



AMERICAN  
ASSOCIATION OF  
ELECTRONIC  
REPORTERS AND  
TRANSCRIBERS

## SOUNDBYTES

*Your Glimpse of Everything You Need to Know About  
What's Happening at AAERT*

Visit our Website

For this issue of Sound Bytes we asked the outgoing board members about their service on the board. We also asked our incoming board members about their thoughts on the future of AAERT. Below are their questions and responses.

Outgoing board members. Thank you for your service and dedication:



**Marybeth Burke-Dring. Owner, Burke Court Reporting:**

1) What advice would you give to incoming board members?

Be open to other's ideas. You are there to serve the industry as a whole and not just the sector you represent.

2) What is AAERT's greatest challenge going forward?

Maintaining an organization that meets the needs of both small and large firms, the court sector, and independent contractors.

3) As a board member, what was your greatest achievement?

I was treasurer for two years and was very involved in the changing over from one management company to another. Although, there were some minor hiccups seeing the transition over as seamlessly as possible.

4) What's next for you in your professional life?

Continuing to grow and operate Burke Court Reporting & Transcription.

**K.C. Corbin, CER, CET.** Owner of KC Scope & Scribe (scoping/transcribing business), and court reporter:



1) What advice would you give to incoming board members?

Keep in mind who the association is for, and always make your decisions based on them.

2) What is AAERT's greatest challenge going forward?

Revising our certification program and getting the word out why certification is so important in our profession, no matter what the method is.

3) As a board member, what was your greatest achievement?

I tried to bring some structure to the grading process. As long as there is a human element, there will be challenges. But we worked very hard to base our grading on documented grammar and punctuation standards.

4) What's next for you in your professional life?

I will continue to work as an official reporter and transcribing my work. Courts are so busy coming out of COVID!

#### **Incoming board members:**



**Benjamin Jaffe, CER.** Manager of Digital Training and Development for BlueLedge, an AAERT-approved online training center focused on teaching digital court reporting and legal transcription:

1) What do you see as the disruptive forces impacting the court reporting and transcribing industry, and how do you think AAERT can stay relevant?

I think the disrupting force is going to be investment companies who see the industry as a way to make a quick buck. We have already seen them start to invest in or create companies that advertise based on price rather than quality and use technology/innovation/AI as a way to market themselves. AAERT needs to reinforce the quality standards of the industry and make sure their certifications are recognized by every courthouse, agency, and law firm as the standard of excellence in this field.

2) What are the top challenges you see coming for the board in the next year?

The top challenges we are going to face will be centered around advocacy and awareness of our industry and the professionals who work in it. We will also be faced with challenges around certification, growth, and new technology.

3) What skills, connections, resources, and expertise do you have to offer to navigate AAERT through the new post-COVID reality?

Having a background in multimedia and TV production, audio/video technology is nothing new to me. COVID exposed the need for a more technologically connected world and the need for solutions. Additionally, I have an MBA which will help with the management and business operations of the organization as we seek to grow and expand. Lastly, being part of the largest provider of digital court reporting and legal transcription education, I understand the needs of our new members and students.

4) What new opportunities for electronic reporting and transcribing do you see in the post-COVID environment?

I believe COVID brought technology to the forefront of the industry and made attorneys more comfortable with audio and video recording/transmission of information. This will

help digital court reporting prosper even more than it already has.

5) How does AAERT increase member retention, member engagement, and encourage certification?

I believe this is done by answering the question, "What have you done for me lately?" AAERT needs to focus on member benefits and what they do for the industry to promote the growth and security of jobs.



**Margaret Morgan, CER, CET.** Official electronic court reporter for the Minnesota Judicial Branch:

1) What do you see as the disruptive forces impacting the court reporting and transcribing industry, and how do you think AAERT can stay relevant?

Obviously, the misinformation constantly being broadcast by NCRA is disruptive to the digital reporting industry. At times I want to respond to correct the misinformation; other times I want to ignore it and keep moving forward providing an accurate and complete digital record. AAERT requesting to do presentations at industry conferences like NACM, judicial conferences, bar associations, National Center for State Courts, etc. Digital reporting has improved greatly over the years and it continues to improve. Can AAERT do a better job at informing the professionals who rely on it every day? Perhaps collaborating with the digital reporting platforms to offset costs.

