

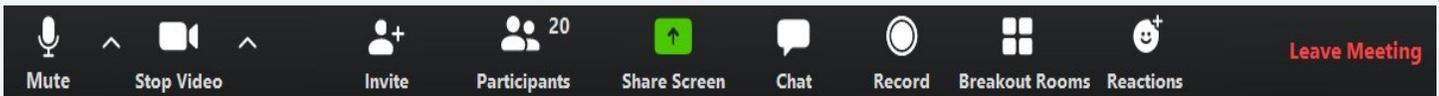


HARRIS COUNTY REMOTE PLEA PROCESS:



1. Defense Counsel must install Zoom Client for every device you intend to use this remote plea process.
2. Defense Counsel and DAO negotiate a plea offer.
3. Defense Counsel creates a Zoom meeting for Client and schedules the meeting for at least 2 hours away. Meeting times are Monday-Friday, 8 AM to 2:30 PM. Be sure to include in the subject and body of the Zoom calendar invite: the *Client's Name, Cause No., Court No. and SPN*, and that the purpose of the visit is to *discuss the plea deal with the client*. Also include in body of the Zoom calendar invite your *Cell Phone Number*. Issues may arise that need to be resolved immediately and office numbers have not been very productive. Be advised that there is a different procedure HCSO will use depending on the visit type, i.e. to *discuss the plea vs sign the plea paperwork*.
4. After you have created the Zoom Calendar invite send it to: **defensevisit@sheriff.hctx.net** and must include in the subject and body of the email: *Client's Name, Cause No., Court No., SPN*, and that the purpose of the visit is to *discuss the plea deal with the client*.
5. HCSO will either accept your calendar invite, reject it or propose a new meeting time. If a new proposal time is requested by HCSO, Defense Counsel can either accept it or counter propose another time that works. Once all parties agree on the meeting time, the Zoom meeting is calendared.
6. On the agreed upon Zoom calendared time the scheduled meeting occurs between Client and Defense Counsel. The meeting should be private with HCSO not in the room. Be sure to be as thorough as possible here and answer all of the questions, it will make the remaining steps much easier.
7. If Client accepts the offer, then Defense Counsel communicates to DAO the acceptance **and** contacts the court coordinator to schedule a time for the plea deal.





ZOOM - Toolbar

8. DAO e-files the plea paperwork and Defense Counsel reviews the plea paperwork via KIOSK.
9. Defense Counsel creates another Zoom meeting utilizing the steps outlined in **step #3**. This time Defense Counsel puts in the Zoom calendar invite, and email, that the purpose of the meeting is for Client to *go over and sign the plea paperwork*. It is important that HCSO know the purpose of this meeting is to have the Defendant go over and sign the plea paperwork because it involves more resources and work by HCSO to complete this step. This visit must occur at least 24 hours in advance of your plea setting date.
10. HCSO personnel will help Client sign paperwork by holding the Surface or Tablet and pulling up the documents to be signed, Defense Counsel will be present via Zoom to go over each document.
11. To go over the plea paper work begin **“screen sharing”** from Zoom so they can see what you see as you go over the plea paperwork.
12. The **“screen sharing”** is only so your Client can see what you see on your device, it has nothing to do with enabling Client the ability to sign the documents. At this point the documents are loaded in KIOSK and can be signed by Client. Also be mindful that once you start **“screen sharing,”** everyone can see what is on your computer so be careful.
13. HCSO will not provide any information or guidance other than something like “sign in this box” and actually working the device.
14. **Court Date:** ALL parties will appear in whatever form except for Client who will appear via Zoom, plea deal is done and Client goes home.
15. If Client has a question during the court room plea, Judge or Coordinator will create a “break out” room where only Client and Defense Counsel are present. Once the questions are answered Defense can manually leave the room and upon doing so we must alert the judge to close the room which will pull the defendant back to the main room or Client can manually leave the room, this part is up to the judge.
16. Judge can end breakout meeting at their discretion and pull us all back to the main courtroom.
17. For probation pleas, there will be another breakout room for Client and CLO to discuss the probation terms.

