

Docket # 20-03264

Party: (Plaintiff) COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF BERKS COUNTY

O R D E R

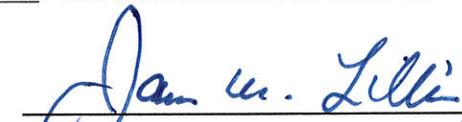
AND NOW, this 1st day of June 2020, in order to encourage the resumption of proceedings involving non-essential matters, specifically compulsory civil arbitration hearings (Arbitration Hearings), as had been continued because of prevailing limitations imposed during the statewide judicial emergency and the Governor's March 6, 2020 Declaration of a Disaster Emergency throughout the Commonwealth, as modified by subsequent orders, this Court recognizes that certain non-essential matters including Arbitration Hearings, should now proceed by use of alternative electronic means. Accordingly, the Court hereby directs as follows:

1. In accordance with prevailing emergency orders, arbitration hearings will proceed using alternative electronic means, commencing with hearings scheduled to commence on and after June 17, 2020.

2. Assigned arbitrators will report to the Berks County Bar Association building at 544 Court Street, Reading, PA 19601, and will be assigned a room to accommodate the arbitrators while allowing for at least six feet social distancing. Parties and witnesses shall participate in hearings using the Microsoft Teams Program. Court Administration will schedule such hearings as "meetings" on the Teams program. Parties and counsel will receive instructions to assist with accessing the Teams program and the particular hearing/meeting. Parties are responsible for ensuring that they and their witnesses have the capability to participate in these hearings electronically.

3. Counsel and self-represented parties shall email exhibits to the arbitrators at least three days in advance of the hearing. Special exhibits, such as photographs and oversized items, should be sent by U.S. Mail or personally delivered to the Prothonotary of Berks County, attention Ann Fitzgerald, Chief Deputy Prothonotary, 633 Court Street, 2nd floor, Reading, PA 19601. The envelope or other container holding such exhibits shall be prominently marked "arbitration exhibits, case no. (insert civil case number), Berks County Court of Common Pleas". Any personal delivery shall be by appointment with Chief Deputy Fitzgerald by contacting her at 610-478-6208 extension 3471 at least twenty-fours in advance of such delivery.

4. In the event that a party has compelling reasons preventing or effectively compromising their participation remotely, such party may file a motion with the Prothonotary objecting to the remote hearing and shall mail and email a copy of such motions to the attention of Brittney Frankowski, Administrative Assistant to the Honorable James M. Lillis, Civil Court Administrative Judge, at 633 Court Street, 4th floor, Reading, PA 19601, and bfrankowski@countyofberks.com. The motion must be filed no later than seven days prior to the scheduled hearing date.


_____, J.

_____, P. J.

REMOTE ARBITRATION INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions set forth special procedures for arbitrators, parties, and their counsel for Compulsory Arbitration Hearings in the Berks County Court of Common Pleas during the COVID-19 judicial emergency, in accord with President Judge Thomas G. Parisi's Supplemental Emergency Order of June 1, 2020, a copy of which is attached to these instructions.

1. In accordance with prevailing emergency orders, arbitration hearings will proceed using alternative electronic means, commencing with hearings scheduled to commence on and after June 17, 2020.

2. Assigned arbitrators will report to the Berks County Bar Association building at 544 Court Street, Reading, PA 19601, and will be assigned a room to accommodate the arbitrators while allowing for at least six feet social distancing. Parties and witnesses shall participate in hearings using the Microsoft Teams Program. Court Administration will schedule such hearings as "meetings" on the Teams program. Parties and counsel will receive instructions to assist with accessing the Teams program and the particular hearing/meeting. Parties are responsible for ensuring that they and their witnesses have the capability to participate in these hearings electronically. Guidance for accessing a Teams meeting are attached.

3. Counsel and self-represented parties shall email exhibits to the arbitrators at least three days in advance of the hearing. Special exhibits, such as photographs and oversized items, should be sent by U.S. Mail or personally delivered to the Prothonotary of Berks County, attention Ann Fitzgerald, Chief Deputy Prothonotary, 633 Court Street, 2nd floor, Reading, PA 19601. The envelope or other container holding such exhibits shall be prominently marked "arbitration exhibits, case no. (insert civil case number), Berks County Court of Common Pleas". Any personal delivery shall be by appointment with Chief Deputy Fitzgerald by contacting her at 610-478-6208 extension 3471 at least twenty-fours in advance of such delivery.

4. In the event that a party has compelling reasons preventing or effectively compromising their participation remotely, such party may file a motion objecting to the remote hearing with the Prothonotary and shall mail and email a copy of such motion to the attention of Brittney Frankowski, Administrative Assistant to the Honorable James M. Lillis, Civil Court Administrative Judge, at 633 Court Street, 4th floor, Reading, PA 19601, and bfrankowski@countyofberks.com. The motion must be filed no later than seven days prior to the scheduled hearing date.

MICROSOFT TEAMS INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please download the Microsoft Teams app to either a cell phone or other device that has both a working microphone and camera. Sign-up with Teams using the email address you provided to Ms. Casey Moerschell, Court Information Management Supervisor, at Court Administration as this is how meeting invitations are initially sent and calendared.

2. Once you're signed up, when you open the Teams app, fully expand it on your screen, then please locate the dark blue left hand column and choose "calendar" which is the screen you should always go directly to and be utilizing, as it's the best way to join a meeting and to view what's scheduled upcoming.

