

SUPREME COURT OF OKLAHOMA

In re Videoconferencing and Teleconferencing in Meetings of Boards and Committees of the Judiciary

2020 OK 108 (Okla. 2020) · Decided December 14, 2020

SUMMARY

The Oklahoma Supreme Court authorizes judicial branch boards, committees, task forces, and working groups to conduct meetings and proceedings by teleconference or videoconference. The order also amends disciplinary hearing rules for the State Boards of Examiners of Certified Shorthand Reporters and Certified Courtroom Interpreters.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Oklahoma
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per Curiam; Gurich, C.J.; Darby, V.C.J.; Kauger, J.; Winchester, J.; Edmondson, J.; Colbert, J.; Combs, J.; Kane, J.
JURISDICTION	Oklahoma
DECIDED	December 14, 2020
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The Supreme Court of Oklahoma issued an administrative order governing meetings and proceedings of judicial branch boards, committees, task forces, and working groups.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published administrative order of the Supreme Court of Oklahoma

TOPICS

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

judicial administration

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether judicial branch boards, committees, task forces, and other working groups may conduct meetings and proceedings by teleconference or videoconference.

2. Whether the Oklahoma Open Meetings Act applies to proceedings of boards, committees, or other groups established by or through the state judiciary.
3. What amendments should govern the use of teleconferencing and videoconferencing in disciplinary proceedings before the State Board of Examiners of Certified Shorthand Reporters and the State Board of Examiners of Certified Courtroom Interpreters.

HOLDINGS

1. The Oklahoma Open Meetings Act does not apply to the proceedings of boards, committees, task forces, or other groups established by or through the state judiciary because the judiciary is exempt from the statutory definition of a public body.
2. At the discretion of each group's chairperson, teleconferencing and videoconferencing are authorized for judicial branch boards, committees, task forces, and other working groups, including the groups identified in the order and any subcommittees.
3. The amended rules authorize the State Board of Examiners of Certified Shorthand Reporters and the State Board of Examiners of Certified Courtroom Interpreters to permit teleconferencing and videoconferencing at the chairperson's discretion during any stage of disciplinary proceedings, subject to the specified district-court videoconferencing provisions.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the requirements of the Open Meetings Act shall not apply to the proceedings of the boards, committees, or other groups established by or through the state judiciary.” (§1)

“The use of videoconferencing and teleconferencing, at the discretion of each group's chairperson, is hereby authorized, for judicial branch boards, committees, task forces, and other working groups, including but not limited to the following:” (§1)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Supreme Court addressed the operation of boards, committees, task forces, and other working groups established by or through the Oklahoma judiciary. The order recognized that the judiciary is exempt from the statutory definition of a public body under the Oklahoma Open Meetings Act. It authorized judicial branch groups to use teleconferencing and videoconferencing and amended related disciplinary-hearing rules for certified shorthand reporters and courtroom interpreters.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The order was issued by the Supreme Court of Oklahoma in conference on December 14, 2020. It clarifies meeting requirements, authorizes teleconferencing and videoconferencing, and amends disciplinary-hearing rules for two judicial-examination boards.

DISPOSITION

other

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