

POLICY RE: USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

IN THE FOLLOWING COURTS:

**Court of Appeal
Supreme Court**

Supreme Court (Family Division)

Provincial Court

Domestic Violence Court

Drug Court

Small Claims Court

Probate Court

Bankruptcy Court

INSIDE COURTROOMS:

Without permission of the Court, no person shall use an electronic device, such as a phone, tablet, computer, camera or audio recorder, in a courtroom:

- to carry on a conversation while court is in session
- to take still photographs or record video
- to transmit an audio or video recording
- that interferes with the proceedings or the courtroom recording system by producing any noise, vibration or electronic signal.

ALLOWED:

- keeping a phone on in vibrate mode only (but not talking on it)
- receiving or transmitting general text only, if it does not interfere with proceedings or the courtroom recording system
- subject to any publication bans that may exist and excluding Challenge For Cause proceedings during jury selection, transmitting information about court proceedings while court is in session, for publication and by any means (including social media platforms, texting, email, etc.) unless the presiding Judge orders otherwise
- members of the media only may use electronic devices to record the audio (only) of the proceedings to augment their note-taking, but not for broadcasting.

PROHIBITED OR RESTRICTED:

- making or answering a phone call while court is in session
- taking pictures, recording video, recording audio (media may record audio)
- transmitting pictures, video or audio
- during Challenge For Cause hearings while a jury is being selected, transmitting information about the proceedings by any means (including social media platforms, texting, email, etc.) is prohibited unless the presiding Judge orders otherwise
- using an electronic device - or having one on - that disrupts what is going on in the courtroom or interferes with the courtroom recording system in any way.

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EXCEPTION:

When official ceremonies such as a swearing-in or robing ceremony, or events such as Law Day, mock trials or civil weddings are held in the courthouse, the prohibitions and restrictions do not apply with regard to those specific events.

INSIDE THE COURTHOUSE, OUTSIDE COURTROOMS:

Without permission of the Court, no one (except members of the media) shall use an electronic device, such as a phone, tablet, computer, camera, or audio recorder, inside the courthouse to produce, record, or transmit audio, video, or still photographs.

ALLOWED:

- speaking on a cell phone
- inputting, transmitting and receiving text only on an electronic device.

PROHIBITED (by members of the public):

- taking pictures
- recording video or audio
- transmitting pictures, video, or audio

EXCEPTIONS:

- Members of the media only may use audio recorders, still/video cameras, and other devices to produce, record or transmit audio, video or still photographs inside the courthouse (not in courtrooms) but only within designated areas where these areas exist.
- When official ceremonies such as a swearing-in or robing ceremony, or events such as Law Day, mock trials, or civil weddings are held in the courthouse, the prohibitions above do not apply with regard to those specific events. However, electronic devices may still only be used within designated areas where these areas exist.

BODY-WORN CAMERAS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

Law enforcement officers often attend court to participate in trials and other court proceedings, and to complete other duties related to their daily police work. In those instances, the officers are required to turn off any body-worn cameras before entering the courthouse or court facility.

Body-worn cameras must remain off while the officers are inside the courthouse, unless a security threat or other urgent situation develops that requires the officer to respond and record the interaction.

Officers responding to a dispatched call inside a courthouse or officers arresting an individual inside a courthouse are permitted to have their body-worn cameras turned on when they enter the building to record their interactions with the public, as per their Employer's policies.

Without permission of the Court, officers are not permitted to use body-worn cameras to record inside the courtroom.

PLEASE NOTE: Disagreements regarding the definitions of "members of the media" or "law enforcement officers" shall be resolved by the presiding Judge.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS

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