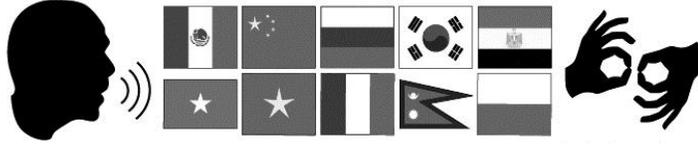
3. You will receive an invitation email and, upon opening, should find and click the "accept invitation option" and then "send response now" which will let the host know you successfully received the invitation, and that it's in your calendar. Upon accepting, a calendar event is automatically entered into both your email's calendar as well as the Microsoft Teams' calendar (see number 2 above)

4. On the day of the hearing, open Microsoft Teams and again chose "calendar" from the dark blue left panel of options and fully expand the Teams app to fit your entire screen. When the actual calendar event under the date/time it is to occur, you will see a dark blue box option which states "join". Click "join", then on the next screen that's triggered, click "join meeting".

5. If you do not see or hear yourself, there's a floating options box around the middle of the screen, please click on the video camera icon which would have a slash have through it indicating it's not turned on, and/or the microphone icon, so that neither have a slash through them, meaning they're activated. Voila, you should be able to see yourself, plus everyone else. **NOTE:** You should make sure your camera is at proper height and angle to allow for your face to be visible to others on the "meeting". Also, when you expect you will not need to speak for a period of time you should consider muting your microphone to prevent any unwanted sounds and background noise from interfering with testimony or discussion among others in the meeting.

6. Should you need further assistance, please contact Ms. Casey Moerschell at either cmoerschell@countyofberks.com or 610-478-6208 extension 5718.

Notice of Language Rights



Language Access Coordinator
Berks County Services Center, 633 Court Street, 4th Floor, Reading, PA 19601
610-478-6208 x5712

Interpreter@countyofberks.com

English: You have the right to an interpreter at no cost to you. To request an interpreter, please inform court staff using the contact information provided at the top of this notice.

Spanish/Español: Usted tiene derecho a un intérprete libre de costo. Para solicitar un intérprete favor de informárselo al personal judicial utilizando la información provista en la parte superior de este aviso.

Mandarin/Cantonese Simplified Chinese/普通话/粤语简体中文: 您有权获得免费的口译员服务。若需要口译员, 请使用本通知上方提供的联系信息通知法院工作人员。

Mandarin/Cantonese Traditional Chinese/普通话/廣東話繁體中文: 您有權要求免費傳譯服務。如欲要求傳譯服務, 請參閱本通知頂部的聯絡資料。通知法庭職員。

العربية/Arabic: يحق لك الحصول على مترجم دون دفع أي تكلفة من جانبك. لطلب مترجم، يُرجى إعلام موظفي المحكمة باستخدام معلومات الاتصال المقدمة في الجزء العلوي من هذا الإشعار.

Russian/Русский: У вас есть право на бесплатные услуги переводчика. Заявка на переводчика подается в суд по адресу, телефону или эл. почте, указанным выше в заголовке этого уведомления.

Vietnamese/Tiếng Việt: Quý vị có quyền được một thông dịch viên giúp mà không tốn chi phí nào cả, xin hãy báo cho nhân viên tòa án dùng thông tin liên lạc có ở trên đầu thông báo này.

Nepali/नेपाली: तपाईंको निःशुल्क रूपमा भाषा अनुवादक राख्न पाउने अधिकार छ। अनुवादकको लागि अनुरोध गर्न, यस सूचनाको माथि दिइएको सम्पर्क जानकारी भरेर अदालतका कर्मचारीहरूलाई जानकारी दिनुहोस्।

Korean/한국어: 귀하는 비용에 대한 부담 없이 통역 서비스를 받을 권리가 있습니다. 통역 서비스를 요청하려면 본 통지서의 상단에 기재된 연락처를 통해 법원 직원에게 알리십시오.

Polish/Polski: Ma Pan/Pani prawo do nieodpłatnego skorzystania z usług tłumacza ustnego. Aby zwrócić się o wsparcie ze strony tłumacza ustnego, proszę skontaktować się z pracownikami sądu, korzystając z danych znajdujących się w górnej części niniejszego dokumentu.

Pakistan/پنجابی/Punjabi: تہاڈے کول بغیر ادائیگی کیتیاں اک مترجم حاصل کرن دا حق اے۔ مترجم دی درخواست کرن لئی، میربانی کر کے ایس نوٹس دے اوتے فراہم کیتیاں رابطے دیاں معلومات نوں ورتدیاں عدالت دے عملے نوں اطلاع دوو۔

Punjabi/ਪੰਜਾਬੀ/India: ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਆ ਹਾਸਲ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਹੱਕ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਲਾਗਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗੇਗੀ। ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਲਈ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ, ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਅਦਾਲਤ ਦੇ ਅਮਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣੂ ਕਰਵਾਓ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਨੋਟਿਸ ਦੇ ਸਿਖਰ ਉਤੇ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਾ ਇਸਤੇਮਾਲ ਕਰੋ।

Portuguese/Português: Você tem direito a um intérprete gratuitamente. Para solicitar um intérprete, informe à nossa equipe usando os dados de contato mostrados na parte superior deste aviso.

Somali/Somaali: Waxaad xaq u leedahay in lagu turjumo lacag la'aan ah. Si aad u codsato turjumaanka, fadlan u sheeg maxkamadda shaqaalaha adiga oo isticmaala macluumaadka ciwaanka kor lagu siiyay ee ogeysiiskaan.

Haitian Creole/Kreyòl Ayisyen: Ou gen dwa resevwa sèvis yon entèprèt gratis. Pou mande pou yon entèprèt, tanpri fè manm pèsònèl tribinal la konnen lè ou sèvi avèk enfòmasyon an yo te bay ou nan tèt avi sa a.

French/Français : Vous avez le droit de bénéficier gratuitement de l'assistance d'un interprète. Pour en faire la demande, veuillez en informer le personnel du tribunal à l'aide des coordonnées indiquées en haut de page.