



## How to Avoid “Zoombombing” for Tennessee Municipal and County Governments

April 6, 2020

---

Now that local governments are transitioning temporarily to online public meetings, we must be mindful of, and prepared to deal with, a new hazard--the Zoombomb.

Zoombombing is when people “gate-crash” online meetings. Zoom refers to one highly popular web conferencing tool, but this may occur on other platforms as well. These uninvited guests share their screens, make disturbing posts in the chat, and attempt to take over the meeting.

Protect your meeting by getting familiar with Zoom’s (or your platform’s) meeting scheduling options and safeguards. Consider these options:

- Start the meeting with the participants’ video off.
- Mute participants upon entry.
- Disable private chat.
- Disable join before host.
- Disable screen sharing for participants.
- Turn off file transfer in chat.
- Consider using the waiting room feature.
  - Meeting hosts can customize Waiting Room settings for additional control and can even personalize the message people see when they enter the Waiting Room. This message is the perfect place to post rules or guidelines for your meeting.
- Remove unwanted or disruptive participants.
  - From that Participants menu, you can mouse over a participant’s name, and several options will appear, including Remove. Click that to remove someone from the meeting. Please consult your legal counsel for situations where it is allowable to remove someone from a public meeting.

Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the features of your web conferencing platform so you can be best prepared to handle unexpected situations. There is no absolute defense to Zoombombs. Preparation is key to swiftly handling such situations and neutralizing Zoombombs before they explode.

For additional information refer to:

[Zoom- How to Keep Uninvited Guests Out of Your Zoom Event](#)  
[The University of Tennessee’s Office of Information Technology](#)

Sources: The University of Tennessee’s Office of Information Technology and Zoom Video Communications, Inc.