

April 25, 2020



1. Webster Mediation has a host account and you do not need your own Zoom account to participate in a Zoom videoconference mediation. The participants should provide the mediator with their email address and telephone number (in case of technological difficulties during the Zoom videoconference).
2. One week before the mediation you will get an email from Webster Mediation attaching the Mediation Agreement to which each participant will reply and acknowledge "I agree with the terms of the Mediation Agreement" in lieu of signatures. An enhanced confidential provision has been added to the Mediation Agreement to reflect virtual participation in the mediation and reassuring participants that all recording functions available through Zoom have been disabled. Chat and screen sharing functions have similarly been disabled to address privacy and security concerns discussed recently in the media. Password requirement, the "waiting room" and locking the videoconference once all the participants are present, ensure additional security and privacy as referred to below.
3. A second email from Webster Mediation will contain a link to join the videoconference. Once you accept this appointment, it will be entered into your Outlook calendar and disappear from your inbox. If you don't have an Outlook calendar, the email will remain in your inbox. On the day of the mediation, just click on link in the calendar entry or email. The password has been embedded in the link but is noted in the email along with the meeting ID for those entering the videoconference manually through www.zoom.us. In Zoom, you will be placed in a "waiting room" until the host/mediator brings you into the videoconference. The videoconference will be started by the mediator host 15 minutes prior to the mediation time to allow participants time to ensure they can get in to the videoconference with their equipment working properly and/or to prepare privately in their breakout rooms if they wish.
4. Your computer/laptop's camera/microphone is best, but Zoom also works with iPad/iPhone if you add the Zoom app to your device. Participants will have a better connection to the Zoom videoconference if their internet connection is direct, rather than through WiFi. Connectivity is greatly reduced if you are working through a remote access to a workplace desktop computer such as TeamViewer, Citrix, Spalshtop, Remote Desktop Gateway. Once everyone has entered the videoconference, it will be "locked" to prevent unwanted participants entering the videoconference.
5. All participants appear in an individual video box on the screen which is the main videoconference room. The openings are in the main videoconference room. After completion of the openings, the mediator assigns participants to their own private breakout rooms - they can only see/hear participants in that room. You will see a message asking you to join your breakout room once assigned. Extra breakout rooms can be created as necessary for impromptu counsel/mediator discussions.
6. The mediator moves among the breakout rooms with offers/counteroffers and discussing the contentious issues. There is a "help/assistance" function on the toolbar to signal to the mediator that a participant is ready for the mediator to enter the breakout room for discussion and providing offers to take to the other side.
7. If any participant loses connection during the mediation, the mediator will contact them using the telephone number provided, and assist them in either returning to the videoconference, or participating by phone if they prefer. Participants should be able to re-enter the videoconference by using the original link provided in the email discussed above once the mediator has unlocked the videoconference. You can also go on the www.zoom.us website and enter the meeting number from the original email to be connected to the Zoom videoconference. You can contact Allyson at (416) 953-0947 (cell). Parties may return to the main conference room for closing comments and good-byes.