

LAREDO MUNICIPAL COURT

Virtual Court Services Guidelines

Laredo Municipal Court is offering an alternative to an in-person court appearance. Virtual Court Dockets/Proceedings are held via Zoom and the schedule of available online court sessions can be found at www.cityoflaredo.com/municipal_court.

Virtual Court Dockets are available for a variety of purposes.

1. Initial appearance for a citation received (traffic, ordinance, Class C misdemeanors)
2. Requesting extensions on existing court orders
3. Requesting modifications to existing court orders due to hardships
4. Show cause hearings on failure to appear and failure to comply with court order.

Requirements

1. Must have an electronic device that is compatible with Zoom (iPhone, iPad, androids, tablets, laptops, computers, etc.).
2. Device **must have audio and video capabilities.**
3. To run a test on using your device via the Zoom platform: <https://zoom.us/test>.

For more detail information regarding system requirements and “Getting Started” guides for “Desktop” (computer use) or “Mobile” (smartphone use):

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697>

Expectations

1. Select an environment that allows you to focus on discussing your case with the judge. Minimize interruptions and background noise.
2. **Join the meeting 10-15 minutes before your scheduled time. The session is locked 15 minutes after the scheduled time.** After the session is locked, participants can no longer join the session. You will have to make your appearance in court in another scheduled session.
3. Exercise proper courtroom decorum at all times. For example, refrain from moving/walking around when appearing before and speaking to the judge, sit in front of the camera so you and the judge can see each other, no driving while participating in a virtual court proceeding, no caps, etc.
4. Have any documentation you would like to present to the judge for review ready.
5. Be patient with unexpected technical issues or inactivity during the session.
6. In order to comply with the Open Courts Provision of the Texas Constitution, all virtual court proceedings are open to the public and are broadcasted live via a public website.

How to participate in a Virtual Court Proceeding/Session

1. Log on to www.cityoflaredo.com/municipal_court.
2. Click on virtual court proceeding located at the top right corner of screen or scroll down to the middle of the page to the virtual court proceeding schedule.
3. From the virtual court proceedings schedule, click on docket that corresponds to your scheduled date and time.
4. Click on the link to join Zoom. Zoom will launch or the Zoom application will open.
5. Zoom will prompt to join meeting with audio. **Click “join with audio”**
6. You will remain in a virtual waiting room until the meeting host allows you into the session.
7. Once in the session, court personnel will provide check-in instructions. Ensure video and audio on your device is enabled and the volume on your device is up.

Instructions to be provided will be as follows:

- a. Your assigned court clerk will send you a message via Chat (in Zoom) requesting identifying information from you (name, date of birth, phone no. and email address).
 - b. Access the “Chat” (in Zoom), from the list of participants, select your assigned court clerk, and send the requested information.
See tips below on accessing the chat on your mobile.
 - c. Please ensure you “Chat” with the court clerk only. This is a private message that only you and the court clerk can see. Sending the message to “everyone”, means that all participants in the session, will see your message.
8. After you have provided your information, please remain online until your case is called by the judge. Your microphone will be unmuted by the court.
 9. After appearing before the judge, you may exit the session. All documents related to your court appearance (judgment, community service hours or driving safety course instructions, payment, etc.) will be emailed to the email address you provided. These documents must be signed and emailed back to the court.

Quick tips...

For information on video and audio, click on the link below

https://www.youtube.com/embed/-s76QHshQnY?rel=0&autoplay=1&cc_load_policy=1

Accessing the Chat from a Mobile Device

While in a meeting, tap the screen to make the controls appear.

1. Click on **Participants**.



2. From the list of participants, select the court clerk you would like to send your message to, type chat message and click **Send**.