2) What are the top challenges you see coming for the board in the next year?

Certification, membership retention.

3) What skills, connections, resources, and expertise do you have to offer to navigate AAERT through the new post-COVID reality?

I have worked for the Minnesota Judicial Branch since 1992, so my background is strictly with the court system. I captured the record for the first jury trial held in our district with Covid restrictions. It was a lot of work and I learned a lot. For almost two years now I have been reporting 95% of court hearings using Zoom. I have learned a lot! The judicial branch has learned that conducting hearings remotely is very efficient in some cases. Remote hearings will continue in some form. ADG has done a great job with the Whova platform and guiding us through virtual conferences.

4) What new opportunities for electronic reporting and transcribing do you see in the post-COVID environment?

I expect there will be more remote court work and deposition work going forward. Electronic court reporting has been dealing with technology forever. Because of that, I think we have a better understanding of technology and electronic court reporters can adapt to the technology changes.

5) How does AAERT increase member retention, member engagement, and encourage certification?

Identify geographic locations in the US and Canada, maybe elsewhere, that have a high population of electronic court reporting used in the court system and then forward promotional/marketing materials to those reporters and district administrators or, even better, host a free informational session about AAERT, certification, and association benefits.

Include testimonials from current members and court managers; or contact a court that employs electronic court reporters and offers five free memberships for one year. Let the administrator choose the reporters who receive the membership and hope that those reporters would contact others in their area about the benefits of AAERT.

## **Making Waves on Your Behalf**

*From the Advocacy Committee*



The Association's mission of awareness, understanding, government acceptance and recognition is spearheaded by the Advocacy Committee, chaired by Aryeh Bak. Formerly known as the Government Relations Committee, the new Advocacy Committee has a broader mission to not only track and respond to the changing regulatory landscape, but to also promote the industry to the broader public in an effort to expand the use of electronic reporting and transcribing and the opportunities available to its professionals. AAERT is proud of the work this committee is doing and is excited to see it grow and blossom.

One of the most recent actions of the committee was responding to California's AB 716, see the letter below drafted by the Advocacy Committee:

Mr. Hoshino:

I am writing to you in my capacity as President of the American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers (AAERT; [www.aaert.org](http://www.aaert.org)). AAERT is a national professional association representing nearly 1000 individuals in California and throughout the United States tasked with producing the official record of court hearings, depositions, and other legal matters.

The State of California has been deliberating CA AB 716, Court Access. The bill is intended to reflect the reality of a changing landscape due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the recent considerable technological improvements that make remote hearings possible.

Our membership very much supports the essence of what AB 716 is trying to achieve. At the same time, certain specific language included in the bill is problematic and could prove to be devastating to the Judiciary's ability to create a record of court hearings.

The proposed language includes the following statement:

(c) (1) Transcripts produced from remote access recordings shall not be deemed to be official verbatim records and are inadmissible for purposes of any court proceeding, including appeals.

It appears that the intent of the bill is to apply this clause to unauthorized transcripts produced by participants to a hearing or members of the public. That being said, as it is written without any qualifying language, this plain reading of this clause could be interpreted to mean that no transcript could ever be produced from a fully remote hearing. That couldn't possibly be the intent of the legislators, nor would that be sensible from the perspective of the Court operating in a post-COVID environment.

On behalf of AAERT we respectfully request that your office comments as such and

request that clause (c)(1) be explicitly and expressly limited to apply to transcripts produced by anyone other than those appointed by the Court. This small clarification to the Bill – certainly consistent with the intent of the drafters – would allow for courts in the State of California to continue to facilitate and conduct remote hearings and have official court transcripts produced from those hearings.

