



NO-FAULT NOTES: News from the AAA®'s Minnesota No-Fault Office

Welcome to the latest edition of the No-Fault Arbitrator Newsletter.

Administrative Changes

Since the pandemic began, the AAA has seen a significant number of hearings transition from in-person proceedings to videoconferences and teleconferences. We anticipate that some parties, representatives, and arbitrators may prefer these alternatives long term. Therefore, in an effort to improve the efficiency of setting a hearing format, the AAA will begin incorporating this process at the beginning of a case. The AAA will identify the preferences of the parties prior to an arbitrator appointment and will begin including this information on the Invitation to Serve letter.

The Invitation to Serve letter will include the hearing format the parties have agreed to use, as well as the requested locale in the event the parties agree to an in-person hearing. If the parties cannot agree on a hearing format, the case administrator will submit the issue to the arbitrator separately for a decision.

Hearing notices will reflect the agreed-upon format and include any necessary videoconference or teleconference credentials.

Resume Updates

Recently, the AAA updated the Minnesota No-Fault resume format to include two new sections:

- **Firm/Professional Address**, prompted by a directive of the No-Fault Standing Committee to provide parties and representatives with information on the physical location of an arbitrator, reflects the physical address of the arbitrator's firm or professional location.
- **Available Hearing Format**, added to capture all hearing formats an arbitrator is willing and able to employ: videoconference, teleconference, in-person and/or documents-only.

The AAA completed the initial update for both sections based on the information provided by arbitrators; however, we ask that, moving forward, arbitrators update this information in Panelist eCenter® as necessary.

Hearing Documents

Over the past several months, numerous representatives have expressed that, under the current circumstances, there have been some challenges related to printing and mailing hearing documents. In addition, these documents often include Personal Identifiable Information and, therefore, providing a secure method of transmission is important. We encourage arbitrators to consider electronic methods of transmitting and reviewing hearing documents, such as AAA WebFile® and Panelist eCenter, or other secure document-management platforms.



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If you would like to change your “Preferred Material Delivery” preference, please contact Kelly Baker at KellyBaker@adr.org. In addition to the online option, you could also designate “No Preference,” which then provides the parties with more options.

Hearing Exhibit Space

The AAA soon will release an enhancement to our online platforms that dedicates space to hearing exhibits within each case record. Once available, an arbitrator can activate this option for parties by clicking the new “Hearing Exhibit” button within the case record. Not only will this offer a single secure platform for all parties to upload their hearing exhibits for the case, it also will provide for the reduction or elimination of expensive and time-consuming preparation of hard copy exhibits.

Arbitrator Case Management Tips

Duplicate copies—no longer necessary! Save the trees! Don't duplicate your efforts!

The AAA no longer requires that correspondence be sent in duplicate. The AAA encourages electronic transmission of communications; however, if you are mailing correspondence, only the original is necessary.

Similarly, if you choose to email or upload your correspondence directly to AAA WebFile, it is not necessary to send the same correspondence using multiple methods. This is especially true of awards. We need correspondence in only one format.

Hosting a Virtual Hearing

The arbitrator is the host of the virtual hearing; after ensuring that the video and audio connections for all case participants are functioning properly, the AAA assigns the controls to the host. At the end of the hearing, please click on “End Meeting” and select the popup option “End Meeting for All.”

Your AAA facilitator may not be your case administrator and, in some instances, may not work with Minnesota No-Fault cases. They are present to ensure that all connections are made and to troubleshoot any connection issues. If you have a question related to the case itself, please contact the case administrator who is handling the file.

The AAA encourages all arbitrators to become comfortable with using videoconference platforms and includes a link to tutorials in each invite. If you would like to schedule a short test session prior to the hearing to familiarize yourself better with the process, please let the case administrator know well in advance.

Arbitrators with their own Zoom account license who prefer to set up their own virtual hearings should inform the case administrator.



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Video Hearing Promptness

It is a best practice to arrive before the start time of an in-person hearing. This also is true of hearings conducted by videoconference. We encourage you to log in to the platform at least five minutes before the scheduled start time. The AAA staff member assisting with the connection might need to relay information or provide instructions to you prior to the start of the hearing. Connecting prior to the hearing ensures that there will be enough time to communicate any necessary information and to assist with any audio, video, or connectivity issues that might arise.

Reminder

New Office and Mailing Address

The Minneapolis office moved to a new location on September 14, 2020. The address for the new location is as follows:

American Arbitration Association
100 South Fifth Street, Suite 1900
Minneapolis, MN 55402

The AAA anticipates that we will occupy this location for at least the next year. During this time, we will not have hearing room space available. However, we will continue to work with those of you who have designated the AAA office as their preferred hearing location to find alternative locations and/or methods to hold hearings.

Feedback

What would you like to see featured in this newsletter?

Please contact Kelly Baker at KellyBaker@adr.org or Kristin Folsom at KristinFolsom@adr.org.