

[About Electronic Attendance](#)

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Introduction to Electronic Attendance

Setting up your Post or District for electronic attendance may not be as simple as just firing up a conference service. There are a number of items to consider if you are going to successfully incorporate it as a seamless part of your meetings.

Our Bylaws have two requirements, the Post has to adopt additional procedures pertaining to the conduct of its meetings and the technology used must allow the participants to communicate with each other simultaneously.

Let's start by looking at how you conduct meetings in person. Most Posts use the Traditional Order of Business found in section 1004 in the Manual of Procedure but the simpler, shorter Contemporary Order of Business may be better suited for electronic attendance. Either way there are certain activities that need to be considered. Can you "check dues cards" of the electronic attendees? Do you allow guests to attend electronically? Do you normally distribute copies of event schedules, reports, and other written materials to those attending the meetings? How can you make those available to the electronic attendees? Does the Adjutant record the meetings and, if so, will your chosen technology support recording? Can the Commander determine who should have the floor or the outcome of a voice vote? How about a "show of hands" vote? What about the "audio only" attendees who can't show their membership cards or raise their hands? Who will act as the electronic meeting host? Can the host "eject" ineligible participants, or mute those that have exceeded their speaking privilege? How about controlling background noise? Do you need electronic attendance capacity for every member of the Post? Answering these questions will help you to identify the additional procedures that you need to adopt and decide on your technology requirements.

Choosing Your Technology

There is an abundance of conferencing technologies that can be used to enable electronic attendance, but you will have to match your requirements to their features and costs. For example:

- Screen and application sharing allow you to show written materials.
- Raise Hand features can be used for showing of hands voting.
- Active view features can help the commander determine who has the floor.
- Host controlled "eject" and mute features can help manage participants and background noise.

Also look for:

- Number of participants supported by the plan.
- Hidden costs such as dial-in fees.

Note that livestreaming to Youtube and Facebook are **not** appropriate solution because it does not enable simultaneous communications.

Some of the available services that provide many of the features listed above, but are in no way limited to:

Technology	Participants	Cost	Notes	Website
Jitsi	*75	free	Easy to use, no account needed	https://jitsi.org/jitsi-meet/
Webex	100	free		https://www.webex.com/
Zoom	100 - 300	Free, \$15 to \$20 / Month	(Free version 40 min time limit) recording	https://zoom.us/
GoToMeeting	150 - 250	\$12 to \$15 / Month	Full featured, transcription and recording	https://www.gotomeeting.com/

* Jitsi's participant limitation is due to service performance.

Introduction to Jitsi and Webex Conferencing for Electronic Attendance

(Thank you to the VFW, Department of Colorado for putting these videos together)

Jitsi

<https://youtu.be/GaKvdYOsoz0>

Webex

https://youtu.be/SpEVPQ5UW_M



Prepare Your Meeting Materials

Screen and application sharing can be challenging if the presenter has to switch from one application to another or if the person presenting has to change. The best approach is to:

- Use a single application and file format for all materials, like Acrobat - Reader, and pdf files.
- Create a PowerPoint presentation in pdf format to guide the meeting.
- Insure that all reports are available in pdf format well before the meeting.

Conduct the Meeting

- Hold a run-through with key officers before the meeting.
- Check your conferencing service, access, and equipment.
- Assign a host to run the conference and present the materials.
- Start your conference solution at least 5 min before the meeting.

Watch this video for a run-through example of a contemporary format meeting.

<https://youtu.be/Q9YXTnztIso>