This bill currently resides with the Senate Appropriations Committee and is scheduled to be discussed on August 16th, 2021. We urge your immediate consideration of the ramifications of this bill and - in order to avoid significant delays in the courts' abilities to work through an increasingly growing case backlog - that you express any reservations or proposed modifications to the Senate Appropriations Committee, as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Janet Harris, CER, CET, CDVS  
President, AAERT

If you would like to get involved with the Advocacy Committee or any of the other AAERT committees, please email [aaert@aaert.org](mailto:aaert@aaert.org).

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## From the President's Desk

*From Janet Harris, AAERT President*

Members,

For those members who joined our virtual Annual Meeting of Members and conference in June, I am confident you were as impressed as I was with the wonderful array of speakers and topics. Our Professional Development Committee has worked especially hard during the pandemic to ensure we are delivering high-quality content to our members. I am grateful we have such a committed, dedicated group that is exceeding our expectations. Thank you to Ilene Watson, Chair, and her committee members for all of your extra efforts. We are planning to hold our 2022 conference in person and hope to see you all there!



In June, we elected new directors, Margaret Morgan, CER, CET, and Benjamin Jaffe, CER. After our July summer break, our new board kick-off meeting begins with a 2-day orientation for the board led by another new addition to AAERT. Bill Carney, AAERT's new executive director, will lead the orientation and planning for what already looks like a very promising year. Bill has dedicated his entire 35-year professional career to helping membership and trade associations grow and prosper, first as an association marketing consultant and practitioner, and for the past 11 years as an executive director for several associations operating within an association management company setting. His expertise includes growing membership bases and boosting retention rates, leveraging strategic partnerships, and developing and deploying sound fiscal strategies. As a former director of several national associations, we are very excited to be the beneficiary of Bill's expertise.



Additionally, Rose Austin, our membership and certification liaison, will be training a replacement as she moves to new opportunities. Elizabeth Coleman is taking the position of Manager, Certification, and Fund Development with our management firm, and will be taking on AAERT membership and certification management responsibilities. Elizabeth has more than 10 years of experience creating and leading fundraising initiatives for local and national nonprofits. Her accomplishments include creating a fundraising event that drew 1500 attendees and raised \$500,000 in one hour! I'm delighted to welcome both Bill and Elizabeth to join our staff and support us on our path of success.

In nearly every conversation I have had with members recently, everyone is extremely busy with backlogs of work. We have received new applications for digital reporter and transcription programs to be offered nationally. If you haven't pursued certification yet, I strongly consider you to maximize your earning potential, and ability to work in jurisdictions that require it. This is a great time to be a certified digital reporter, as they are in demand nearly everywhere.

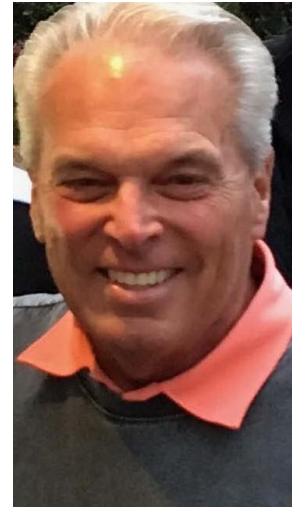
Stay tuned for more exciting news every month with this dynamic board and staff!

Janet Harris, CER, CET, CDVS

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## **AAERT Welcomes its new Executive Director, Bill Carney**

Bill Carney has dedicated his entire 35-year professional career to helping membership and trade associations grow and prosper, first as an association marketing consultant and practitioner and for the past 11 years as an executive director for several associations operating within an Association Management company setting.



Bill successfully managed, among others, the American Academy of Craniofacial Pain, the American Association for Aerosol Research, the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association, and the National Association of Corporate Treasurers. His considerable success over the years is based on his ability to grasp and then master all aspects of association management.

He holds a master's degree in journalism from the University of Maryland at College Park (Fear the Turtle), and his writing, speaking and comprehension skills are exceptional. These qualities have proven invaluable in serving his client associations.

Team members and clients alike find him to be an energetic, reliable, confident, empathetic, decisive, and very likable innovator. Most importantly, he's a leader who is able to forge strong alliances, because people believe in him.

