



GUIDELINES FOR THE CONDUCT OF VIDEOCONFERENCE HEARINGS AT THE PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL IN CHICAGO

- I. The Philippine Consulate General in Chicago (“Chicago PCG”) may authorize the conduct of videoconference hearings on its premises for individuals residing within its consular jurisdiction (i.e., Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin).

II. Procedure

- A. Prior to the filing of a motion to participate through videoconferencing to the relevant court, the requesting party, through counsel, shall first coordinate with Chicago PCG.
- B. Requesting counsel shall send a letter request addressed to Chicago PCG via e-mail to notarials@chicagopcg.com.
- C. The request must indicate the following:
1. The details of the case (case title, names of parties, case number, court);
 2. The reason for the VCH request;
 3. The proposed date for the conduct of videoconferencing, which must be at least 30 calendar days from the date of the request;
 4. The proposed start and end time for the videoconferencing;
 5. The name, nationality, and contact details of the witness;
 6. Driver’s license or State ID reflecting the residence of the witness;
 7. The relevant contact details of the requesting counsel;
 8. An undertaking to include the following:
 - a. Pay the prescribed fee of USD 148 payable to Chicago PCG for the conduct of the VCH;
 - b. Comply with the security measures implemented at Chicago PCG;
 - c. Adhere to the designated start and end times of the VCH;
 - d. Prioritize the case in the court calendar;
 - e. Ensure proper notification and coordination with the court, other parties, and/or persons who may be required by the court; and
 - f. Provide all necessary equipment, including internet access, interpreters, and other items required for the VCH.
- D. Chicago PCG shall only accommodate VCH from Monday to Thursday in Chicago, Illinois. The VCH must promptly start at 8:30 AM or earlier and conclude at 9:30 AM Philippine time Standard Time (adjusted to the corresponding US Central Time).



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- E. Chicago PCG shall evaluate the acceptability of the request. Due to differences in time zones and in view of operational limitations, Chicago PCG reserves the right to approve or deny VCH requests based on merit and practicality.
- F. The requesting counsel shall only proceed with the filing of the necessary Motion in Court to issue the Order for the VCH after Chicago PCG's confirmation of the proposed schedule. Initiating a motion or securing a court order for VCH without Chicago PCG's prior confirmation is an automatic ground for denial of the request.
- G. Upon receipt of the VCH Order from the court, the counsel must transmit its copy to Chicago PCG at least five (5) business days before the scheduled VCH.
- H. Any request deviating from these guidelines will be a valid ground to deny the request.

III. VCH Proper

- A. On the scheduled date of the hearing, the witness must arrive at Chicago PCG an hour before the VCH time to test their equipment.
- B. Only participants in the VCH will be allowed to enter the premises of Chicago PCG. Persons requiring assistance due to a medical or physical condition may be assisted by a maximum of one (1) person, whose name and ID should be submitted and approved prior to the hearing.
- C. Food and beverages are not allowed in the building. Pets are not allowed.
- D. The applicant must bring the following during the scheduled date of the hearing:
 - a. Driver's license or State ID reflecting the residence of the witness;
 - b. USD 148 venue and administrative fee, in cash, for the conduct of the VCH; and
 - c. Equipment to be used during the VCH, including the device to be used and access to its own internet connection.

IV. Deposition Taking

- A. Requesting parties are reminded of the additional procedural remedies under the Rules of Court, particularly the Modes of Discovery, under Rule 23 (Depositions Pending Actions), stated in OCA Circular No. 209-2017, "Guidelines in the Taking of Depositions Before the Philippine Consular Officers Abroad."
- B. As distinct from VCH, deposition taking is a regular function of consular officers and is held during Chicago PCG's business hours.



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- C. Requests for deposition upon written interrogatories shall be filed with the Office of the Treaties and Legal Affairs of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

V. Role of Chicago PCG

- A. The role of Chicago PCG during the VCH is limited to providing the venue and confirming to the court that the witness was sworn in by the court.
- B. Chicago PCG shall not supply the witness with any device to be used during the VCH and shall not allow the witness to connect to any of its networks. It shall be the witness's responsibility to supply themselves with an internet connection.
- C. The Consular Officer shall not verify the identity of the witness, who shall establish their identity to the satisfaction of the court.
- D. The Consular Officer shall not act as an interpreter, offer any assistance to the witness, or attend the VCH. The Consular Officer has the right to deny requests by the court or the witness to perform any other act without prior written consent of the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- E. The use of the venue is strictly limited to the VCH proper. Any meetings with counsel or other post-VCH activities are expressly prohibited.
- F. The Consular Officer further reserves the right to deny any requests for an extension of time.
- G. Chicago PCG shall send a report to the Department of Foreign Affairs on the conduct of the VCH.

The above guidelines must be strictly complied with. Any deviation from the guidelines will be a valid ground to postpone or cancel the conduct of the VCH.

For further inquiry on this matter, please email notarials@chicagopcg.com.

Chicago, Illinois
04 May 2026