



## CITY OF ATLANTA CIVIL SERVICE BOARD

### Protocol for Civil Service Board Virtual Hearings

The Mayor of Atlanta, Keisha Lance Bottoms, recently issued an executive order, as a result of COVID-19, permitting the meetings conducted by Boards, Authorities, Commissions and Committees to resume remotely. As such, the Civil Service Board will exercise its discretion to conduct essential and non-essential hearings remotely. The Department of Human Resources (DHR) has provided a Zoom account and technology resources for the Civil Service Board to conduct its hearings remotely.

### PROCEDURES FOR APPELLANTS

The Civil Service Board for the City of Atlanta will be using Zoom video conferencing for virtual hearings. Zoom is free to download; you and your witnesses will need to download Zoom at [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) on your computer, or you may download the application directly to your mobile device. The Board Coordinator will email you a link to your hearing and will also provide a phone number if you are a self-represented litigant or your witness does not have internet access.

1. To appear on camera for the Virtual Hearing you will need a:
  - a. Computer with internet access and a camera
  - b. Laptop with internet access and a camera
  - c. Smartphone with a camera
  
2. To participate by telephone in a Virtual Hearing:
  - a. If you only have a telephone, you can dial into the hearing and the parties can hear you but will not be able to see you; and you can hear those participating.
  
3. Virtual Hearing scheduling:
  - a. The calendar will be posted to the Civil Service Board's web landing page.
  - b. Appellants will receive a **Notification of Hearing** letter with detailed hearing information including how to log on, submit exhibits, and subpoena witnesses.
  - c. The **Notification of Hearing** letter will be sent to opposing counsel (or self-represented parties) and include the email addresses of all parties and witnesses participating.
  - d. If any parties or witnesses are participating only by telephone, a cell phone number for them must be provided.

- e. Each hearing will be recorded via a court reporter.
  - f. The Board will be the host of the hearing, and the Board Coordinator, Kandice Harmon, will email all those participating a link for the hearing and a phone number to call in.
4. Using Exhibits at the Virtual Hearing:
- a. If you intend to offer any exhibits during the Virtual Hearing, you **MUST** email them (**in one email**) to the Board Coordinator, Kandice Harmon ([AtlantaCSB@AtlantaGA.Gov](mailto:AtlantaCSB@AtlantaGA.Gov)), at least 48 hours prior to the hearing.
  - b. The subject line of the email should say: Virtual Hearing Exhibits of (City of Atlanta or Appellant) Case No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - c. The documents must be in PDF format and pre-marked (or saved) by Exhibit No. For example, save each exhibit as a separate PDF, and label each PDF as CITY-1, CITY-2, etc.
  - d. If you have voluminous exhibits, please email [AtlantaCSB@AtlantaGA.gov](mailto:AtlantaCSB@AtlantaGA.gov) for additional instructions.

### **FAILURE TO APPEAR AT HEARING**

Failure to appear/log-on on the date and time scheduled, or within fifteen (15) minutes after the hearing has been opened on the record, shall result in one of the following:

- a. Rescheduling of the case (if the appellant notified the Board)
- b. Dismissal of the case; or
- c. The appearing party may proceed to present the case and a decision shall be rendered based on the evidence presented.
- d. If you experience a problem logging into the hearing please notify us immediately at [AtlantaCSB@AtlantaGA.gov](mailto:AtlantaCSB@AtlantaGA.gov)

### **REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE**

Request from any party for continuance will be granted at the discretion of the Civil Service Board Chairperson, hearing officer or panel chairperson. Request will be granted for good cause, which includes but is not necessarily limited to legal and documented court excuses, and only if the request is presented no later than three (3) business days prior to the hearing date. The Board may consider request for continuances that are made after the established guideline if the requester demonstrates good cause that prevented a timely request. All request for continuances and any opposition thereto must be made by filling out a request for continuance form. Send the form and appropriate documentation (if needed) to:

[AtlantaCSB@atlantaga.gov](mailto:AtlantaCSB@atlantaga.gov)

Notice of the request must also be sent to the opposing party. Parties will be notified by the Chairperson of the Civil Service Board regarding the granting or denial of a request for a continuance.

Additionally, if you need to request an accommodation please send your request to

[AtlantaCSB@atlantaga.gov](mailto:AtlantaCSB@atlantaga.gov).

## **HEARING FORMAT**

- a. The hearing officer/panel shall read or cause to be read the charges and the parties shall identify themselves on the record.
- b. Opening statements from both parties.
- c. Presentation of witnesses:

### *City proceeds first.*

- Direct examination
- Cross examination
- Re-direct examination
- Re-cross examination

### *The same procedure is followed by the Appellant.*

- d. The hearing officer/ panel may question a witness at any time during the presentation of testimony.
- e. Either party may reserve the right to recall any witness. If said right is not reserved, the witness may be excused for the remainder of the hearing.
- f. Closing statements from both parties, with the City, having the burden of proof, proceeding first.

## **PROCEDURES FOR WITNESSES**

- a. Witnesses should appear by video conferencing.
- b. The attorney/Representative calling the witness is responsible for ensuring the witness has a separate video and audio feed.
- c. Attorneys/Representatives should not attempt to “share” a connection with a witness.
- d. All witnesses should be prepared to present a valid form of identification to verify their identity to the Board over the video feed (if requested).
- e. It is the responsibility of the attorney/Representative offering the witness to ensure that the witness has the link to the proceedings and that all exhibits are available to the witness, including those of the opposing party.

## **FOR THE PUBLIC**

THE OPEN MEETINGS PROVISIONS OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES ALLOWS ACCESS TO HEARINGS. You may access any Civil Service Board hearing by clicking the link on the calendar, underneath each specific hearing, which is located at the bottom of the Civil Service Board’s web landing page:

<https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/boards-and-commissions/civil-service-board>