



Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

# Child Welfare Hearings & Civil Bulk Courts

Information Guide for Solicitors



This guide provides information and step by step instructions for solicitors who participate in Child Welfare virtual hearings within SCTS courts.

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# Pre-Hearing Criteria

## 1. Browser & set-up Information:

The Court will schedule the Child Welfare Hearing using the Cisco WebEx Meetings platform. The minimum web browser and operating system requirement to allow participants to join a WebEx Meeting can be found online, using the below link:

<https://help.WebEx.com/en-us/nki3xrq/WebEx-Meetings-Suite-System-Requirements>

The solicitor should log in at least 30 minutes prior to their Hearing start time and check –

1. That the equipment that they are using (such as a laptop, mobile phone, tablet etc.) is in working order and that WebEx can be accessed on it;
2. That the internet connection being used is a secured and/or wired connection. The use of “Personal” or “Open Hotspots” (e.g. BT Open Zone) **must** be avoided;
3. That there is sufficient charge in the device and a charging socket is available if necessary;
4. That any evidence will be given in an environment where there will be no risk of disturbance that could affect the running of the case;
5. That they are positioned in such a way as to be seen clearly centred on the screen and are not too close to the camera so that their face isn’t dominating the screen.
6. If they are joining via Google Chrome for the first time, then they will be prompted to download and install the Cisco WebEx Meetings Google Chrome extension. If unable to do this, there is also the option to “**Run a temporary application**” which can be selected.
7. All attendees are required to join via **WebEx Meetings Desktop App**.

## 2. Productions:

All documentary productions **must** be lodged with the court, in electronic format, no later than 2 clear days *prior* to the child welfare hearing starting – Preferably in PDF format.

(*For example* - if you are lodging a list of authorities, you **must** lodge an electronic copy of said authorities).

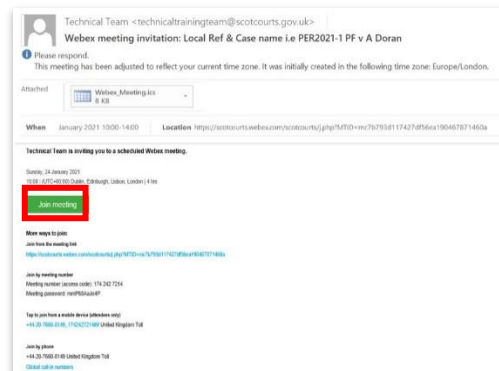
## 3. Email Invitation to Meeting

Once a Meeting has been scheduled by the Court, Attendees will receive an email invitation from [messenger@WebEx.com](mailto:messenger@WebEx.com). Attendee should note that depending on the filters set up on individual

email accounts, this invitation may go to their '**Spam**' folder. If the email is not received then this folder should always be checked *prior* to contacting the court.

This invitation will contain the following information:

- Join Meeting button
- Meeting name
- Meeting date and start time
- Meeting number (access code for dial-in)
- Meeting password
- Attendee link to join Meeting
- Attendee password
- Dial-in details



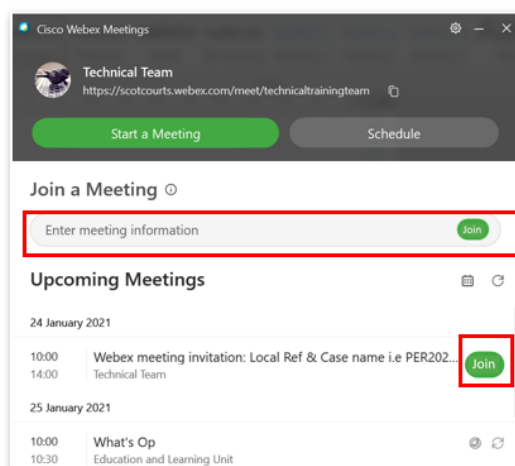
#### 4. Joining the Meeting

Ensure you have the “**Cisco WebEx Desktop App**” downloaded. If not, the first time you join a Cisco WebEx Meeting by clicking on the **green ‘Join Meeting’** button within the email invitation, the “WebEx Meeting Desktop Installer” will download. Once installed, click on the “Installer” to join the meeting.

Once you have left that meeting, the “WebEx Meeting Desktop App” is available on your desktop.

- Click to open the app and select “**Join as Guest**”.
- Enter your **name, designation** and **email address** and then click **Continue**.  
(**NOTE:** When entering your name, it is beneficial to enter it in the following way:
  - *James Smith, Pursuer’s Solicitor*      *Jack Brown, Defender’s Solicitor*
  - *This enables all parties within the virtual meeting to identify each Attendee’s role.*
- Users can change their display name or email address using the **Edit** (pencil icon) function
- Thereafter, any Meetings which are scheduled via Microsoft Outlook will be automatically added to your WebEx Desktop App.

