



## What is a Microsoft Teams Virtual Hearing?

A Microsoft Teams Virtual Hearing is another method by which virtual hearings can take place at the Supreme Court of New South Wales.

**A Microsoft Teams Virtual Hearing is still a formal hearing. All usual court etiquette, protocols, procedures and restrictions apply. You should check with the trial judge's Associate to ascertain whether or not counsel is required to be robed.**

## How to use a Microsoft Teams Virtual Hearing?

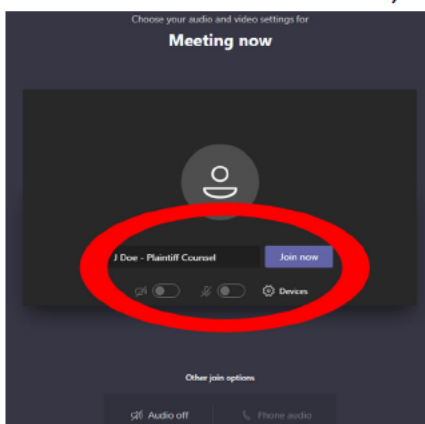
If the hearing is to take place using Microsoft Teams, parties will receive an email or Outlook calendar invitation containing a link to the Microsoft Teams Virtual Hearing.

1. It is highly recommended that practitioners download the Microsoft Teams desktop application: <https://products.office.com/en-au/microsoft-teams/download-app>.
  - Teams can be used in a web browser, without downloading the application, or on a smartphone or tablet, but these methods are less stable.
2. At least fifteen minutes prior to the commencement of the hearing, click on the link contained in the email from court staff inviting you to the Virtual Hearing. It looks like this:

### [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

[Learn more about Teams](#) | [Meeting options](#)

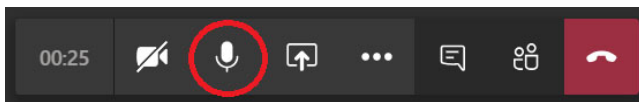
3. The link will open in your web browser. If your browser does not work with the link, copy and paste the link into the Google Chrome web browser.
4. The next screen will prompt you to join the meeting through your web browser, by downloading the Teams application, or by launching the Teams application if you have already installed it. If Step 1 in this guide has been followed, click on the words "Launch it now" in the text "Already have the Teams app? Launch it now".
5. On the next screen you will be prompted to enter your name. Please use the following naming convention: First Initial Surname – Party description (Example: J Doe – Plaintiff Counsel)



6. Below your name there are options to turn on or mute your camera and microphone. If you will be appearing in Court and making submissions you should set the camera to ON by clicking the toggle next to the camera icon so the switch is to the right of the oval. The microphone should be set to MUTE by clicking the toggle next to the microphone so that the toggle is to the left of the oval.
  - The microphone should only be unmuted when you are presenting to the Court (see step 8 below). The microphone must be muted at all other times.



- If you will not be making submissions, your camera should also be set to OFF.
7. Click “Join now” and you will be admitted to a virtual lobby. Court staff will admit you to the hearing.
  8. When you are making submissions to the Court, you will have to unmute yourself.
    - To do this, move your mouse over the screen and a bar will appear. Clicking on the icon of the microphone on that bar will mute or and unmute your microphone.

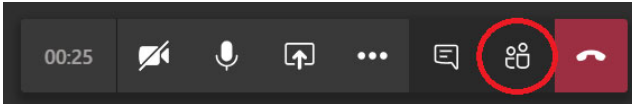


- Your camera can be turned on and off in the same way, by clicking the icon of the camera.
9. Whenever speaking to the Court (particularly when you first speak) state your surname.

## Tips and guidance on using Microsoft Teams

- **Prior to the hearing** it is your responsibility to ensure that your device has a working camera and microphone and to familiarise yourself with the technology. If you have downloaded the Teams application by following Step 1 above, you can test your camera and microphone by navigating to the “Settings” menu, clicking “Devices” and then clicking “Make a Test Call”.
- Ensure that your microphone is placed on **mute at all times unless you are speaking**. If this is not done, there will be feedback and other participants will not be able to hear properly.
- Use headphones, and, if possible, a headset (or external microphone). This will significantly decrease the chance of feedback causing disruption to other parties or the Court.
  - Often, the party causing an echo on a video call will not hear it themselves. If other parties are complaining of an echo, and you do not hear an echo, it is likely that you are causing the problem. Check your device is on mute when you are not speaking, or find headphones to prevent this.

- Teams will only display four speakers at a time on the screen. The other participants can still see and hear the proceedings. Teams will automatically show the most recent speakers. If you are using the desktop application you can “pin” speaker or multiple speakers so that their video is more prominent i.e. the particular speaker occupies a greater area on a viewer’s screen. To do this, move your mouse so that the following bar appears:



Click on the icon of two people which is the second last icon. A bar with the names of each participant in the “meeting” will appear on the right hand side of the screen. If you move your mouse over the name of a participant, three dots will appear next to their name, if you click on those dots you will be given the option to “pin” their video. That will have the effect of increasing the image of that particular participant. You may wish to do this, for example, if a particular counsel is addressing. You can do this with multiple participants at once.

- Ensure that you have a strong internet connection.
- Do not access Microsoft Teams using two devices in the same room. This will create a feedback loop or echo.
- Turn all phones near your device on “Silent” and, if possible, close any applications that make sounds on your computer during the hearing. For example, Microsoft Outlook makes a sound whenever emails are received. These sounds can be picked up by your microphone and will disrupt proceedings and court reporting.
- While it is possible to use Microsoft Teams in web browser, the court strongly recommends using the desktop application.