

# Hot Topics Newsletter

## Space and Glass...The Mission Continues!



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Reconstructed courtrooms for the resumption of jury trials.

## Lag Time in Resolution of Retiree Prescription Drug Litigation Preserves Benefits For 2021 Plan Year; Motion to Hold State in Contempt Fails

By: Hon. Robert A. Zarnoch

Because of a complicated contingency clause in 2019 legislation fashioned in light of the ongoing challenge by Medicare-eligible State retirees to changes in prescription drug coverage and delays inherent in this complex litigation, benefits are preserved for the 2021 plan year. This would be the case even if the State were successful in its pending motion to dismiss the now two-year old litigation.

The 2019 legislation declined to reinstate prescription drug subsidies retirees enjoyed, but did establish three new programs to defray some costs for retirees. However, the law was not immediately effective; its implementation would not take effect until the “final resolution” of the preliminary injunction issued by U.S. District Judge Peter J. Messitte on October 16, 2018. In addition, the new changes could not be effective if the resolution occurs “less than 9 months before the first day of the next State health benefits open enrollment period [normally beginning October 15<sup>th</sup>].” If the 9-month rule cannot be met, the changes “shall begin on the first day of the second State health benefits plan year [normally beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>] immediately following the resolution.”

To illustrate how this contingency clause would work, suppose the State should win the case tomorrow, it would have no effect on the 2021 plan year because less than 9 months would have passed before the October 15<sup>th</sup> open enrollment period. Now, what would happen if the case drags on through summary judgment, discovery, or even trial? The “final resolution” of the injunction may not occur until after January 15, 2021. If that happens,

the benefits would continue through the 2022 benefit year, because the 9-month rule would not have been satisfied.

Whether the “final resolution” requirement includes an appeal—stretching matters out even further—is beyond the scope of this article.

These scenarios presume the State would prevail in the litigation. If the State loses, most likely a permanent injunction would issue halting any changes to the prescription drug proposal for Medicare-eligible retirees. Then, the contingency clause would not be triggered.

Where does the litigation now stand? The case took another abrupt turn when the retirees pressed a new claim, *viz.* that the State was improperly directing funds from the Postretirement Benefits Trust Fund, which they assert was intended to pay for retiree prescription drug benefits. They moved for an order to show cause why the State defendants should not be held in contempt and why a preliminary injunction should not issue to enjoin diversion of funds. The court denied the motions largely because the fund in question was not paying for the retiree benefits. Rather, the benefits came from a different fund, which operated on a pay-as-you-go basis and which obtained its monies via legislative appropriations.

Still pending in the case is the State’s motion to dismiss. No hearing has yet been scheduled on the motion.



### Why I Love Bees

(And Why You Should as Well)

By: Hon. Larry Daniels

I am an apiarist. I keep bees. I became an apiarist after my daughter Caitlin convinced me to take a 12-hour course in beekeeping with her at our local agricultural center. After just 5 or 6 hours of the course I was hooked. I had to try my hand at starting a hive.

Bees are incredibly fascinating, complex and invaluable members of this global community we call Earth. I decided they needed my support, and after reading this article I hope you will decide they need your support as well.

Pollinators i.e. honey bees, butterflies, moths and their ilk, fertilize plants by transferring pollen from the male part of a plant to the female part. The result is an apple, a peach or a squash. Without pollination plants could not produce fruit or reproduce. There would be no apples, peaches or squash. Experts estimate that world-wide famine would result within six months of the honey bees' extinction as a species.

The average bee hive is home to fifty to sixty thousand bees. Except for 100 to two hundred male bees, or drones, all the bees are females. All the female bees except one, the queen, are worker bees.

The queen has one function and only one function: she lays eggs that hatch into new bees. From the time she, herself, hatches and returns from her mating flight outside of the hive she spends the remainder of her two-year life span in the hive laying eggs. The average lifespan of a bee, other than the queen is only four to six months. That means that every four to six months the queen must lay enough



eggs to replace the fifty to sixty thousand bees who have died during that time. Do the math and you come to the astounding conclusion that the queen lays about 350 eggs a day or 15 per hour. She is a very busy lady!

The male drones also have but one function: that is to fertilize a newly hatched queen bee. As soon as she emerges from her incubation cell, the queen leaves the hive followed by the male drones. While she flies around the hive she is fertilized by the male drones in midair. Once she is made fertile the queen returns to the hive to begin her egg-laying duties. The male drones, alas, having fulfilled their destiny and, according to the dictates of ever efficient Mother Nature, are driven from the hive by sentinel bees to die.