Any future Meetings can be joined directly using the **WebEx Desktop App**, either by entering the “**Meeting Link**” or “**Meeting Number**” into the App and clicking on the “**Join**” button or by clicking onto the “**Join**” button within the scheduled Outlook Meetings as shown below.

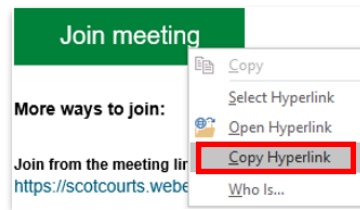


Helpful guidance is available on YouTube [here](#).

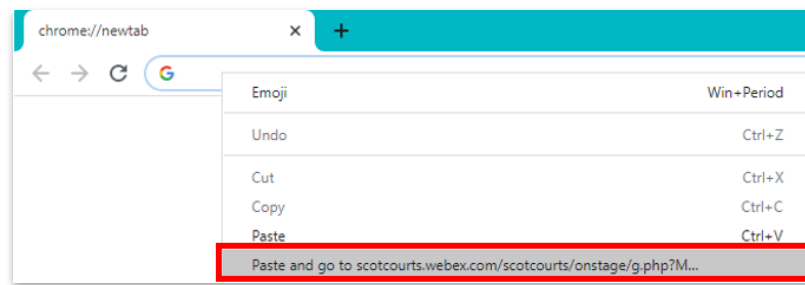
## 5. Connection Issues

If for any reason, the 'Join Meeting' button doesn't work, you **must** contact the clerk of court immediately to advise them that you are having a problem connecting.

An alternative way to join the Meeting is to right click on the '**Join Meeting**' button, and then select '**Copy hyperlink**', as shown below.



Open a new browser tab (Chrome or Microsoft Explorer), then **right click** on the address line and select "**paste and go to the added hyperlink address**".



If you still cannot gain access to the Meeting using the above method, you **must** contact the clerk of court *as soon as possible* to request that a copy of the Meeting hyperlink and password be emailed to them.

## 6. Joining via telephone

If for any reason it is still not possible to join WebEx via an internet connection, it is possible to join by telephone. However it should be noted that you will **not** be able to see Attendees via this method, although you will still be able to interact but unable to participate in a breakout session.

You should contact the clerk of court *as soon as possible* to obtain the "**Case Access Code**". Once you have the 'Case Access Code', please follow the steps below:

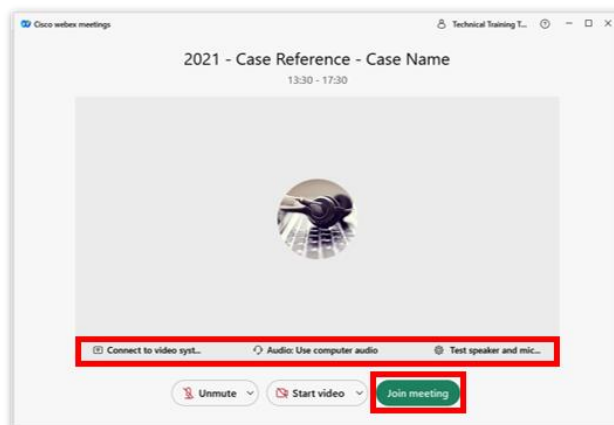
- Call (United Kingdom Toll) +44-20-7660-8149;
- Using your phone keypad, enter the **Case Access Code** provided;
- When prompted, **press #** to join.

Once connected, the line will remain silent until the hearing begins. The meeting audio will then activate automatically.

**NOTE:** Joining the meeting by this method may incur additional costs and you should check with your phone service provider.

## 7. Entering the Meeting – via Browser

The Meeting entry window will now be launched, which will present toolbar buttons to switch the microphone audio and video camera on. The selected settings for each can be found above the icons, as shown in the screenshot below.

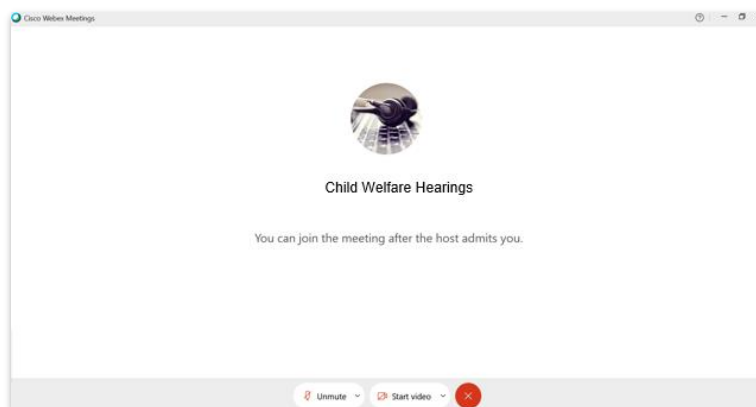


Once you are ready to join the Meeting, click the green '**Join Meeting**' button. *(Note: once you have the WebEx Desktop App installed, you will be able to join all Meetings via this method directly when you click on the “Join Meeting” button).*

