

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTIES OF BRUNSWICK, GREENSVILLE, PRINCE GEORGE, SURRY, SUSSEX, AND THE CITIES OF EMPORIA AND HOPEWELL.

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

STANDING ORDER

Amending, in part, Order entered on January 23, 2026.

The Chief Judge, sharing statutory authority over courthouse security with the various Sheriffs, and having inherent authority to maintain order and decorum in the courthouses of this circuit, and pursuant to Virginia Code §17.1-128.2, does hereby establish a uniform policy within the Sixth Judicial Circuit governing the possession and use of portable electronic devices by visitors as defined by Virginia Code § 16.1-69.35:4(A); it is therefore:

ADJUDGED, ORDERED, AND DECREED that all visitors are prohibited from using devices to take photographs, make audio or video recordings, or transmit live audio or video streaming; it is further

ADJUDGED, ORDERED, AND DECREED that 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; and
3. Voice cellular telephone calls by visitors shall only be permitted outside of courtrooms in an area designated by the Sheriff. If such calls disturb any court or courthouse proceeding, then the Sheriff shall require the voice call to be made outside of the courthouse; it is further

ADJUDGED, ORDERED, AND DECREED that all visitors are permitted to possess portable electronic devices in the courtroom, but they must be turned off, except where the device is used to monitor a medical condition, and placed inside a *Yondr* bag, if available from the Sheriff, or stowed away out of view; it is further

ADJUDGED, ORDERED, AND DECREED that if a device is necessary for the presentation of evidence related to a proceeding, the visitor must obtain permission from the presiding judge to use and power the device; it is further

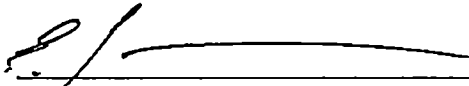
ADJUDGED, ORDERED, AND DECREED that the chief judges of the General District Court and the Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court may enter Orders establishing conditions governing devices in their respective courtrooms pursuant to Virginia Code§ 16.1-69.35:4. If no Order is entered by the Combined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

ADJUDGED, ORDERED, AND DECREED that any device used in violation of this Order shall be confiscated by the Sheriff and forfeited pursuant to statute; it is further

ADJUDGED, ORDERED, AND DECREED that 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; and it is further

ADJUDGED, ORDERED, AND DECREED that the Clerk of Court shall disseminate a copy of this Order to his or her respective District Court Clerk and Sheriff to post at the public entrance of their respective courthouse and make available on any relevant website homepage.

ENTERED this 1 day of July, 2026.



W. Edward Tomko III, Chief Judge