Circuit Court of the \_\_\_\_\_\_ Judicial Circuit

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County, Illinois

Courthouse(s) located at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Local Policy/Rule/Order Regarding Portable Electronic Devices**

1. **Purpose and Scope.**

The purpose of this policy is to provide information to the public regarding the permitted and prohibited uses of portable electronic devices in the above mentioned courthouse(s). Any authorized use of a portable electronic device under this policy is subject to the authority of the judge presiding over a matter to terminate activity that is disruptive or distracting to a court proceeding, or that is otherwise contrary to the administration of justice.

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, 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](https://www.illinoiscourts.gov/Resources/6a32f078-067c-49af-b763-7c31c0aca6e1/Extended_Media_Coverage.pdf) and [Illinois Supreme Court Rule 44](https://ilcourtsaudio.blob.core.windows.net/antilles-resources/resources/8db700cb-c17a-421d-8fdc-95ad22b399c9/Rule%252044.pdf).

1. **Definitions.**
2. “Portable Electronic Devices” are mobile devices capable of electronically storing, accessing, or transmitting information and is defined to include personal computers, tablet computers, mobile telephones (including cell phones and any form of telephone with cameras and audio and video recording and transmission capabilities), electronic calendars, e-book readers, smartwatches, or similar devices.
3. “Court visitor” means any individual present at a state courthouse in Illinois.
4. “Courthouse” includes all areas within the exterior walls of a court building, or if the court does not occupy the entire building, that portion of the building used for the administration and operation of the court. A “courthouse” also includes areas outside a court building where a judge conducts an event concerning a court case.
5. A “courtroom” includes the portion of a courthouse in which the actual proceedings take place.
6. **Uses of Portable Electronic Devices in Common Areas of Courthouse(s)**.

All court visitors may use Portable Electronic Devices in the common areas of the courthouse, such as lobbies and hallways. No telephone conversation may be used on speakerphone, court visitors must speak at an appropriate volume, and no music or other sounds may be played in the courthouse so as to minimize disruption of others. All Portable Electronic Devices must be placed in “silent” mode at all times within the courthouse.

1. **Uses of Portable Electronic Devices in Courtrooms:** Case participants including lawyers, parties (including self-represented litigants), and witnesses may use a Portable Electronic Device inside a courtroom to check calendars or present case-related information. All other uses of Portable Electronic Devices inside courtrooms are prohibited, unless authorized by the judge presiding in the courtroom. All Portable Electronic Devices must remain in “silent” mode at all times in courtrooms.
2. **Prohibited Uses of Portable Electronic Devices in Common Areas and Courtrooms**: The taking of photographs, audio and video recordings are generally prohibited without prior approval of a judge or as governed by [Illinois Supreme Court Rule 44](https://ilcourtsaudio.blob.core.windows.net/antilles-resources/resources/8db700cb-c17a-421d-8fdc-95ad22b399c9/Rule%252044.pdf). No court visitor 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.
3. **Confiscation of Equipment and Ejection:** Court visitors using a Portable Electronic Device, or possessing other electronic devices, in violation of this or any other court order, rule, or policy may be removed from the courthouse, found in contempt of court, or subject to penalties as provided by law. Any Portable Electronic Device used in violation of an order, rule or policy 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 Portable Electronic Device.