



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF ARBITRATORS  
VIDEOCONFERENCING TASK FORCE

**Please be advised that the information below is provided as a courtesy by NAA members who have used Assistants. The information is for NAA Members only and may not be distributed to anyone who is not a member of the National Academy of Arbitrators. The publication of this list does not constitute an endorsement of any individual, except as stated by the arbitrator who has used the services of that assistant, by the Academy or by the Videoconferencing Task Force.**

### ASSISTANTS FOR VIDEOCONFERENCING

Videoconferencing requires an arbitrator to be willing not only to convene and conduct a hearing but also to manage all technical aspects of the videoconference platform. Many advocates may be willing to submit their dispute to a videoconference but may be concerned about how effectively they will be able to utilize the technical aspects of the platform. An arbitrator may want to consider the use of an assistant who has the necessary technical proficiency to manage the hearing thereby allowing the arbitrator and the advocates to focus on the substance of the hearing. NAA members who have used assistants have provided an overview of their experience.

**Gil Vernon**  
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- *I have had one remote hearing and the Parties wanted to use WebEx. I had familiarized myself with Zoom via the NAA resources but WebEx was new to me. The other factor that led me to employ an assistant was that in Minnesota there is a tradition of not using court reporters. So I was petrified as to how I was going to host the meeting technically speaking and listen and take notes.*

*I employed my son Nate Vernon to host the meeting and we set up a pre-hearing conference via WebEx, including Nate, to discuss how we were going to handle exhibits, breaks and other matters that might arise. Following Keith Greenberg's advice we kept it simple. Rather than create break-out rooms, people just left the meeting and rejoined. Rather than trying to post exhibits on the platform we all had pdf copies (exchanged ahead of time). For unanticipated exhibits we just emailed them to each other. It was easy to toggle back and forth from the meeting screen/window to whatever exhibit we needed.*

*It went smoothly. Nate has indicated he would be willing to help other folks. I will leave it to him and any member and/or the parties to agree to remuneration. [nate.vernon@gmail.com](mailto:nate.vernon@gmail.com)*

**Paula Knopf**

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- *I, and many other Canadians, are using a group of young people who have set themselves up as “facilitators” of Zoom hearings. They sign confidentiality agreements with me. They set up the meetings, with breakout rooms that I designate, and they send out the invitations to the Zoom meeting. They then “host” the meeting, letting people in and out of the various rooms and offer advice when needed about document sharing or internet problems.*

*While I think I could manage some or all of that, it is far easier for me to focus on the parties, the people and the issues when I don't have to worry about the technology.*

*The basic cost is \$400 Canadian for a hearing day. They can provide you with the full breakdown of their fee schedule. The parties realize that the cost is far less than a hotel boardroom or even the coffee for the day. You can contact them via their founder, Maddy Hearne, (the daughter of an arbitrator): [mhearne@firstclassfacilitation.ca](mailto:mhearne@firstclassfacilitation.ca)  
Their website is <https://www.firstclassfacilitation.ca/>*

**Jackie Drucker**

[jdrucker@druckerarbitration.com](mailto:jdrucker@druckerarbitration.com)

- *Nicole Ferguson has worked as one of my two assistants for nearly two years. She also is an Equity actor, currently on pandemic hiatus from the national tour of My Fair Lady, in which she understudies Eliza. Nicole is a quick study and rapidly developed an understanding of the arbitral process and appreciation for the work of arbitrators. Since March, she has provided support (and major saves) during countless Zoom hearings. We recently added WebEx to the repertoire, and she is adept at that platform, too. Nicole is nimble with exhibits and screen sharing/annotating, is able to seamlessly juggle participants and their various tech issues, and has a superb and reassuring screen and phone presence. Just as an aside, she also is studying accounting. I have Nicole on payroll as a part-time employee, so I cannot address her fees in this context, but I know that she will be happy to discuss mutually acceptable rates based on the project. Nicole Ferguson – (571) 214-4695  
[Nicole.j.m.ferguson@gmail.com](mailto:Nicole.j.m.ferguson@gmail.com)*

**C. Allen Pool**

[callenpool@comcast.net](mailto:callenpool@comcast.net)

- *Julianne Hamill is an experienced Court Reporter and also very experienced in the use of Zoom and Veritext as teleconferencing platforms.*

*She was very helpful to me in my first arbitration hearing conducted via a teleconferencing platform. Julieann Hamill Ertl (916-768-0460) [julieannhamillertl@gmail.com](mailto:julieannhamillertl@gmail.com)*

**Sylvia Skratek**  
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- *I had a Video Hearing during which I used a recent law school graduate to provide assistance throughout the hearing. She was amazing and put everyone at ease during the hearing. I initially worked with her for a couple hours a few days before the hearing to provide her an overview of what to expect. On the day of the hearing she and I signed in 1/2 hour prior to the participants. She set up all of the breakout rooms based on the list of participants that we had received a couple days before the hearing. She had all of the exhibits organized and ready to go. There was a flurry of documents that I had received the day before and I warned her that there would most likely be additional documents during the hearing. Once everyone was in the hearing she was not visible on the screen however if there was a technical glitch we would hear her calm voice explaining what the party needed to do (feedback from audio was the major glitch). She would also very calmly advise everyone to mute their microphone and stop their video when we went to a break or lunch. Most importantly she used the "share screen" to have an exhibit in front of everyone when it was being used by a witness. She had taken the time to organize the exhibits and tab them appropriately. I never had to tell her what exhibit to put on the screen. She just knew.*

*Several items were emailed to me during the hearing. I forwarded them to her and they were on the screen immediately. I also had to modify a "Consolidated Statement of Facts" at the beginning of the hearing. I made the modifications in Word, forwarded them to her, she converted to a PDF, and posted immediately. She then scrolled through the document as I explained the changes.*

*I had set up the meeting and sent out the invitations. She was the co-host however once we were into the session I changed her to the host. I could then relax, take notes, and let her manage the exhibits. She followed everything that was being said, knew what exhibit needed to be displayed, and scrolled through the exhibit as the advocate or witness was referencing a particular section.*

*While I am aware that many of us are knowledgeable and capable of convening a Video Hearing I found that the parties were extremely grateful when I advised them that there was assistance available for a small fee. I have offered her services in all of the video hearings that I have scheduled and in every single case the parties breathed a sigh of relief and quickly said "yes".*

*Her name is Elisheva Patterson: [elisheva.m.patterson@gmail.com](mailto:elisheva.m.patterson@gmail.com) (913-485-0188) [www.adctechservices.com](http://www.adctechservices.com). Her fee is \$50/hour USD; \$65/hour CDN. (Parties in both countries have readily agreed to her assistance).*