# How to Prepare for Remote Hearings in Family Court

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> Having been through family court myself, I know how much pressure there is before a hearing. My advice is to deal with the practical details early, so they do not become another worry on the day.

## Read the joining instructions carefully

At least a week before check the hearing notice for the:

- Date
- Time
- Joining method
- Contact details

Don't be too concerned if the

CVP link

is not with you until the morning of the hearing, this often happens. But you

must

contact the court if the link is

not

with you within 1 hour of the hearing. This will give you time to keep calm and the court to

find it and send it to you, follow this guide for

CVP hearings in family court

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Do not assume the arrangements will be the same as your previous hearing.

> Keep the instructions somewhere easy to find. A simple preparation list can help you spot anything missing before the morning of the hearing.

## Test your technology beforehand

Check your internet connection, camera and microphone using the instructions for the platform specified by the court. If your hearing uses Cloud Video Platform, HMCTS advises checking access as soon as possible and telling the court immediately if technical support (see the link above) cannot resolve a problem.

> Practise opening your documents while using the video platform. Finding a PDF should not mean accidentally closing the hearing window.

## Choose a quiet, private space

Think about interruptions, background noise and who might overhear. Arrange childcare where needed and tell anyone sharing your home that you must not be disturbed. HMCTS advises choosing a quiet, private location. For video participation, dress appropriately, use a plain background and position yourself so your face is visible.

> Clear your desk and silence unrelated notifications. Small distractions can make an already difficult conversation harder to follow.

## Keep your papers ready

Have the latest court order, relevant hearing documents and your own notes accessible. My suggestion is to prepare a short list of the points you need to raise, with document references beside them.

Use the page numbering in the hearing bundle

where applicable, so everyone can locate the same passage.

> Organisation cannot remove the emotional strain, but it can reduce frantic searching.

## Arrange support and adjustments early

If you want someone to support you,

check with the court beforehand

. Private family hearings require particular care about attendance. HMCTS explains that a

supporter may offer emotional support and take notes, but does not automatically become your representative.

> Tell the court promptly about accessibility needs or difficulties participating. HMCTS recommends being ready at least 20 minutes before the hearing, with your device charged or plugged in.

## Follow the hearing rules

Mute your microphone when not speaking, follow the judge's directions and ask if you cannot hear or understand something.

Do not record the hearing

, take photographs or capture screenshots without authorisation. HMCTS warns that

doing so is a criminal offence

, however

written notes are permitted.

I would use them avidly, write down key parts and pages numbers they pertain to particular things you would like to refer back to, whether this be during the session or once the session is over. You do not have to pretend everything is clear, if you cannot hear or there is any interference on the line tell the judge as soon as is appropriate, speaking clearly, slowly and about a problem helps you participate properly.

## Sources checked on 23 September 2026:

- HMCTS remote-hearing guidance
- HMCTS guidance on remote support
- CVP joining guidance