Charitable causes include the American Stroke Association, Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition, and the National Kidney Foundation. He's proud to have been invited to serve as the officiant at two weddings to date.

Bill has two grown and very productive sons, a beautiful and talented daughter-in-law, and two preschool grandchildren. He grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, and maintains a strong allegiance to the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team. He is addicted to golf, plays tennis, runs, and enjoys the beach in his spare time.

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***October 6th, 2021***

***Digital Court Reporter and  
Transcriber Day***

***Watch your email for more  
details!***

### **The Smartest Person in the Room**

Jen Krueger, Associate Professor, Cuyahoga Community College

Life as a court reporter or transcriber leads to a career of continuing education. Seriously, who else do you know who gets the opportunity to learn about such things as a medical procedure designed to improve heart function, the best way to install an asphalt driveway, the value of a racehorse, and the negotiation of a multimillion-dollar divorce settlement in a single week? Observing the legal proceedings related to any of those topics and countless others provides a bird's eye view to the court reporter and the perfect opportunity for the transcriber to safely eavesdrop!



Beyond watching and listening, annotating, creating the Lists of Important Terms, researching, verifying, transcribing, and proofreading builds knowledge about a great variety of subjects as well as an extensive vocabulary. But the learning doesn't stop at the end of the proceeding or transcript page. To be the best reporter or transcriber possible, one must pursue continuing education.

AAERT's conferences and webinars are chockful of ways to boost your professional development. This past June, the virtual annual conference "A World of Opportunity" brought reporters and transcribers together to learn better ways to annotate and some transcribing tricks to make that work more efficient. Managing social media and marketing are so important in today's world; a session focused on those areas of interest energized attendees to address those concerns. A behind-the-scenes look at the Derek Chauvin trial was an incredible look into the logistics involved in managing that situation. The evolution of artificial intelligence is all around us and a session on that topic taught us how it has grown, where it is going, and gave us a few laughs along the way.

AAERT's webinars are available to view at our convenience. Follow up that discussion of AI from the conference with a webinar on embracing and annotating with AI. This last year and a half have moved many of us from in-person proceedings to the remote capture of

the record. There are webinars focused on managing that transition. Ensuring you are using the very best tools to transcribe only leads to professional improvement.

Don't limit yourself only to these excellent resources, but take advantage of other ways to continue your education. Be aware of news events and when you encounter anything unfamiliar, do some further reading on your own. A quick Google search leads to an unlimited array of related information. The more you know about anything trending, the more easily you will manage your professional work.

Sign up for a word-for-the-day email and increase your vocabulary on a daily basis. Read books and magazines of personal interest as well as a professional concern. Listen carefully when engaged in conversations and benefit from the knowledge of friends and acquaintances. What you hear during one day, whether related to work or not, will undoubtedly be heard again in your work. Be the best you can be at your work and never forget that your career allows you to be the smartest person in the room anywhere you go!

For information on Tri C's program, visit [www.tri-c.edu](http://www.tri-c.edu) or call 216-987-5214.

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### **Court Reporting in the Digital Age: Key insights from digital-focused industry experts**

Michal Roche, Director of Marketing, Verbit

What does the rapid adoption of technology in legal over the last 18 months mean for the future of court reporting? What will be the impact of many legal professionals, including judges, stenographers, commissioners, and magistrates all retiring earlier than expected?



Verbit gathered court reporting and legal industry experts from PwC, STTI, and TheRecordXchange [live to share their predictions](#) for the future of court reporting now that many professionals are returning to in-person meetings, events, and proceedings. The overwhelming consensus is that the tech know-how that professionals learned to adopt - many begrudgingly - will not go to waste. Technology will continue to cause shifts in the legal world and offer exciting opportunities to professionals willing to incorporate innovations into their workflows for much greater efficiencies.

Digital technology has "been able to fill a gap that the court reporting industry has needed for quite some time" because of the stenographer shortage, according to Louanne Rawls, a 15-year veteran in digital court reporting. She spoke live on her appreciation for AI-powered tools that support her work, stating that the technology is "an asset to digital court reporters, and it's just amazing."

