

VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE CITY OF PETERSBURG

*In re: POLICY REGARDING POSSESSION AND USE OF PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES BY VISITORS*

**ORDER**

Pursuant to Virginia Code §17.1-128.2, the Court hereby establishes a uniform policy governing the possession and use of portable electronic devices by visitors as defined by §16.1-69.35:4 (A) within the Petersburg Courthouse. The Court finds that such policy is necessary to ensure safety, maintain decorum, and protect the integrity of judicial proceedings.

All visitors are permitted to possess portable electronic devices in the courthouse subject to the following conditions:

1. All devices must be placed in silent mode before entering the courthouse.
2. All devices are subject to security screening at the discretion of the Sheriff.
3. Voice cellular telephone calls by visitors shall only be permitted outside of the courtroom in an area designated by the Sheriff. If such calls disturb the proceedings, then the Sheriff shall require the voice call to be made outside of the courthouse.
4. Use of devices by a visitor to take photographs, make audio or video recordings, or transmit live audio or video streaming is prohibited.

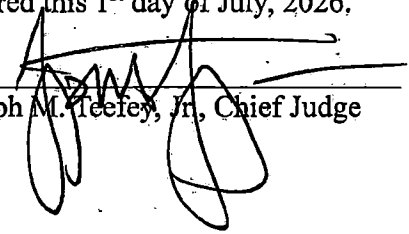
All devices possessed by visitors inside of the circuit courtroom must be turned off and placed inside of a Yondr bag, if available from the Sheriff, or stowed away out of view. If a device is necessary for the presentation of evidence related to a proceeding or necessary to monitor a medical condition, the visitor must obtain prior permission from the presiding judge to use and power the device. *Visitors are encouraged to leave devices in their vehicles unless the device is necessary for evidence presentation or to assist with a health condition.*

The chief judges of the General District Court and the Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court may enter Orders establishing conditions governing devices in their respective courtrooms pursuant to Virginia Code §16.1-69.35:4. If no Order is entered by Combined District Courts, this Order shall apply.

Any device used in violation of this Order shall be confiscated by the Sheriff and forfeited pursuant to the statute. Any visitor or non-visitor who uses a device in a manner that threatens the safety, security, order, or administration of justice may be proceeded against as allowed by law and subject to the contempt powers of the Court.

A copy of this Order shall be posted at the public entrance of the courthouse and made available on the Petersburg Circuit Court homepage of the Supreme Court of Virginia website. It is so ORDERED.

Entered this 1<sup>st</sup> day of July, 2026.

  
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Joseph M. Teeley, Jr., Chief Judge