

Remote Court Proceedings: Are They Ever Going Away?

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Why Am I Covering this Topic?

- SCOTX Remote Proceedings Task Force – Vice Chair
- Texas Judicial Council – Chair, Civil Justice Committee
- Supreme Court Advisory Committee
- District Court judge – 7 years experience
 - 1st Zoom hearing in pandemic
 - 1st remote bench trial
 - 1st remote jury trial
 - 300+ remote trials

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| DISTRICT COURTS 2019 (pre-pandemic) | TOTAL NON-CRIMINAL | CIVIL | FAMILY |
|---|-----------------------|---------|---------|
| Cases Disposed | 488,674 | 145,721 | 342,953 |
| By Trials | 100,539 | 8,706 | 91,833 |
| Bench Trials | 99,362 | 7,654 | 91,708 |
| Jury Verdicts | 1,177 | 1,052 | 125 |

<https://www.txcourts.gov/media/1445760/fy-19-annual-statistical-report.pdf>

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Pandemic – Year One

March 2020 to February 2021:

- 1+ million court hearings
- 2,100+ judges
- 3+ million participants
- 2.4 million Zoom hours
- 1,300+ court YouTube channels

<https://www.txcourts.gov/media/1451689/media-release-texas-judiciary-marks-one-million-virtual-court-hearings.pdf>



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Access to Justice

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Digital Divide / Transportation Divide

- 85% of Americans have a smartphone
- 77% have home broadband
- >20% of Americans 65+ don't drive
- 21% of households <\$51k have no vehicle
- 45% of Americans have no access to public transit
- 25.5m Americans have travel-limiting disabilities

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[2022 eConference on State and Federal Appeals](#)

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