



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF HAWAII

Video- and Tele- Conference Etiquette

Page 1 of 2

Good video and tele- conferencing etiquette is really just common courtesy and respect for the people in your meeting, just as you would in a face-to-face meeting. In general, do what you can to minimize distractions and make the meeting as efficient as possible.

Read through these tips for successful video- and tele-conferencing.

Visual hygiene hints and tips

In the relaxed comfort of your home office or den, it can be too easy to overlook “visual hygiene”. When you videoconference, dress as you would for an in-person meeting to ensure that your personal appearance matches the tone of the meeting. Do not dress too casually.

Forward planning

If you’ll be hosting the meeting, ensure all participants will be available. Appoint a Chairperson and distribute an agenda and all attachments.

Review

If you’re attending the meeting, print out all materials in advance and review them before the meeting begins. The meeting time is not to be spent familiarizing yourself with the agenda items and content.

Be prepared

Have the meeting materials (agenda, paperwork, etc) printed and ready. Set-up at least 10 minutes before the start of your videoconference to ensure a smooth connection is made and that you’re familiar with the equipment. Arrange the room and check there is enough seating (if more than one will be attending). Place the computer/microphone in the center of the table. Check the volume. Mute the microphone until you are ready to start the call.

Contingency Plan: If video does not work, make an effort to participate by conference call.

Can you be seen?

Check self-view or picture-in-picture to make sure you and any other participants can be seen. Lighting should be on your face & not coming from behind (close any curtains or blinds).

What else can be seen?

Check behind you – what is the backdrop and is it appropriate? Remove items that are inappropriate. Do not eat during the videoconference. Do not allow cats, dogs, birds, etc. to wander across the screen.

Do you hear what I hear?

Turn off the background music and TV. Please use the mute button unless you're speaking, particularly if you have street noises, planes, loud neighbors, barking dogs, and children that can be heard during the videoconference.

What are you doing?

Remain focused on the meeting. Do not multi-task with other non-related activities – they are a distraction.

The Meeting

Start on time. Remember to include and involve those who are joining the meeting via video- or tele- conference.

Beginning the call

Extend greetings. Because the benefit of informal introduction is unavailable to all participants, make sure everyone is introduced at the start. Most importantly, make sure latecomers are properly introduced as they join.

During the call

Speak clearly and act naturally; there is no need to shout. Don't tap the table or rustle papers unnecessarily. Address participants clearly by name. Look directly into the camera when making key points. Don't conduct side or private conversations. Don't interrupt or talk over others.

Need to talk privately?

Don't forget to use the mute button. And it's up to participants to make sure that they aren't unintentionally discourteous during muted periods.

Audio-only participants?

For optimum sound quality, ensure that the speakerphone for the participants is placed in a central position on the table.

Ending the call

The Chairperson should clearly indicate that the meeting has adjourned and everyone may disconnect.