



WOOD BUFFALO TRIBUNAL VIRTUAL HEARING PROTOCOLS

General Information:

Wood Buffalo* Tribunal Hearings are open to the public and take place, in person, in the Council Chamber, located in the Jubilee Centre, 9909 Franklin Avenue; however, there are some exceptions including the following:

- Preliminary Hearings may be conducted virtually where both parties to the appeal and the Tribunal Members participate virtually.
- Hearings where the parties are outside of the Wood Buffalo Region.
- Hearings where the Chair, of a Wood Buffalo Tribunal has deemed it appropriate to hold a hearing virtually.
- Requests for virtual participation are accepted. If a party to an appeal wishes to participate in a hearing virtually, requests for virtual participation must be received by the Clerk's office at least 2 business days prior to the hearing. If the Tribunal receives a virtual participation request from a party to the appeal, the hearing will be facilitated from the Council Chamber where the Tribunal Members are present and where members of the public can attend. Parties requesting for virtual attendance are advised that the other parties may appear in-person in the Chamber with the Tribunal.

Wood Buffalo Tribunals use **Microsoft Teams** to facilitate hearings where there is a virtual component. Virtual participants ("Participants") will be given instructions on how and when they will receive the Microsoft Teams participation link by the Clerk prior to the hearing. Once the link is received, it is important that it not be shared or forwarded to anyone under any circumstances. Only registered Participants will be admitted into the hearing. If there are additional persons in your party, they must register with the Clerk in order to receive a participation link.

Participants are encouraged to download the [Microsoft Teams App](#) to their device and familiarize themselves with the functionality of the software prior to the hearing to avoid delays.

What to Expect:

Using the Microsoft Teams link provided, connect to the hearing at least **15 minutes** prior to the hearing start time. Once joined, Participants will be directed to the Lobby, where they will wait until admitted into the hearing by the Clerk. Upon sign in, Participants are requested to ensure microphones are muted and remain muted throughout the hearing unless called upon by the Chair. Once the hearing begins, Participants are required to have their camera on at all times.

* Assessment Review Boards (Local and Composite Assessment Review Boards),
Community Standards Appeal Committee,
Subdivision and Development Appeal Board

Once all registered Participants have been recorded, the Clerk will provide an overview of the hearing protocols and order of proceedings. The Chair will then conduct a roll call for the record and review the process.

Breaks / Recesses:

Participants are requested to remain connected to the hearing during recesses and caucuses 15 minutes or less in duration unless otherwise advised by the Chair. Please ensure your microphone is muted. You may turn your camera off during breaks. If you need to disconnect from the hearing during a break, please use the same participation link to reconnect and wait to be admitted in to the hearing by the Clerk. If you need to request a recess or need to leave the hearing at any time, please enter your request in the Microsoft Teams Chat or alert the Chair or Clerk by using the Raise Hand feature in Microsoft Teams.

Troubleshooting:

If you are having issues connecting to the hearing or if you have not been admitted to the hearing at the appropriate time, disconnect from the hearing and try reconnecting. If the reconnect is unsuccessful, contact the Clerk at the telephone number or †email provided with the participation link. If you are having technical difficulties during the hearing, alert the Clerk as soon as possible by using the Microsoft Teams Chat function or by contacting the Clerk at the telephone number or email address provided.

Virtual Hearing Etiquette:

- Join the hearing at least 15 minutes prior to the hearing start time.
- Ensure your camera is turned on at all times during the hearing. Should Participants need to step away from the camera, please use the Chat function or alert the Chair or Clerk by using the Raise Hand feature in MS Teams. The hearing will be paused until all parties are available to participate.
- Ensure your device is muted at all times unless called upon by the Chair.
- Find a quiet space with no distractions, ensure your background is appropriate and free of excessive background noise. Try to attend from a room with a closed door in order to minimize video and audio interruptions.
- Use of a headset/earbuds with a microphone is recommended, as it reduces background noise when you are speaking.
- If using a mobile device, try to stay situated in one spot and avoid walking around holding your device.
- Your screen name should be your given name and surname. Familiarize yourself with how to change your name using MS Teams to ensure that you are recognized appropriately during the hearing.
- If there is someone in the room with you, ensure they are introduced for the record.
- Participants are expected to dress appropriately, as though they are physically appearing at the hearing.
- As with in-person proceedings, parties are expected to refrain from eating or drinking anything other than water, coffee, tea or soft drinks during a virtual proceeding.

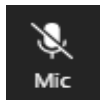
† Assessment Review Board email: ARB@rmwb.ca
Subdivision and Development Appeal Board email: SDAB@rmwb.ca
Community Standards Appeal Committee email: CSAC@rmwb.ca

- When referring to evidence, reference the hearing package page number so others can follow along with you. If possible, share your screen or request the Clerk to display your evidence when referring to illustrations, maps, diagrams etc. by referencing the hearing package page number.

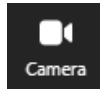
Helpful Tips for a Successful Hearing:

- Download and familiarize yourself with Microsoft Teams prior to the hearing.
- Turn off auto-sleep and power-saving settings on your devices.
- If using a laptop or desktop computer to join the hearing, please ensure your cellular devices are muted to avoid any feedback issues.
- Ensure your device is charged and that you have quick access to a charger and power supply.
- Have the materials with you for reference (print the hearing package, use dual screens or use another device).

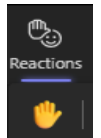
Microsoft Teams Settings:



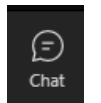
Ensure your microphone is muted upon sign on and remains muted throughout the hearing unless called upon by the Chair. The Clerk may mute a Participant’s audio or video at any time if necessary.



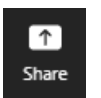
Participants must have their cameras on at all times once the hearing is called to order with the exception of breaks.



Use the “Raise your Hand” function to alert the Chair of any technical difficulties or if you need to step away from the hearing.



The Chat feature is only to be used when requesting a recess or experiencing technical difficulties, or unless explicit direction has been provided by the Chair or the Clerk.



The Share function provides Participants with the ability to share their screen when displaying evidence. If you are unsure of how to use this function, you may ask the Clerk to display your evidence by referring to the page number in the hearing package.

Please contact the Clerk of the Appeal Board you are dealing with for any further information or clarifications.