



## Supreme Court of Illinois

January 6, 2022

### **ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ANNOUNCES NEW POLICY ON PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

The Illinois Supreme Court announced today the adoption of a policy which will require every state courthouse in Illinois to adopt individual orders or rules regarding the use of portable electronic devices in their courthouse buildings and in their courtrooms.

In adopting this policy, the Court recognizes that portable electronic devices such as cell phones, computers, tablet, e-book readers are essential tools of today's society. Many courthouses already possess policies which address the needs of lawyers, jurors, and other court users and staff to possess portable electronic devices in courthouses yet some bar members of the public and self-represented litigants (SRLs) from carrying their devices. The new policy acknowledges that portable electronic devices are often necessary for these court users and SRLs to access resources, conduct court business, accomplish procedural steps, and present evidence or arguments in their cases. The policy is available [here](#).

"The courts must adapt with the times, and this is an important way to address the needs of court users," Chief Justice Anne M. Burke said. "It is no longer realistic to ask people to leave cell phones and other electronics at home when they visit courthouses.

The new policy allows for individual courts to address any security issues by allowing restrictions on the use of portable electronic devices in the circuit court's local orders or rules. Courthouses will need to provide free storage for the equipment should the use of devices be restricted.

Courts will be required to post signs with information about their portable electronic device policies prominently in the courthouses, including at the entrances, in the clerks' offices, and outside each courtroom. This information must also be publicized on the courts' and clerks' websites and in other publicly available places.

"We thank the Supreme Court for adopting the policy and in recognizing the importance of cell phones and other portable electronic devices to SRLs and other individuals conducting business in our courthouses." said Justice Mary K. Rochford. "The Access to Justice Commission also expresses appreciation to the various stakeholders who helped form and develop this crucial policy."

The Illinois Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission (ATJ Commission) recommended the new policy to the Supreme Court with input from the Conference of Chief Judges. The Chair of the ATJ Commission is Justice Mary K. Rochford of the First Appellate District. The then Chair of the Conference of Chief Judges was Chief Judge Michael Kramer of the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial District.

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