Now, Rawls continues to practice as a digital court reporter and uses AI-based solutions provided by Verbit's speech-to-text transcription technology while embracing her new role of teaching students who are looking to enter the profession.

Digital court reporters must complete training before they can start working in courtrooms and preserving deposition records. Rawls encourages digital court reporters to seek



certification from AAERT. She explains that obtaining such a credential will provide "attorneys that you're working with... assurance that you are trained properly and they will have a professional that will be working with them to provide that accurate transcript."

Read more helpful content from Verbit here: <https://hubs.li/H0SMNDT0>

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## Thank you AAERT Charter Sponsors!

### PLATINUM



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### GOLD



**For information on becoming a sponsor, please email [aaert@aaert.org](mailto:aaert@aaert.org)**

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## **Welcome New**

### **AAERT Members!**

Victor Aldrich of Fort Lauderdale, FL  
Andrew Anastasio of Jackson, NJ  
Alix Andrew of Scottsdale, AZ  
Victoria Applegarth of Rapid City, SD  
Stephanie Austin of Jacksonville, FL  
Kelsey Backhaus of Mandan, ND  
Abigail Bayne of Staten Island, NY  
Lorraine Berardi of Port Jefferson, NY  
Brittany Berry of Georgetown, KY  
Carolyn Blakeslee Proeber of Ocala, FL  
Samantha Brushaber of Milwaukee, WI  
Delaney Caleau of Denver, CO  
Amanda Chetnik of Janesville, WI  
Deja Christian of Albuquerque, NM  
Cynthia Clark of Tampa, FL  
Cindy Cobb of Washington, NC  
Josephine Conte of Englewood, CO  
Lorie Cook of Salix, PA  
Monica Cook of Randolph, WI  
Ciara Cravens of Marion, NY  
Elizabeth Decker of Epping, ND  
Lilly Duong of Commack, NY  
Courtney Evenson of Cavalier, ND  
Erin Flynn of Laurel, MD  
Susan Fullar of Clinton Twp., MI  
Alexis Gallo of Reno, NV  
Barbara Glenn of Arcadia, OK  
Carmen Harper of Lubbock, TX  
Annette Hipshire of Sharps Chapel, TN  
Chloe Howard of Coss Creek of KY  
Lorena Howell of Royse City, TX  
Tiffany Hughes of Portage, WI  
Valentina Jimenez Rueda of Hollywood, FL  
Kimberly Jones of Manchester, CT  
Kristen Keegan of Bismarck, ND

## **Our Newly**

### **Certified Members**

Victor Aldrich, CER of Fort Lauderdale, FL  
Jessica Allen, CER of Orlando, FL  
Amy Anderson, CET of McHenry, IL  
Tracey Beatty, CET of Cambridge, Ontario  
Dayna Breitegam, CER of Charlotte, NC  
Trinita Brown, CER of Columbia, SC  
Reyna Cruz, CER of Fort Meyers, FL  
Lilly Duong, CER of Commack, NY  
Lisa Freeman, CER CET of Beloit, WI  
Jena Geist, CER of Lincoln, NE  
Lisa Gomez, CER of Ocala, FL  
Jessie Gross, CET of Idaho Falls, ID  
Alexis Hill, CER of Windermere, FL  
Diana Hirth, CET of Dallas, TX  
Tiffany Hughes, CER of Portage, WI  
Valentina Jimenez Rueda, CER of Hollywood, FL  
Robin Johansen, CER of Grand Folks, ND  
Adam Marcus, CER of Goshen, NY  
Giverny Marshall, CET of Powell River, British Columbia  
Ana Mera Valera, CER of Bronx, NY  
Angela Meta, CER Bluffton, SC  
Melissa Moy, CER of Wauwatosa, WI  
Christian Naaden, CET of Menifee, CA  
Daniel O'Connell-Santos, CET of Lynch Station, VA  
Diane Otto, CET of Milltown, WI  
Karen Ortega, CER of Tavares, TX  
Misty Patterson, CER of Cape Coral, FL  
Jacobey Radtke, CET of Plumas Lake, CA