## The Hearing

### 8. The Lobby

When you first try to enter the meeting, you will be held in the Clerk's "**Lobby**", which is essentially a virtual waiting room, until your scheduled time slot. You will see a screen similar to that shown below. Once your case is ready to proceed, the clerk will admit you to the meeting.



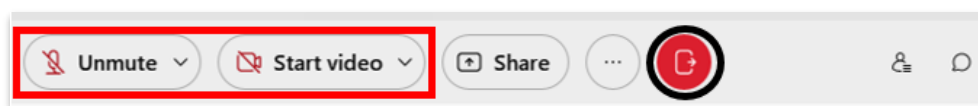
It is therefore beneficial to join the meeting only slightly before your allocated timeslot, which is intimated to you by the clerk.

## 9. 'Breakout Sessions'

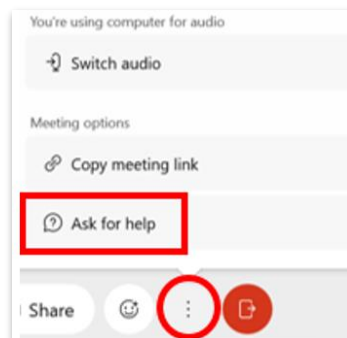
All Attendees must preferably have joined the meeting using either the "WebEx Desktop" or "Mobile App" to enable participation within a Breakout Session as and when required.

Breakout Sessions may also be instigated during the course of a live hearing for any adjournment requested, objections raised, private discussions with client, etc. Once the Breakout Session is instigated, only the specifically selected Attendees assigned to a Breakout Session by the clerk of court will enter into that session.

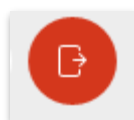
Upon entering and exiting a '**Breakout Session**', the audio microphone will automatically **be muted** and you will be required to manually activate your microphone audio within the Breakout Session.



If you are placed in a Breakout Session then you will have the ability to request that the Clerk join said session if they're not automatically joining (i.e. if the Defenders Agent is having a private consultation with their client). This is done by selecting the '**more options**' button from the WebEx toolbar at the bottom of the screen, and then clicking on '**Ask for Help**', as shown below:



You can also leave the session and return to the main meeting at any time using the exit button shown below, which is located at the bottom of your screen:



## 10. Audio and Video Controls

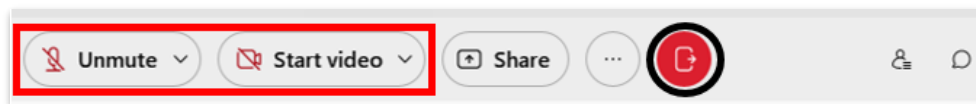
There is a **Taskbar Menu** along the bottom of the screen showing a series of buttons (shown below).

The Audio icon, first from the left, shows a microphone symbol and the word '**Unmute**', and this is the one to click to mute or unmute the audio microphone. The symbol will be shown in **red** when

audio is muted and **green** when unmuted. Click the button once to toggle between muted and unmuted.

The Video icon, second from the left, shows a video camera symbol and the words '**Start video**', and this is the one to click to start or stop the video. The symbol will be shown in **red** then the video is switched off, and **green** when it is switched on. Click the button to toggle between starting and stopping the video.

Taskbar Menu



When entering the Meeting, the video display will automatically default to the '**Grid**' view. This is where the display shows all Attendees and the Host in a tiled layout.

## 11. Positioning your Camera

You **must** ensure that you are positioned in such a way as to be seen clearly on the screen with you:

- Centred on the screen
- Suitably distanced from the screen - i.e. ensuring that you are not too close to the camera so that your face is not dominating the screen.



## 12. Parties to the action

Solicitors must liaise with their client to ensure that they are in the relevant venue and have access to the necessary systems (Webex Desktop App preferred) for their attendance, so that this information can be passed to the clerk.



