

PROCEDURES FOR TELEPHONE HEARINGS

1. A property owner wishing to appear for a hearing by telephone conference call must:
 - a. notify the Appraisal Review Board in writing not later than the tenth day before the date of the hearing; and
 - b. provide any evidence in the form of an affidavit filed before the hearing begins.
2. The property owner should call (254) 752-9869 approximately five minutes before the hearing is scheduled to start.
 - a. When the owner's call is answered, the owner should be prepared to give:
 - i. the owner's name;
 - ii. the protest/case number(s) identifying the protest(s); and
 - iii. the telephone number at which the owner can be reached.
 - b. If a panel is not available to hold the hearing right away, the ARB member or staff member answering the call will advise the property owner that the owner may be placed on hold or explain that the ARB will call the owner back when a panel is available. The owner is responsible for keeping the line clear and answering promptly when the ARB calls. If the ARB's cannot reach the owner, the owner will forfeit the opportunity to participate in the hearing by telephone.
 - c. If a property owner not represented by an agent has had to wait more than two hours from the time scheduled for his/her hearing and the hearing has not begun, the owner may terminate the call if he/she is on hold. The owner should promptly call the ARB and state that he/she is exercising the right to request a postponement of the hearing.
3. The property owner is responsible for ensuring a clear connection from his/her end of the telephone connection;
 - a. The property owner should use a land-line telephone or, if the owner uses a cell phone, he/she should call from a place with a strong, reliable connection to a cellular network. A property using a VOIP telephone should ensure that the Internet connection is fast enough to provide clear transmission of sound without buffering.
 - b. The owner should separate himself/herself from background noises like televisions and barking dogs, noises that might interfere with the panel's ability to hear and understand the owner.
 - c. If a call is dropped or if the property owner's speech is garbled or unintelligible, the ARB panel may terminate the call and either try to call the property owner or wait for the property owner to call again. If the connection cannot be reestablished within five minutes, the panel will proceed with the hearing and owner will have no further opportunity to participate in the hearing by telephone.
4. If the property owner provides documents, photographs tables or other items with his/her affidavit, the owner should label those items prominently with the first being labeled PO Ex. 1, the second being labeled PO Ex. 2, etc. If the owner wishes to emphasize certain portions of an item, the owner should highlight those portions or otherwise set them off with colored marking. When the Appraisal District provides items to the property owner before the hearing or at the beginning of the hearing, the District should label those items prominently with the first being labeled AD Ex. A, the second being labeled AD Ex. B, etc. During the hearing, the owner, the panel members and the representatives of the Appraisal District should refer to the items by their exhibit numbers.
5. A property owner may not offer evidence by telephone. Evidence includes facts and opinions. The owner may comment on evidence that is presented through an affidavit or by the Appraisal District. Panel members will not ask a property owner to present evidence by telephone.
6. The property owner is responsible for providing access to another person that the owner invites to participate in the hearing.