The female worker bees perform many different roles in the hive during their four- to six-month lives. They excrete wax which they build into the hexagonal cells, or honey comb, in which the queen lays her eggs and the bees store honey and pollen. The workers "nurse" the newly laid eggs by feeding them royal jelly and act as sentinels to protect the hive from predators. Finally, these intrepid workers will fly as far two and a half miles from the hive to forage for and bring back the nectar and pollen necessary to support the bees and the hive. Alas, all this flying takes its toll on delicate wings, and within three to four weeks the bees die from their foraging efforts.

[Bees do not migrate or hibernate during the winter. Instead they remain in the hive steadfastly supporting the queen in her egg-laying efforts and maintaining the hive. In cold weather, the bees "cluster" around the queen to keep her warm as she lays eggs. They do this by vibrating or buzzing, as we call it, and keep the center of the cluster where the queen is laying around 90°F. on the coldest of winter days. During the winter and the other months when plants are not blooming and, therefore, there is no nectar for the bees to collect and turn into honey, they live off the honey and pollen stored in the cells of the honey comb. When the "nectar flow" resumes in the Spring and plants are blooming, any honey left over from winter can be harvested by the bee keeper.]

I really like keeping bees because they are so low-maintenance. The conventional wisdom among

veteran apiarists is the less you do to your hive, the happier the bees will be. That makes sense since, in the wild, bees get along perfectly well without any human intervention. So, other than to harvest honey once a year and a couple of checks during the summer to ensure that the queen is happily laying eggs, I “let the bees be.”

PS: Yes, I do get stung 2 or three times a year, but my body is accustomed to bee venom and the stings itch more than they hurt.



### PUBLIC NOTICE

- For all COVID-19 updates, please visit [mdcourts.gov](https://mdcourts.gov) and click on the red banner labeled COVID-19 UPDATE at the top of the page.
- For the latest news, updates, payroll info, Hot Topics and more, check out the Senior Judge webpage @ <https://mdcourts.gov/hr/seniorjudges>. Don't forget to save the link so you can refer back at any time.

### Upcoming Advanced Payrolls for Senior Judges

- 10/14/20-10/27/20: Timesheets need to be submitted by noon on Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>.
- 11/11/20-11/24/20: Timesheets need to be submitted by noon on Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>.
- 12/9/20-12/22/20: Timesheets need to be submitted by noon on Monday, December 21<sup>st</sup>. This will be the last pay period paid in 2020. The 2021 Earnings Limitation will begin on December 23, 2020.
- 5/12/21-5/25/21: Timesheets need to be submitted by noon on Monday, May 24<sup>th</sup>.

# Getting Started with Zoom for Government

## Quick Reference Card

### Overview



**Zoom for Government (ZfG)** is a JIS approved application for conducting meetings and remote hearings within the Maryland Judiciary. While similar to the commercial version of Zoom, ZfG includes added security required when meeting internally and with the public.

Zoom for Government is web based and accessible both online and through a desktop client, which will be automatically downloaded to Judiciary devices. This QRC outlines the steps for logging into the ZfG desktop client from a Judiciary computer using AD credentials, as well as the steps to download ZfG on a personal computer or mobile device.

### Zoom Accounts

There are two (2) account types available for **Zoom for Government**:

**Standard/Basic:** All Judiciary employees have access to a standard account. This allows standard account users to host meetings up to 100 participants. If three (3) or more participants join, the meeting will systematically time-out after 40 minutes. The meeting time-out is a default setting that cannot be changed.

**Licensed:** Select Judiciary employees will also receive a licensed account by JIS. The licensed account user can host and record unlimited remote court hearings and select Judiciary functions.

### Logging in for the First Time

#### From a Computer with the Desktop Client Installed

Most Judiciary computers will have the desktop client already installed. To log in for the first time, take the following steps:

1. Double click on the **Zoom desktop client icon**.
2. Click **Sign In**.
3. Once on the Sign In page, click **Sign In with SSO**. The **Sign In with SSO** page will display.
4. **Ensure that it reads mdcourts.zoomgov.com** and click **Continue** to sign in with Active Directory credentials.



**Sign In with SSO**

[Continue](#)

#### From a Computer without the Desktop Client

##### Step 1: Download the Desktop Client

1. Navigate to <https://zoomgov.com/download>.
2. Click on the **Download** button. An .exe file will appear at the bottom of the screen.
3. Click on the **Zoominstaller.exe** file to automatically install the desktop client of Zoom for Government.

**Zoom Client for Meetings**

The web browser client will download automatically when you start or join your first Zoom meeting, and is also available for manual download here.

