

### Telephone Hearings

Almost all states now allow participation in unemployment hearing by telephone. It's important to understand your participation by telephone – just like an in person hearing – is still governed by state rules and procedures.



Here are some telephone hearing basics:

- **Notice.** In general, the time from the issuance of a hearing notice to the date of the hearing is short. The average is only 10 days, and in many states it's only 7 days.
- **Provide participant information to the state agency:** Most states require employers to provide information about who will be participating in the hearing. The procedures for notification vary from state to state, so make sure you comply with your local rules. It's also important to coordinate with your hearing representative, or make sure you know what is required if you are attending the hearing without representation.

- **Be certain of the time zone:** It's very common for the hearing office to be in one time zone and for you to be in another. Remember – you are required to be on time.
- **Find a comfortable QUIET place:** It's always best to be in a quiet place with few distractions. Also – use a land line if at all possible.
- **Have Your Documents Ready:** You will be required to provide copies of your documentation to the state and the claimant before the hearing. During the hearing, you must have ready access to these documents.
- **Back-Up Planning:** Usually, the Notice of Hearing will contain a number to call if the state does not call you on time. Make sure you have that number handy, and be prompt in reaching out to the state if their call is late or delayed.
- **Call immediately if you can't participate or a witness isn't available:** Not only is this good manners, but it's essential in maintaining good relationships with the state. Things happen. If you notify the state in advance, the state can use the hearing resources dedicated to your case on another case. Also – you may be able to get your hearing postponed so essential personnel are available.

Telephone hearings are excellent ways to reduce the costs and disruption of unemployment proceedings. But it's important not to take a telephone hearing lightly. It's still a quasi-judicial proceeding before the state. Behave accordingly.