



## CENTRAL REGION – RED DEER FAMILY COURT VIRTUAL JUDICIAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION (VJDR) PROTOCOL

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**Effective: December 2, 2020**

### **Purpose:**

This Protocol applies to Judicial Dispute Resolutions (JDRs) that have been previously booked or will be booked. If a party does not have access to Zoom or other video conferencing software, then the JDR shall be conducted by telephone or, if directed by the Court, in-person.

### **Procedures/Guidelines:**

#### **Overview:**

1. Until further notice, all JDRs shall be conducted virtually, either by Zoom or other video conferencing software should it become available, unless exceptional circumstances exist that require an in-person JDR.
2. All parties and counsel are reminded that even though the VJDR is being conducted remotely, it is still a court proceeding. As a result, parties are to be polite and respectful. Failure to comply with this will result in the judge either muting the offending party or canceling the VJDR. Parties are also reminded that VJDRs are confidential and other individuals, including children they may be caring for, are not to be present during the VJDR. Only the parties and their counsel may attend.
3. Should the parties elect or are directed to a Binding VJDR, they are to complete a Binding JDR Agreement and file it with the Court prior to the VJDR date being set.
4. When the VJDR date is set, parties shall advise the Court of their email address and telephone number in the courtroom at the time of booking.
5. Parties are to be available at least 5 minutes before the VJDR is scheduled to begin.

6. Should a party not attend a VJDR, the matter will be automatically adjourned to the next available date in Courtroom 103. Costs may be awarded against the party or parties who did not attend the VJDR and the Court may make any other order it deems appropriate.

**The VJDR Process:**

1. Within 5 days of the VJDR, a link will be emailed to parties inviting them to attend a Zoom meeting at the date and time scheduled for the VJDR.
2. Parties are to accept the VJDR meeting invitation as soon as possible after they receive it.
3. Counsel are to forward the meeting link to their clients as soon as possible after they receive it.
4. All participants must have upgraded to Zoom 5.0, as this software is required for the VJDR to occur.
5. Recording or taking screenshots of the VJDR is prohibited.
6. Non-alcoholic refreshments are permitted during the VJDR. Food or gum is not permitted during the VJDR.
7. Focus should be on courteous, productive resolution.
8. At least 3 business days before the VJDR, parties are to provide a brief summary, not exceeding 2 pages, outlining what type of order they are seeking, as well as the evidence supporting their position. Counsel are encouraged to prepare a draft order and attach it to their summary. These summaries are to be sent by email to: [family.reddeer@csadm.just.gov.ab.ca](mailto:family.reddeer@csadm.just.gov.ab.ca).

As per: Assistant Chief Judge Hunter  
Central Region Courts