

USE OF PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN GENERAL DISTRICT COURT

1. Definition of “Portable Electronic Device”

The term “Portable Electronic Device” 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, and “smart” watches.

2. Possession and Use of Portable Electronic Devices in the Courtroom:

Portable Electronic Devices shall not be brought into or used in the courtroom without authorization from the presiding judge. A presiding judge may authorize the possession and use of Portable Electronic Devices in the courtroom and may impose restrictions on such possession and use. If the possession of Portable Electronic Devices in the courtroom is authorized, they must remain silent at all times. They shall only be used for the purposes and in the manner authorized by the presiding judge. Photography, video recording, audio recording, or video transmission or communication of any information using any media from inside the courtroom is prohibited without prior written authorization of the presiding judge.

3. Confiscation of Equipment and Ejection of User:

Any person using a Portable Electronic Device in violation of this or any other court order or policy may be removed from the courthouse, found in contempt of court, and subject to penalties as provided by law. Any Portable Electronic Device used in violation of this or any other court order or policy may be confiscated, and the Sheriff shall not be responsible or liable for any damage to or loss of a confiscated device.

4. Further Limitations by the Judge:

A judge may further limit or ban the possession or use of any Portable Electronic Device:

- (1) pursuant to Virginia Code § 19.2-266 (to regulate media coverage of judicial proceedings);
- (2) if possession or use of the Portable Electronic Device may or does interfere with the administration of justice or cause any threat to safety or security; or
- (3) for any other reason.



Colleen K. Killilea, Judge