Larry Lara of Palm Desert, CA  
Jeanna Lichtenberg of La Vista, NE  
Katherine LoCicero of Milwaukee, WI  
Bonnie Madoerin of Weatherford, TX  
Surina Mahadeo of Poughquag, NY  
Sarah Mangold of Iowa City, Iowa  
Adam Marcus of Goshen, NY  
Jarette Marin of Brooklyn, NY  
Lori McCalvin of Leesburg, GA  
Jamie McPeak of Mooresville, NC  
Ana Mera Valera of Bronx, NY  
Molly Merryman of Chico, CA  
Angela Meta of Bluffton, SC  
Trina Michael of Gig Harbor, WA  
Laura Miller of Harrison, NJ  
Alicia Morales of Royal Palm Beach, FL  
Laura Morin of Beaverton, OR  
Stephen Mortensen of Chicago, IL  
JoLene Nollenberg of Weyauwega, WI  
Lisa O'Shea of Stamford, CT  
Claudia Owen of Clearwater, SC  
Cynthia Peacock of Clarkesville, GA  
Codi Potts of Lees Summit, MO  
Amy Ragsdale of Hemingford, NE  
Carla Ramos of Costa Mesa, CA  
Denise Ranauro of Matawan, NJ  
Robert Reed Abernathy of Calhoun, GA  
Jeni Reisinger of Arlington, TN  
Valerie Richter of West Allis, WI  
Raquel Rivera of Los Angeles, CA  
Grace Roa of Houston, TX  
Andrea Rodriguez of Hialeah, FL  
Vincent Romeo of Kinsale, VA  
RaeGan Roque of Shreveport, LA  
Kari Rusinko of Forest Hills, NY  
Jade Sabol of Winter Park, FL  
Raj Sam of Normal, IL  
Patricia Senate of Acton, CA  
Jessica Shaham of Redondo Beach, CA  
AJ Simeone of Pittsburgh, PA  
Katherine Snedigar of Hayward, CA  
Sara Stavchansky of Dallas, TX  
Hannah Story-Gore of El Paso, TX  
Adil Syed of Port Saint Lucie, FL  
Dee Torres-Roa of Houston, TX  
Collins Ukegbu of Roswell, GA  
Janet Wallravin of Burnt Hills, NY  
Pamela Warren of Lake Zurich, IL  
Brigitte Werts of Bella Vista, AR

Jeni Reisinger, CER of Arlington, TN  
Andrea Rodriguez, CER of Hialeah, FL  
Clara Rubin, CET of Rehovot, Israel  
Kari Rusinko, CER of Forest Hills, NY  
Sara Stavchansky, CET of Dallas, TX  
Stacy Stewart, CER of Mesa, AZ  
Phyllis Sullivan, CET of Chicago, IL  
Sherod Sutton, CER of Tallahassee, FL  
Dee Torres-Roa, CER of Houston, TX  
Michele Valliere, CET of Cape Coral, FL  
Debra Williams, CER of Key Largo, FL  
Jordann Williams, CER of Miami, FL  
David Wieczorek, CER of Grafton, WI  
Brittany Wollin, CER of Grand Folks, ND

## CONGRATULATIONS!

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Surely you have heard some digital Court Reporting Myths:

"Digital reporters are just button pushers."  
"Audio is bad and not monitored, resulting in too many inaudible notations."  
"Transcripts are farmed out to overseas vendors."  
"They aren't certified."  
"They have little to no training or education."  
"The transcript quality is bad."

These are just a few of the many myths surrounding our industry. Can you think of any more? If so, AAERT would like to hear from you!

We are looking for one-minute video clips of either more "myths" or of you "busting the myths." Be CREATIVE! We would love to hear stories or personal testimonials. You will earn 0.1 CEU for your submission and be entered into a contest to win a \$25 gift card.

All submissions need to be in mp4 format and must be submitted to [aaert@aaert.org](mailto:aaert@aaert.org) no later than September



10, 2021, to be considered. Your video may be used in an upcoming webinar or in a future event at the sole discretion of AAERT.

