

## Frequently Asked Questions about resuming in-person proceedings

The BIIA offers parties the opportunity to participate in proceedings held remotely, in-person, or as a hybrid event. Starting November 1, 2022, in-person proceedings may be held at all BIIA facilities.

### What do these terms mean?

- **Remote:** all participants appear by Zoom or telephone.
- **In-person:** all participants appear in person in a hearing room.
- **Hybrid:** some participants appear in person in a hearing room with the judge and others appear remotely.

### Where can I schedule an in-person or hybrid proceeding?

At this time, the following BIIA facilities can accommodate in-person or hybrid proceedings: Everett, Seattle, Lakewood, Olympia, Yakima, Spokane, and Richland. Unfortunately, we cannot hold video hybrid proceedings in Moses Lake or Vancouver, only telephone hybrid proceedings. Please express your desired method of hearing at your scheduling conference. However, we still need to schedule timely hearings. If we do not have a hearing room available, the judge will hold your proceeding by either Zoom or telephone.

### Proceedings at non-BIIA sites.

Historically, the BIIA held proceedings in every county in Washington. Sometimes, these proceedings were held in facilities not controlled by the BIIA. If you request an in-person hearing in a county where we don't have an office, we will try to accommodate your request. However, facilities previously used may no longer be available. As a result, you may be asked to either (1) waive venue to allow us to schedule your hearing at a BIIA office or (2) agree to a telephonic or video hearing. We do not offer hybrid hearings in non-BIIA facilities.

### What happens on the day of the proceeding?

**Everyone** who wants to participate must self-screen prior to arriving at a BIIA hearing location. If you or your witnesses have COVID symptoms or recent exposure, or are otherwise ill, please do not enter the building. If you are a witness, you should contact the person who asked for your testimony and notify that person that you cannot appear. If you are a party(or represent a party), you should notify the judge's assistant. The judge will decide how the hearing will proceed. **A continuance is not necessarily the next step.**

**Question:** Will the judge ask me about my vaccination status?

**Answer:** No.

**Question:** Do I have to wear a mask?

**Answer:** No. However, we encourage everyone who wants to wear a mask to do so. We will have masks available.

**Question:** Will the judge be wearing a mask?

**Answer:** Maybe. State employees are no longer required to wear a mask when working indoors with members of the public. However, judges may choose to wear a mask.

### **Mediation or Settlement Conferences**

Parties are not required to participate in in-person mediation or settlement conferences. As a result, the default for mediation will be by telephone. However, upon agreement of all parties, the judge may hold a mediation or settlement conference (or extended mediation conference) in person. In addition, a judge may schedule an in-person or hybrid mediation or settlement conference if the judge determines it is appropriate. These determinations will take place on a case-by-case basis. For example, the judge may schedule the conference in person as an accommodation.

The BIIA cannot accommodate hybrid mediation or settlement conferences in non-BIIA facilities.