

# Attending QCAT by phone

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) is committed to actively resolving disputes in a way that is fair, just, accessible, quick and inexpensive.

## Can I attend my hearing by phone?

When a matter is listed for a hearing or other proceeding before QCAT, parties are expected to attend the tribunal in person and present their case. If you are not able to attend in person, you must make an application to QCAT prior to your hearing to ask for permission to attend by phone.

You **do not** need to make an application if you are attending a directions hearing. You will receive a *Notice of Hearing* advising the date, time and location of your proceeding. You will also receive an *Attendance Advice* which you can return to QCAT to indicate if you will attend in person or by phone.

## Before lodging an application

Before lodging an application to request to attend a hearing by phone, you should ask the other parties in your matter for their agreement (in writing) to you attending by phone. This agreement should be attached to your application when lodging it with QCAT. If you have been allocated a QCAT case manager they may assist you in this process.

## How to apply to attend by phone

To apply to attend the hearing via phone you need to lodge an [Application for attendance at hearing, compulsory conference or mediation by remote conferencing \(PDF, 358.7 KB\)](#) and provide a copy of this application to the other party. There is no fee to make an application to attend by phone.

Even if you have agreement from the other party, you still need to lodge the application at least three days prior to the hearing so the tribunal can make the final decision.

Your application should include the reasons you need to attend by phone and any documents to support the application.

## Who decides if I can attend by phone?

A QCAT member or adjudicator will make a decision on your application and consider issues including health reasons, distance, the type of proceeding, the complexity of the matter and the safety and security of parties.

In some circumstances, the Tribunal may arrange attendance via a video link.

## Who pays for the phone call?

Depending on circumstances including how many parties are attending the hearing by phone, QCAT will either contact you directly or provide details on joining a conference call to participate in the hearing.

QCAT will generally not pay for long distance or mobile phone calls to parties except if QCAT was going to sit in that location and cancelled a hearing. You are encouraged to use a landline to avoid any issues with mobile phone reception.

QCAT will not pay to connect parties who are overseas. Parties may phone into QCAT for the hearing at their own cost.

## Will a default decision be made if the party is not available over the phone when required?

Depending on the type and complexity of the hearing, if you have advised the tribunal you will attend by phone and then cannot be contacted, a decision may be made in your absence.

## Appearing via phone

When appearing at a proceeding via phone:

- be ready to start the hearing at least 15 minutes before the start time
- make sure you will not be interrupted during the call
- if using a telephone with a loudspeaker, test it is working before the hearing begins
- be prepared and have all your paperwork with you
- listen carefully to the other party and the Tribunal member. Do not interrupt or talk over anybody else
- all phone attendances/conversations are recorded just as if the proceeding was happening in the hearing room.

## Can I have an interpreter?

QCAT can organise for an interpreter to assist you during your hearing over the phone or via video link.

## More information

- [Practice Direction 2010/04 - Proceeding by remote conferencing](#)
- [Practice Direction 2014/1 – Hearing protocols](#)

A practice direction is a guideline providing more information on a QCAT process.