Share your myths today and help us bust all of the misconceptions about our industry!

## Tech Corner: Video Conferencing Technology into the Future

*From AAERT Communications Committee Chair Benjamin Jaffe, CER*



As remote proceedings and meetings have become more popular and necessary due to COVID-19, it is clear that the use of video conferencing technology to conduct legal matters is here to stay.

Many attorneys have said they like the convenience, time saving, and relative ease of remote proceedings while others envision a hybrid model where one party may be at a remote location. Either way, this technology is part of the future of court reporting, and it is important to know how it works and what to look for when providing a remote environment for your clients.

### Security

Making sure the record is safe is one of the primary responsibilities of a court reporter. This starts with choosing a professional video conferencing platform designed for business rather than socialization. A professional video conferencing platform should employ most, if not all, of the following:



### End to End Encryption

Encryption is used to make sure that when data is moving from place to place no one else can decode it. Think of this like a message written using the Rosetta Stone that can only be deciphered if you have a duplicate stone on the other side. End to end speaks to the fact that the data is encrypted from all participants to the server and back to the participants and that in no place does the data move without security.

### Unique Meeting IDs

Many video conferencing companies assign a room to each user when they sign up, in my case it would always be "Ben's Room #123456789" for me to use whenever I want to start a meeting. But they should also have the option to create a unique room just for that meeting so that if you need to post it somewhere or send it to a group of people, they do not have access to your room forever.

### Room Passwords

Along the same lines of a unique meeting ID, you also want a unique password to be generated every time a room is made to ensure that those who should not be in your room cannot get access. In the early days of the pandemic, people would guess the 9 digital numbers for the room ID and just get into a room. Establishing a password stops that. Additionally, the popularity of videoconferencing technology has made companies increase the room IDs to longer than 9 digits and to include numbers and letters.

### Host/Organizer/Presenter/Admin Controls

Most video conferencing platforms give additional control to the organizer of the meeting, sometimes called the host. This allows the person to enable extra features, mute participants, and even kick someone out of the room. Additionally, they can usually control



the start and end of the meeting so people cannot get into the room until the organizer arrives.

### **Waiting Rooms**

Waiting rooms are a relatively new but popular feature that allows people to join the video conference but not be fully admitted into the room. Then the organizer can let people in all at once or one person at a time. This is incredibly helpful if you do not want the witness sitting in a virtual room with a particular side of the case. Maybe it is a plaintiff witness, but the defense has not arrived yet. It also allows an organizer to screen who is coming in the room before they have the privilege to speak or participate.

### **Tools**

Many video conferencing providers have an additional feature that can be very helpful to remote proceedings. Some of the features I look out for are below:

#### **Recording**

Depending on the setup of the legal proceeding and the clients involved it may be beneficial to record the proceeding as the organizer of the meeting so that you can have a backup to your audio record. The best videoconferencing software systems even allow you to record the channels of the participants' audio separately which can really help the transcribers for remote proceedings when it is more likely that people will talk over each other.



#### **Screen Sharing**

The ability for both the organizer and the participants to share their screens can help quite a bit with exhibit distribution. Most platforms that have this feature also allow the organizer to block participants from sharing so that they control who is sharing what and when.

#### **Annotations/Drawing/Whiteboard**

In many legal proceedings, lawyers will ask witnesses to illustrate documents. This could be where they were standing, where an accident occurred, the steps they believed that happened, or a number of other things. To do this in the virtual world, a video conferencing platform needs to have the ability to allow users to draw and/or mark when screen sharing. They should also be able to output the marked document so that it can be saved as an exhibit.

These are just some of the key features of a quality video conferencing platform that will help you run remote proceedings into the future.

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## **Join an AAERT Committee**

AAERT is looking for members to join its Advocacy, Membership, Certification, Communications, Professional Development, and Leadership Development Committees. Anyone who is interested in sharing their passion and talents is encouraged to join! Fill out the application and email it back to [aaert@aaaert.org](mailto:aaert@aaaert.org)

[Committee Application](#)

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## **Stay Safe**

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