

	Civil Agents- Party Litigant - Lay Rep Virtual Hearings Guidance		
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### Party Litigant-Civil Agent-Lay Rep Guidance

1. **Webex Login:** At least the day before the event the Pursuer/Defender/Solicitor/Lay Rep **must** attend a pre-event test (the date and time of which will be agreed with the Court) using the details provided in an email intimation. *(Refer to the Appendix for guidance on how to join an Event).*
2. Clarification that this has been done **must** be noted on the certification document which must be subsequently completed and returned to the court;
3. **Productions:** All productions **must** be lodged with the Court, in PDF electronic format, **no later than 24 hours prior** to the hearing starting. For example: if you are lodging a list of authorities, you **must** also lodged an electronic copy of said authorities.
4. **The Event:** On the day of the Event, the Pursuer/Defender/Solicitor/Lay Rep **must** log into WebEx, ensuring that they have their correct **designation noted**, namely Pursuer/Defender/Solicitor/Lay rep.  
**Examples:**
  - (1.) First name: **J Smith**;  
Last name: **Pursuer /Pursuer’s Solicitor /Lay Representative**
  - (2) First name: **B Brown**;  
Last name: **Defender /Defender’s Solicitor /Lay Representative**
5. **Pre-event Checks:** The Pursuer/Defender/Solicitor/Lay Rep should log in at least 30 minutes prior to the Event Start time and check –
  - That the equipment that they are using (i.e. laptop, mobile phone, tablet, etc.) is in working order and that WebEx can be accessed on it,
  - That the internet connection being used is a secured and/or wired connection. The use of Personal or open hotspots (i.e. BT Open Zone) **must be avoided**;
  - That there is sufficient charge in the device and a charging socket available if necessary;

- That evidence will be given in an environment where there will be no risk of disturbance affecting the giving of evidence or the running of the hearing;
  - That you are positioned in such a way as to be seen clearly on the screen (i.e. ensuring that you are not too close to the camera so that your face is dominating the screen).
6. **Connection Issues:** If there is any issue with accessing WebEx via the ‘**Join Event**’ button contained in the email invitation, then the Pursuer/Defender/Solicitor/Lay Representative **must** notify the clerk of court of this as soon as possible so that they are aware of the issue.
- The Pursuer/Defender/Solicitor/Lay Rep can right click on the ‘**Join Event**’ button and select ‘copy hyperlink’. This can then be pasted into a new Chrome browser window and by pressing the enter button, should take them to the WebEx Event login screen;
  - Alternatively, the clerk can issue a new copy of the Hyperlink and Password for the event via email upon request, if the above doesn’t work;
7. **Joining via telephone:** If for any reason it is not possible to join WebEx via an internet connection, it is possible to join by telephone. However, it should be noted that you will **not** be able to see all other participants via this method, but you will still be able to interact. You will have to obtain the “Case Access Code” from the Clerk of Court. Once you have the Case Access Code, please follow the steps below:
- To join you must call (United Kingdom Toll) +44-20-7660-8149;
  - Using your phones keypad, enter the **Case Access Code**;
  - When prompted, **press #** to join.
  - **NOTE:** This may incur a cost and you should check with your phone provider. Once connected, the line will remain silent until the hearing begins and then the sound will activate automatically.
8. **Witnesses:** The Pursuer/Defender/Solicitor/Lay Representative must liaise with their witnesses to ensure that they are in the relevant venues (which may be their own home or office, as they can join from essentially any location), and have access to the necessary systems for their attendance. This information **must** be passed to the clerk during the practice session.

They must **also** liaise with the Court Officer via telephone in respect of witnesses who are giving evidence from within a Court building.

Where any party is attending from a location that is **not** within a Court building, the responsibility for all aspects of External IT requirements (i.e. ensuring there is access to a separate computer/laptop with webcam, speakers, microphone, and broadband/wired connection) lies with them. SCTS **cannot** provide IT equipment or broadband support for parties in these instances.

9. **Pursuers' Witnesses:** The Pursuer/Solicitor/Lay Representative will advise the Clerk which witness they wish to call. The Pursuer/Solicitor/Lay Representative will then contact said witness when instructed by the court, using the contact details previously provided, and inform them that they should now join the event using the panellist link within their email intimation. This will be repeated as and when each witness is required, until all evidence has been led and concluded;
10. **Defenders' Witnesses:** The Defender/Solicitor/Lay Representative will advise the Clerk of which witness they wish to call. The Defender/Solicitor/Lay Representative will then contact said witness when instructed by the court, using the contact details previously provided, and inform them that they should now join the event using the panellist link in their email intimation. This will be repeated as and when each witness is required, until all evidence has been led and concluded;
11. **Objections:** The Pursuer/Defender/Solicitor/Lay Representative can raise an objection at any time during the event by simply stating aloud that they have an objection. Any witnesses present at the time of an objection will be asked to leave the event entirely *prior* to any submissions being made.

If the witness is giving evidence from a location **outwith** a Court building, then they **must** remove themselves from the event, using the '**red cross**' button at the bottom of the WebEx screen. Alternatively, if they are having issues doing this, then the Clerk of Court can 'Expel' them from the event.

If the witness is connected through the VC equipment, then the Court Officer will be responsible for disconnecting them.

The witness will then be instructed by either crown or defence when notified to do so by the Clerk to dial back in prior to the case continuing,

12. **End of Event:** Once the case has concluded, the Pursuer/Defender/Solicitor/Lay Rep is responsible for ensuring that they leave the event and close down WebEx. This is done by clicking on the red button at the bottom of the screen and selecting "Leave Event".