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**An Activist's
Guide to
using Zoom**

**For All CLPs
and
Disabled Activists**

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Zoom Meetings

Zoom is a cloud-based video conferencing platform that can be used for video and audio meetings and webinars. Zoom allows members who find it difficult to attend meetings in person due to their disability or caring responsibilities.

Zoom Meetings are video meetings which use Zoom software, to allow remote participants to join in a meeting, which may or may not be a physical event. You do not need to have a Zoom account to attend a Zoom meeting. Only the host or alternative host needs to have an account. Attendees can join the meeting in-person, via webcam or video conferencing camera, or via phone (Audio Only).

Under the Pro account, which Disability Labour uses and recommends, you may have 100 attendees, for meetings up to 24 hours long, and meetings can be recorded. Recording of meetings provides an absolute record of what was said and debated at a meeting, written minutes then just become a short summary of what occurred, however it is recommended that written minutes are still taken. A pro account costs around £14 a month.

Joining a Zoom meeting on smart device or PC/Mac is simply a matter of clicking on the meeting link which the meeting coordinator/secretary sends out prior to the meeting. If it is the first time of joining for a member then they will be directed to install the web-app or app to their device, which need only be done once.

Within a meeting the host or co-host can share documents to the screens of attendees, run polls for voting, control who has an open microphone to the meeting, etc. Polls within a meeting can be set up before hand and can be activated at the click of a mouse by the host.

Setting up your meeting

Once a date and time has been fixed for the meeting the host should set up the meeting invites and Zoom link. This is automatically generated within the Zoom app.

We recommend that you have a waiting room where participants remain until the host or co-hosts allow them into the main meeting. There is an option to allow attendees to enter the meeting before the host. Make sure this option is un-ticked.

To keep your meeting even more secure once you begin the process of scheduling a meeting you can choose the option to 'Generate Automatically', this will generate a unique ID for that meeting rather than use your usual meeting ID.

Make sure "Require a password" is checked. Zoom will then generate a random password, but you can also create your own.

You can also require attendees to sign up via email, so you can check email addresses against your membership list.

Alternative Hosts and Co-Hosting

A Zoom account can only be owned by one person (who can act on behalf of the CLP). It is essential that you always have an alternative host on the account in case of illness or absence so Zoom meetings can always continue.

Disability Labour recommends that you have at least one co-host for every meeting above 6 attendees. Assigning someone as a co-host can only be done once that person has entered the Zoom meeting room.

For larger meetings you can have several co-hosts (there is no limit). The co-hosts role is to spot who has either raised their hand to speak or who has used the raise hand option within Zoom and convey that information to the meeting Chair. The other role that the co-hosts carry out is they have the responsibility to ensure that everyone in the waiting room is permitted to join the main meeting.

Alternative Hosts and Co-Hosting

The Meeting Chair, whilst having rights to mute all or specific meeting attendees, should be left to concentrate on running the meeting as effectively as possible.

If there are motions to be discussed and / or amended one of the co-hosts can use the screen sharing option to share documents which can be amended as the voting options are won or lost.

It's not just documents that can be shared you can also share videos or PowerPoint presentations.

The Chat Function

Whilst the chat function enables meeting attendees to communicate with each other privately or send messages to the meeting host - it is inaccessible to anyone who has a visual impairment.

We therefore strongly advise that the chat function is either switched off completely or only used to message the meeting host. If the second option is used you MUST have a way for anyone who is visually impaired to contact the meeting host, as well as ensuring that visually impaired participants are fully included in all discussions and votes.

The other reason for turning off the chat function is to stop anyone trying to distract meeting participants with "spamming" messages. Such messages can be extremely disrupting within large meetings. They can also change the tone of the meeting and encourage uncomradely behaviour.

In DL when we are hosting a larger meeting such as an AGM the host and co-hosts usually communicate via Facebook messenger to alert the meeting chair as to who wishes to speak on a particular issue. A previously set-up WhatsApp group could also be used.

Signers & Palantypists

A BSL - British Sign Language signer is a must for a meeting where there are deaf or hearing impaired people attending. Zoom allows for the signer's screen to be 'pinned' so it is always visible.

Palantypists type live subtitles during a meeting. This is really important where you have members who are hearing impaired, but do not use BSL. Zoom has a feature where everything the Palantypist types is visible at the bottom of the screen. Attendees can increase the size of the type if they need to do so.