Download

Version 5.0.5 (26213.0602)

##### Step 2: Log in to Zoom (via the web)

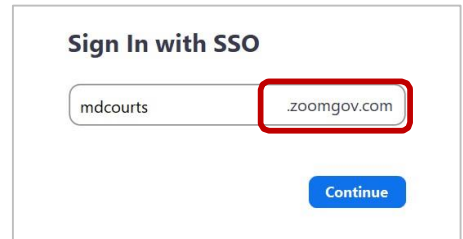
1. Navigate to <https://mdcourts.zoomgov.com/>.
2. Click **Sign in**. The Sign in page for the Maryland Judiciary will automatically display.
3. Enter the email and password used to login to Judiciary systems, e.g., [firstname.lastname@courts.state.md.us](mailto:firstname.lastname@courts.state.md.us) and Windows password (Active Directory credentials).
4. Click **Sign in**. The MD Courts Zoom for Government home page will display.



**Step 2: Create a brief initial meeting**



1. In the upper right corner of the screen, click **Host a Meeting**. If prompted, click **Open Zoom Meetings**. Click **Join with Computer Audio** to start the meeting.
2. After a few seconds, click the red **End** button in the bottom right corner of the meeting window.



**Step 3: Log in to Zoom (Desktop Client)**

5. Open the Zoom desktop client and click **Sign In**.
6. Once on the Sign In page, click **Sign In with SSO**. The **Sign In with SSO** page will display.
7. **Ensure that it reads mdcourts.zoomgov.com** and click **Continue** to sign in with Active Directory credentials. Zoom for Government is now accessible from the desktop client.

**From a Mobile Device**

**Step 1: Download the App**

1. Navigate to the Apple Store or Google Play and search for Zoom Cloud Meetings.
2. Download the app to the mobile device, tablet, or iPad.



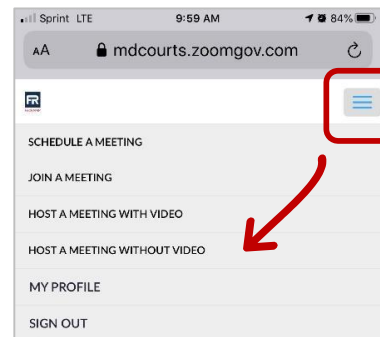
**Step 2: Log in to Zoom (via the web)**

1. Once the app is downloaded, open the browser on your mobile device and navigate to <https://mdcourts.zoomgov.com/>.
2. Click **Sign in**. The sign in page for the Maryland Judiciary will display.
3. Enter the email and password used to login to Judiciary systems, e.g., [firstname.lastname@courts.state.md.us](mailto:firstname.lastname@courts.state.md.us) and Windows password (Active Directory credentials).
4. Click **Sign in**. The Zoom for Government home page will display in the browser.



**Step 3: Create a brief initial meeting**

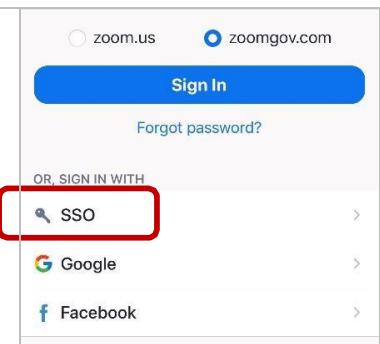
1. In the upper right corner of the screen, click the **Menu** icon.
2. Click **Host a meeting without video**. When prompted with **Open this page in "Zoom"?**, click **Open**.
3. The app will open with the meeting. Notification prompts may pop up. Select **Don't Allow** or **Allow** as desired.
4. Prompts to access the camera and microphone will display. Click **OK**.
5. If a **Join Audio** prompt appears, click **Cancel**.



6. After a few seconds, click the red **End** button in the top right corner of the meeting window, then **End Meeting for All**.

**Step 4: Log in to Zoom app**

1. Open the Zoom app. Select the radio button for **zoomgov.com**.
2. At the bottom, click **SSO** as the sign in option. Enter **mdcourts** as the company domain and click **Go**.
3. Enter Active Directory credentials and click **Sign in**. Zoom for Government is now active on the app.



**Need help? Contact the Service Desk @**

<https://mdcourts.service-now.com>

[mdcourts@service-now.com](mailto:mdcourts@service-now.com)

410.260.1114

## IN MEMORIAM

\* *Hon. Vincent J. Femia*\* *Hon. Sue-Ellen Hantman*


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**The Judicial Council's Senior Judges Committee**

Hon. James A. Kenney III, Chair  
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 Hon. Gale E. Rasin, Senior Judge  
 Hon. Thurman H. Rhodes, Senior Judge  
 Hon. Nancy B. Shuger, Senior Judge  
  
 Eliana Pangelinan, Staff

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**Retirement Services Contact List**
**Maryland State Retirement and Pension System**

1-800-492-5909

Charelle Saunders  
[csaunders@sra.state.md.us](mailto:csaunders@sra.state.md.us)  
 410-625-5515

**Social Security Administration (SSA)**

1-800-772-1213

[www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)
**Centers for Medicare and Medicaid**

1-800-633-4227

[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)
**Maryland Supplement Retirement Plan (MSRP)**

1-800-545-4730

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