

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
COUNTY DEPARTMENT, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DIVISION**

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No. 2024-DV-01

SUBJECT: Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices (“Portable Electronic Devices”)

Pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court’s policy on Portable Electronic Devices, and in order to ensure safe administration of justice given the highly-sensitive nature of the cases heard in this division, the Circuit Court of Cook County, Domestic Violence Division, is publishing this order allowing Portable Electronic Devices subject to the following rules and restrictions.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. **Use in Common Areas:** All persons may use Portable Electronic Devices in the common areas of the courthouse outside the courtrooms, such as lobbies and hallways. Use is restricted to telephone, SMS (short message service) texting, instant messaging, email, and word processing functions of a cell phone or other electronic device. Photographic filming or recording, digital video capturing, or other recording is prohibited, except (1) a recording by the court or at the court’s direction or (2) pursuant to the terms of an order approving extended media coverage. Further restrictions, including restricting mobile telephone conversations to designated areas, will be imposed as needed to maintain safety, security, proper behavior, decorum, and the administration of justice. All Portable Electronic Devices must be placed in “silent” mode at all times within the courthouse.
2. **Use in Courtrooms:** Any use of Portable Electronic Devices inside courtrooms may be prohibited by the judge presiding in the courtroom. All Portable Electronic Devices must remain in “silent” mode and/or turned off at all times in courtrooms, unless otherwise expressly permitted by the judge presiding.
 - a. The following persons are *exempt* from the above prohibition:
 - i. Case participants, including self-represented litigants and witnesses, may use a Portable Electronic Device inside a courtroom to check calendars or present case-related information or for any other purpose the judge presiding deems appropriate;
 - ii. current or former judges;
 - iii. licensed attorneys and, when authorized by the judge presiding, their authorized employees;
 - iv. members of the news media. Upon approval by the Illinois Supreme Court of the Circuit Court of Cook County's application to participate in extended media coverage, approval by the trial judge presiding, and

subject to denial or limitation by the chief circuit judge, pursuant to the Illinois Supreme Court's Policy for Extended Media Coverage, members of the news media may also use their electronic devices in the courtroom to communicate with news media colleagues, provided court is not in session;

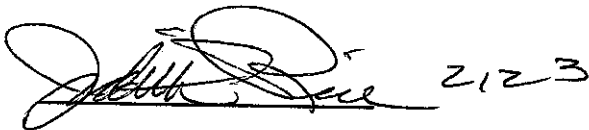
- v. local, state, and federal law enforcement officers;
- vi. employees of any local, state, or federal government agencies and/or offices;
- vii. any person reporting for jury duty pursuant to summons. Individuals selected for jury service are also subject to the order(s) of the trial judge presiding, who may make orders as to the possession or use of electronic devices by potential or sworn jurors during trial sessions and deliberations.
- viii. building and maintenance tradespeople, equipment repair persons, and vendors with proper authorization for whom such devices are necessary in the performance of their job;
- ix. domestic violence advocates or counselors as defined by 750 ILCS 60/227(a)(2);
- x. participants in a domestic violence assistance program, as defined and identified by the Presiding Judge of the Domestic Violence Division;
- xi. disabled persons, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, whose disabilities necessitate the use of an electronic device to communicate and who are permitted by the Court Disabilities Coordinator or court order to possess and use such devices in the court facility, including the courtrooms;
- xii. persons required by court order or the sheriff to wear an electronic monitoring device;
- xiii. any other person or category of persons authorized by order of court to possess an electronic device as defined above in the court facility.

3. **Prohibited Uses in Common Areas and Courtrooms:** The taking of photographs, photographic filming, digital video capture, audio and video recordings, and broadcasting or other publishing of audio, video, or photographic content are generally prohibited, without prior approval of a judge or as permitted by Illinois Supreme Court Rule 44. No person may use a Portable Electronic Device to communicate or attempt to communicate with any potential juror or juror at any time. No court visitor may use a Portable Electronic Device to harass, intimidate, or communicate about given testimony with any witness at any time. Pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 44, nothing in this order shall be interpreted to permit the taking of photographs in the courtroom during sessions of the court or recesses between proceedings, or the broadcasting or televising of court proceedings unless authorized by order of the Supreme Court.

4. **Other Electronic Devices:** Cameras, video cameras, video recording equipment, and recording devices not classified as Portable Electronic Devices are not allowed in the courthouse, unless permitted by the Chief Judge of the Circuit, or the Presiding Judge, Domestic Violence Division, and on such conditions as ordered, for ceremonial events such as marriages, investitures, and graduations in problem solving courts or as outlined in the Policy for Extended Media Coverage in the Circuit Courts of Illinois and Illinois Supreme Court Rule 44.
5. **Consequences of Violations:** Persons in violation of this or any other court order or policy may be removed from the courthouse, found in contempt of court, or subject to penalties as provided by law. Any electronic device used in violation of an order may be confiscated and held until the possessor leaves the courthouse. Court personnel shall not be responsible or liable for any damage to or loss of a confiscated electronic device.
6. Nothing in this order shall be construed to infringe upon the authority of the Cook County Sheriff to deny courtroom or courthouse access to any person in the interest of preserving public safety.
7. Nothing in this order shall be interpreted to supersede or conflict with Cook County Cir. Ct. G.A.O. 2013-05 (Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices) (eff. April 15, 2013).

Dated this 27th day of March, 2024

ENTERED:



Judith Rice
Acting Presiding Judge

Judge Judith C. Rice

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Circuit Court - 2123