the pilot project. Live audio of appropriately qualified civil proceedings will be streamed on the Court’s YouTube channel. Streamed content will not be available for playback on YouTube after the proceeding.

Any content streamed in connection with the pilot project is not the official record of the proceeding and must not, in full or in part, be recorded, broadcast, posted, rebroadcast, or otherwise reproduced in any form by any person or entity outside of the federal judiciary.

The Judicial Conference of the United States has authorized this pilot program. The pilot is be administered by the Judicial Conference’s Court Administration and Case Management Committee and the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts and will be used to study the feasibility of livestreaming audio of district court civil proceedings.



The pilot program is limited to civil proceedings involving matters of public interest. Trials and civil proceedings involving live witness testimony or sealed, confidential, or classified materials are excluded from the pilot.

Additional questions can be directed to Public Information Officer Rebeccah Parks at [Rebeccah\\_Parks@mnd.uscourts.gov](mailto:Rebeccah_Parks@mnd.uscourts.gov).

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