



Zoom Meetings vs. Webinars

Meeting and webinars offer similar features and functionality but have some key differences: in the healthcare setting, one of the most important differences are that webinars **do not** include a virtual waiting room and therefore participants cannot be screened before entering the session.

Note: For best privacy and security practice, all virtual health visits that directly address a patient's health or allow a patient to be seen or heard should be conducted as **meetings** so participants can be screened.

	Meetings	Webinars
<i>Key feature:</i>	Waiting room included; participants need to be let in by the host(s).	No waiting room; participants are automatically let into the webinar once it's begun.
<i>Description:</i>	Meetings are designed to be collaborative , with all participants being able to turn on their audio and video, screen share, chat, and see who else is attending.	Webinars are designed so that only the host and any panelists can share their video, audio, and screen. Other participants are view-only and can interact with the panelists via Q&A, chat, and poll questions.
<i>Best used for:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual health visits that directly address a patient's health or allow a patient to be seen or heard Small to large group sessions where participants should be able to interact and engage with each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or a few people ("panelists") speaking to a view-only audience Events up to 500 participants* Events where no identifiable patient information is shared Audience only needs to interact with the panelists (e.g. Q&A), not with one another

Related resources

- Zoom: [Meetings and webinars comparison](#)
- [Convert webinars to meetings](#)
- [Virtual health Zoom security best practices](#)
- For detailed instructions on scheduling/hosting meetings or webinars, including registration, see the full [Zoom manual](#).
- *For 500 – 1000 participants, see overview of [large-scale webinars](#).



Feature comparison table

Feature	Meetings	Application	Webinars	Application
Waiting rooms	✓	Participants need to wait in the waiting room for the host (or any co-hosts/alternate hosts) to let them into the visit.	✗	Participants are automatically let into the webinar once it's begun.
Audio & video sharing	✓	All participants can see and hear each other.	✗	Only the host and panelists can share their audio and video, allowing the audience to see and hear them.
Screen sharing	✓	If enabled, all participants can share their screen.	✗	Only the host and panelists can share screen.
Breakout rooms	✓	Participants can be assigned to smaller rooms in a group visit for discussion.	✗	Not a feature.
Participant list	✓	All participants can see the full meeting participant list. Participants can also rename themselves (e.g. pronouns, preferred name, first name only)	✗	Only the host and panelists can see the full participant list.
Chat	✓	Questions and comments can be entered into the chat for everyone, and/or private messages between participants, to view.	✓	Questions and comments can be entered into the chat for just the host and panelists, or everyone, to view.
Automated email reminders	~	If registration is selected when scheduling, a Zoom confirmation email is sent to the participant. Additional reminder emails can be sent via Outlook.	✓	If registration is selected.
Q&A	✗	Not a feature.	✓	Allows participants to ask questions directly to the host and panelists to answer.