

Best Practices for Using Video Teleconferencing for Hearings and Related Proceedings

Project Outline

In the interest of providing agencies with best practices and facility and technology guidelines for the use of video teleconferencing in hearings and related proceedings, the Administrative Conference of the United States (ACUS) has engaged the Center for Legal and Court Technology (CLCT) at the College of William and Mary Law School.

CLCT proposes the following outline for our work:

1. We will conduct a review of relevant documents and recommendations, as well as other materials related to the use of video teleconferencing with judicial and administrative hearings. This review will include the adoption of video teleconferencing, the related problems and solutions encountered by such adoption, and any legal issues that ensued. Part of this review will be done by student staff with oversight. Anticipated sources include all materials provided by ACUS, as well as any available primary and secondary legal resources (identified through searches of LexisNexis and Westlaw) and other sources as deemed appropriate.
2. Our full-time staff will interview agency officials to ascertain their experiences with video teleconferencing, their views on it, and why they are or are not using it.
3. We will also conduct open-ended interviews with fewer than ten non-federal government entities or individuals.
4. We will review practical considerations and best practices for using video teleconferencing. This will include, but is not limited to, lighting, room décor, soundproofing, microphone coverage, sound re-enforcement, video hardware and software, camera location, and camera display. We will note how managing these characteristics well can help ensure fair adjudications.
5. We will examine the benefits and challenges of video teleconferencing to administrative hearings including expected costs and cost savings. This analysis will also address the unique challenges of hearings with participants in multiple locations, as well as how agencies can best strike a balance between fairness and efficiency.
6. CLCT will give suggestions to improve the use of video teleconferencing and identify best practices for federal administrative hearings and related proceedings.