## Screen Sharing Documents

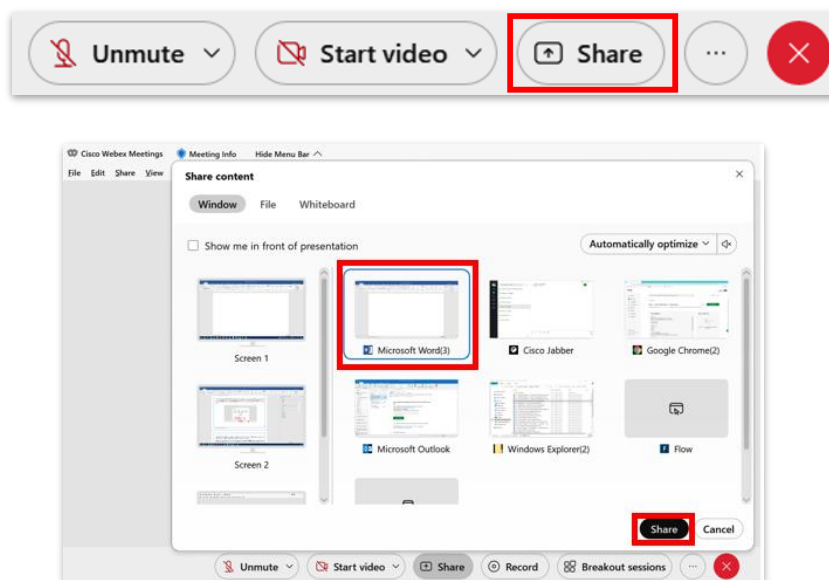
### 13. Sharing a screen during a Meeting

Whilst a Meeting is live, only those with “Presenter” permissions can share their documents or evidence on screen. The documents or evidence can then be seen by all parties. The clerk of court will promote the solicitor to a “**Presenter**” as and when required.

**Reminder:** It is advisable to **mute** all notifications, close any personal or sensitive documents and have **only** the relevant evidence/documents open on your device prior to presenting evidence.

To share evidence, click on the “**Share**” button on the menu bar at the bottom of the WebEx screen. This will open a new window showing all open documents and available screens, simply select the relevant application window, before clicking “**Share**”, as shown below -

**NOTE:** it is advisable to have the documents required during the hearing open in the background in advance of starting the hearing. This allows the above step to be completed in a more streamlined way.



### Share File Option

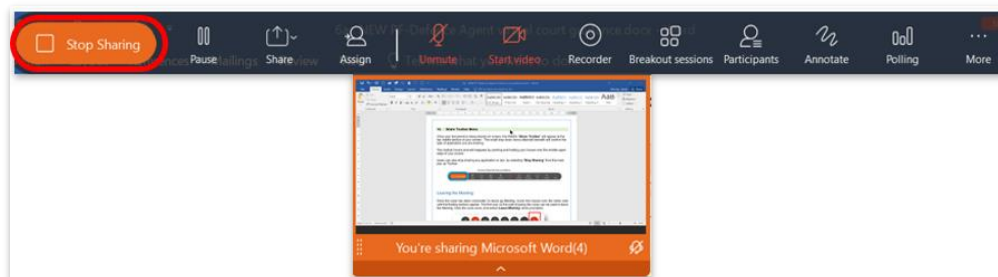
If you select this option which is located at the top left of the screen, your Drive folders will be shown in a separate pop-up box to enable you to locate the file you wish to share. Once located, select the “**Open**” button to proceed.

### 14. Share Toolbar Menu

Once your document is being shared on screen, the WebEx “**Share Toolbar**” will appear across the top, middle section of your screen, as shown below. The small drop-down window attached beneath will show the exact document that you are sharing.

This Toolbar hovers briefly at the top of the screen, before disappearing and will reappear by pointing and holding your mouse over the middle upper edge of your screen.

Users can also **stop** sharing any application or document, by selecting “**Stop Sharing**” from the main pop-up toolbar.

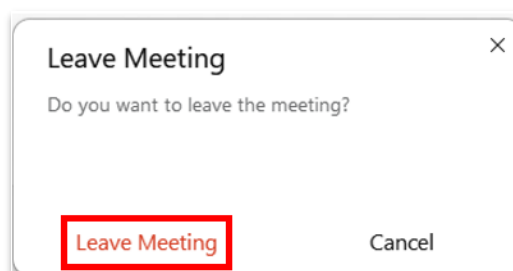


## 15. Leaving the Meeting

Once the case has concluded, to leave a Meeting locate the ‘**End Meeting**’ icon (Red X) from the WebEx Toolbar at the bottom of the screen.



WebEx will provide a pop-up box asking for confirmation that you wish to leave the Meeting. Click on the “**Leave Meeting**” option at the bottom left of the pop-up box to terminate your participation.



## 16. Support

Attendees seeking support on technical issues encountered before or during a Meeting should notify the clerk of court **as soon as possible**. The clerk can then notify the designated CDi support member of the issue to have this rectified as quickly as possible.

**IMPORTANT: SCTS Change & Digital Innovation Unit (CDi) cannot provide IT equipment nor broadband support.**