

## Notice

Date: September 25, 2020

To: General Authorities, General Officers, Area Seventies, and the following leaders in the United States and Canada:  
Stake, Mission, and District Presidents; Bishops and Branch Presidents; Stake, Ward, and Branch Councils; and Stake Technology Specialists

From: Office of the Presiding Bishopric  
Information and Communication Services Department

Subject: Guidelines for Using Virtual Meeting Technologies

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The First Presidency letter dated September 11, 2020, “[Safely Engaging in Church Meetings and Activities](#),” outlines principles and details to help leaders adjust Church meetings and activities due to COVID-19, whether in person or through technology. The following guidelines are provided to help local units make decisions about the use of technology for these meetings and activities.

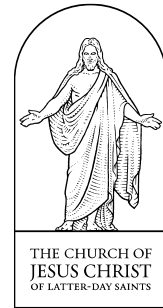
- **Ensure that technology does not become a distraction.** For sacrament meetings, a one-way streaming solution will avoid inadvertent interruptions that could be caused by those participating remotely. For class, quorum, and other meetings, an interactive two-way solution will support effective teaching.
- **Choose technology that will be easy for remote participants to use.** Whenever possible, take care to avoid choices that would exclude someone from worshipping due to resource constraints or technology complexities.
- **Preserve flexibility by avoiding significant equipment purchases and permanent meetinghouse modifications.** This can be done by focusing on simple solutions that can be adapted as needs, policies, conditions, and technologies evolve.
- **Call one or more assistant technology specialists for each unit,** and ensure that they have adequate training and support. To have access to the Webcast platform that is installed in some meetinghouses, a person’s calling must be recorded in Leader and Clerk Resources (LCR) as a ‘stake assistant technology specialist.’

Additional details on selecting and using technology are in the enclosure to this notice and on the Church’s technology forum, [tech.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/forum](https://tech.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/forum). This forum will be used to share ideas and provide current best practices.

# Guidelines for Using Virtual Meeting Technologies

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Wards and branches will generally have two types of meetings: noninteractive and interactive. Noninteractive events, or broadcasts, allow members to view or listen remotely, but participation by speaking or asking questions is limited to those physically gathered. Sacrament meetings and similar meetings are typically held as noninteractive events. In most cases, class, quorum, and other meetings will work best as interactive events, allowing all participants to contribute thoughts and ideas.

Selecting appropriate hardware and meeting platforms, along with proper setup and preparation for each type of meeting, will help ensure a good experience for members and leaders.

## Hardware

Under the direction of area leadership, members may volunteer the use of personal technology and areas may allow stakes and districts to use member-owned technology in order to avoid purchasing laptops, high-end cameras, and other expensive technology. For events, including sacrament meetings, a member's mobile device can originate the broadcast. All the meeting platforms described below, including the Church's Meetinghouse Webcast platform, support using a mobile phone to broadcast an event. Using a mobile phone mounted on a tripod or microphone boom near the podium and directly connected to the building's audio system can provide a high-quality viewing experience.

## Meeting Platforms

Multiple meeting platforms are available for noninteractive and interactive events. Local units are encouraged to use whichever platform is most familiar to members in their area.

Noninteractive events help minimize the risk of accidental or intentional meeting interruptions by those participating remotely and are recommended for sacrament meetings and similar meetings. Several platforms best suited for *noninteractive events* include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Meetinghouse Webcast** is a Church-provided platform that offers an easy-to-view experience for members. Meetinghouse Webcast uses technology similar to that used for general conference and can accommodate many viewers. Software is available to allow a member's mobile phone to originate the webcast. Information on how to use Meetinghouse Webcast can be found on the [Help Center](#) [Meetinghouse Technology](#) support site and on the Church's technology forum at [tech.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/forum](http://tech.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/forum).

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- **YouTube Live** is free and offers a familiar experience that will likely be available on members' phones, TVs, and devices. YouTube Live events should be unpublished and deleted after the meeting. In some areas of the world, there are restrictions on showing youth in live events; take care to abide by all terms of use. Members who have configured YouTube's restricted mode to limit content will need to temporarily disable this restriction to view YouTube Live events.
- **Facebook Live** is also free and familiar. Members can view events without having Facebook accounts. Since viewers have the ability to react and comment during the meeting, it is important to encourage viewers beforehand to avoid using this capability, thus limiting distractions to others.

Many options are available for interactive events, such as class, quorum, and other meetings. In most cases these meetings can be supported by free options that have time and participant limits. Platforms well suited for *interactive events* include the following:

- **Google Meet** is free and is used by many schools, providing a familiar use experience for youth participants. It is well suited for interactive meetings.
- **Zoom** is a generally familiar platform well suited for interactive meetings. The free version has a 40-minute meeting time limit, which may be adequate for most meetings. Depending on the number of meetings that need to exceed this limit, the paid option may be cost prohibitive.

Other options are available for noninteractive and interactive events. When considering all available and reputable options, pay attention to how familiar and simple they are for members, what local restrictions may exist, and overall cost.

### Setup and Preparation

Paying attention to several details during setup will greatly improve the quality of experience for remote viewers. These details will be most consistently managed if there is at least one trained assistant technology specialist assigned to each unit. These specialists will typically focus on supporting sacrament meetings but also can be a resource to teachers and learners who use technology for class, quorum, and other meetings. The Church's technology forum at [tech.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/forum](http://tech.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/forum) will serve as a resource to assistant technology specialists and stake technology specialists, providing a place to ask questions, share ideas, and get additional details on recommended solutions.