

News Release

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Tucson City Court Expands Public Access by Live Streaming First Appearances on YouTube

Effective today, first appearance proceedings will be streamed live on YouTube. First appearances are held every day of the year at 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. All in custody defendants are required by Arizona law to be seen by a judicial officer within 24 hours of arrest. During this hearing, a defendant is advised of the charges, the right to an attorney, conditions of release and the next hearing date. The court has no plans to record the video streams. Digital audio recordings are still available by contacting City Court.

For many years, Tucson City Court has participated in an effective collaboration with Superior Court, Pima County Consolidated Justice Court and all of the other justice and municipal courts in Pima County and local justice agencies to connect remotely with the jail and conduct first appearance hearings twice per day. This program is known as 2XIA (Twice per Day Initial Appearance).

In 2020, it became obvious that the court's limited video capability was insufficient to meet the remote hearing demands presented by the pandemic. In response, City Court initiated a major upgrade of the court's remote hearing capability. Remote hearing platforms such as Teams and Zoom enhance service by expanding the number of court participants who can appear and observe proceedings remotely. Pre-Covid, first appearances were the only hearings City Court heard by remote video technology. Now, the courts rely upon Teams and Zoom to conduct more than a third of hearings remotely. Presiding Judge Antonio Riojas, Jr. noted that "...in light of the pandemic lessons, the use of remote hearings will continue and they make court more accessible to the public."

City court magistrates have conducted first appearances by video for all Pima County cases for many years. However, the existing video technology only allowed a video connection between two locations; both of these locations were at the jail. The public would need to go to the jail to observe the proceedings. Presiding Judge Antonio Riojas stated that the "...new remote hearing platforms are simpler, have more robust features and are more stable than the technology it replaces."

To connect to a live proceeding - [tcc crt15 - YouTube](#)

