



Alberta Court of Justice

Calgary Family & Youth Division Virtual Judicial Dispute Resolution (VJDR) Protocol

Effective: March 29, 2021

Purpose:

This protocol replaces all previous protocols and applies to Judicial Dispute Resolutions (JDRs) that have been previously booked or will be booked.

Procedures/Guidelines:

Overview:

1. Until further notice, all JDRs shall be conducted virtually, either by Zoom or other video conferencing software should it become available, unless exceptional circumstances exist that require an in-person JDR.
2. All parties and counsel are reminded that even though the VJDR is being conducted remotely, it is still a court proceeding. As a result, parties are to be polite and respectful. Failure to comply with this will result in the Justice either muting the offending party or canceling the VJDR. Parties are also reminded that VJDRs are confidential and other individuals, including children they may be caring for, are not to be present during the VJDR. Only the parties and their counsel may attend.
3. Should the parties elect or are directed to a Binding VJDR, they are to complete a Binding JDR Agreement and file it with the Court prior to the VJDR date being set.
4. When the VJDR date is set, parties shall advise the Court of their email address and telephone number in the courtroom at the time of booking. A return date in Courtroom 1208 will be set no less than 3 business days after the VJDR.
5. Parties are to be available at least five (5) minutes before the VJDR is scheduled to begin and 20 minutes after the scheduled end time, as VJDRs may take longer than anticipated.

6. Should a party not attend a VJDR, the matter will be automatically adjourned to the return date in Courtroom 1208 and costs may be awarded against the party or parties who did not attend. The Court may make an order against the party who did not attend the VJDR should the party not attend the return docket date.

The VJDR Process:

1. Within five (5) days of the VJDR, a link will be emailed to parties, by either the VJDR Justice or a judicial assistant, inviting them to attend a Zoom meeting at the date and time scheduled for the VJDR. If the link is emailed directly to counsel by the assigned VJDR Justice, counsel are to keep the Justice's contact information confidential.
2. Parties are to accept the VJDR meeting invitation as soon as possible after they receive it.
3. Counsel are to forward the meeting link to their clients as soon as possible after they receive it.
4. All participants must have upgraded to Zoom 5.0, as this software is required for the VJDR to occur.
5. Recording or taking screenshots of the VJDR is prohibited.
6. Non-alcoholic refreshments are permitted during the VJDR. Food or gum is not permitted during the VJDR.
7. Focus should be on courteous, productive resolution.
8. In certain cases, the Justice scheduled to hear the VJDR may require additional steps to be taken. You will be contacted by email about what additional steps you need to take.