Using headphones or earphones

Many people find that using headphones or earphones with a built in microphone, enables them to improve their meeting concentration. They are certainly an essential if you are somewhere with a lot of background noise. Setting up Bluetooth on most computers or tablets is fairly easy.

You can get feedback on some types of wireless earphones, so it is wise to use the 'test your audio' function before entering a meeting.

Using the polling options

The meeting host can set up polls before or during the meeting, to enable voting on motions or amendments that would usually be done by show of hands. The poll is a secret one so it is also possible to use it for election of officers or delegates.

If you have visually impaired members who cannot vote this way you must have alternative options available so they can vote. One option is to buddy them with one of the co-hosts - it should be someone the member knows and trusts - who can make sure their vote is recorded correctly.

The other option is to allow the member to have a sighted PA or family member to vote for them. Either of these options are Reasonable Adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 and they must be granted if requested.

Meeting Etiquette

Hosts and co-hosts cannot vote on polls, but can have their votes counted manually by the designated host or co-host.

Meeting Etiquette

Members should ensure that their full name is displayed on their Zoom screen. Screen names can be altered at the beginning or during a meeting.

We do ask attendees to be visible on camera at the beginning of a meeting so we can verify who they are. Some members, particularly those who are Neurodivergent, find being on screen difficult. To accommodate this Reasonable Adjustment, we only those members to use their camera when then are speaking. Any member can request the Reasonable Adjustment of having assistance in setting up their computer.

For the majority of meetings (where you have a large number of members) it is best to mute all attendees until someone wishes to speak or is called to propose a motion. When a member is speaking they should be allowed to do so without interruption. Having all other attendees muted also removes the ability to heckle - which can assist in making the meeting more comradely.

The Disability Labour Experience

In Disability Labour we have been holding all of our Executive meetings in zoom for 18 months, in this time we had only one face to face meeting. It is possible to do away with nearly all face to face meetings for any party unit by using Zoom. Since Jan 2020 we now run all our General Meetings (EGM, AGM) within Zoom also.

We run our Executive Committee meetings with one host and at least one co- host. The co-host takes over document sharing, admitting members from the waiting room and spotting members who wish to speak.

The Disability Labour Experience

To speak at a meeting a participant simply presses a “hand up” button and waits to be called by the chair. We find it useful for the host and co-host to keep a Facebook Messenger Chat open between each other so they can stay in contact, comment on confidential issues, and not disrupt the meeting.

chat. The host or co-host has the ability to remove a disruptive member from the meeting and stop them rejoining.

After one unfortunate incident Disability Labour is including a dress-code within our standing orders which requires members to be appropriately dressed during meetings. Whilst we understand that some members will be attending from bed - it is required that members wear clothing, and not just underwear to ensure that they are appropriately dressed when on screen.

Disability Labour have also recently moved to allowing all members to vote on all relevant matters by using Survey Monkey to create polls for such items as Election of Executive Members/Officers, non-contentious motions, policy direction, and the selection of candidates to conference.

We consider remote meetings an essential Reasonable Adjustment to allow all members free and easy access to all items of internal democracy.

Disability Labour are happy to demonstrate online meetings in zoom to a CLP/Branch Executive Committee or to attend a meeting to help facilitate setting everything up and assisting with running the meeting.

Please email info@disabilitylabour.org.uk if you would like to take us up on this offer.

We also invite you to affiliate to Disability Labour, please see <https://disabilitylabour.org.uk/affiliation-to-disability-labour/>

By affiliating you will be showing your CLPs commitment to disability equality. We can assist your Disability Officer with setting up a disabled Members Branch, as permitted by the Labour Party Rule Book.

Disability Labour Publications

Disability Labour produce Disability Equality Training for the Labour Party. We also run Train the Trainer sessions to ensure all our training is of the same high standard. Some training will be available on line, but we prefer to deliver training directly to your CLP to ensure that we can support you and your disabled members and help to ensure that all your CLP activities are fully accessible to all disabled members.

Disability Labour produce a number of Guides for Disabled Members. These contain vital information to ensure that your CLP is not breaching the Equality Act 2010.

Our Guides are:

Disabled Activist's Guide to the Labour Party

Disability Officer Job Description and Role

Accessible Campaigning – a Guide for CLPs

Activist Guide to Differently Paced Canvassing

Activist Guide to Accessible Leaflets

All these guides can be downloaded at:

<https://disabilitylabour.org.uk/our-publications>