

Using Zoom for meetings, training and events

The Fostering Network, like many other organisations, uses various online platforms to undertake meetings, training and events. Whether in face-to-face meetings or via an online conference system like Zoom, we place the highest value on safeguarding those attending our meetings and their security. Here are some things to consider when using Zoom, which we thought you may find useful.

Things to consider:

- Always refer your organisation to seek expert advice and support from your local Data Protection Officer and IT advisors to ensure you are correctly using any communication platform appropriately and safely.
- Zoom is very flexible, and this flexibility can give rise to security risks if appropriate security measures are not put in place. Zoom can be as open as a public meeting with no attendance restrictions or as secure as a board meeting with very restricted attendance.
- Zoom can offer good levels of security if, for example, the following steps are taken:
 - Always use a password protected meeting invitation (you should have this set up in the default setting).
 - Send invites to individuals so that only they can join; and agree in advance if the invitation is able to be sent on to anyone else.
 - Use the 'waiting room' function, so that the host can admit only those who were invited or agreed in advance.
 - Ask guests to join with their camera on, so that the meeting host can verify their identity in the waiting room.
 - Lock the meeting once everyone who is expected is there. This will ensure that other people, even those with an invite, cannot join.
 - Ensure you leave the 'automatically record meeting' setting unchecked in the settings.
 - Set it so that only the host or nominated co-host can record the meeting or share their screen.
- Assigning 'co-host' or 'alternative host' roles is advisable. Assigning an alternative host ensures that there is someone to start the meeting if the host has any technical difficulties or can no longer attend. Please note that co-hosts cannot start a meeting. An alternative host or a co-host can also be useful for managing the logistics of the meeting while the original host is leading the agenda.
- Selecting 'mute on entry' will enable guests to enter silently and avoid disruption to the meeting.
- If a recording is necessary, it is best practice to announce it when the meeting is starting and all users will then see a recording icon throughout the meeting.
- You can restrict the 'chat function' (written communication between participants) if you choose to; and please note that if the meeting is recorded any chat is also recorded. You should also remind participants of this when announcing the recording at the start of the meeting.
- Be clear that the host can bar anyone who behaves inappropriately.
- Zoom has a range of free and paid for plans and you should consider what type you need as a meeting, training or event host. A participant does not require a Zoom account to join a meeting.

Frequently asked questions

How secure is Zoom for those joining a call?

It can be secure, however this depends a lot on the host taking responsibility and using the facilities outlined in this document.

Is there a cloud bank where recordings are stored?

Yes – these are controlled by Zoom and for your own meetings you will have administrator access. The recordings can be stored anywhere in the world, so you may want to restrict yours to, for example, USA and Europe.

How can we ensure recordings are not stored or even taken for some meetings?

The host makes the choice to record a meeting or not. The host can choose to record locally or in the cloud. Hosts and administrators of the account have access to cloud recordings, however access to local recording depends on the location where they are saved. Please ensure that you check that the default setting is 'to not record' before starting a meeting. If a meeting is being hosted by someone else and they start recording it will show on the top of participant screens.

How can we ensure external contacts are not recording the calls?

The host makes the choice to record a meeting or not. If a meeting is being recorded it will show on the top of participant screens. Participants cannot record a meeting, however there is very little one can do to stop someone filming the meeting from a stand-alone camera.

Should we allow someone to join a meeting with the camera off?

Unless you have already identified them another way, no. While many people are working from home and may not want to appear in public, you should take extra steps to ensure that the person is who they say they are, perhaps by agreeing a 'camera off' status with them in advance.

Are others able to take screen shots of those who join without their knowledge?

Yes, phones and tablets can take screen shots of the meeting. It is a capability of the device that Zoom can't override. However, a careful and responsible host can prevent unauthorised people joining the call by ensuring participant cameras are on before they join and using the 'waiting room' and 'lock room' functions.

Further guidance

- [Zoom: Privacy & Security for Zoom Video Communications](#)
- [Zoom: Best Practices for Securing Your Zoom Meetings Everything you need to keep your video meetings safe and secure](#)
- [Read our blog](#) about things to consider for online family time. This [resource](#) is from the University of Sydney's Research Centre for Children and Families.