

Possession and use of Portable Electronic Device in Circuit Court Building


The following policy is hereby issued in accordance with Va. Code §17.1-128.2:

"Portable electronic device" means (i) a personal laptop; (ii) a tablet; (iii) a mobile telephone, including a cell phone and any telephone with a camera, audio and video recording capabilities, and transmission capabilities; (iv) an electronic calendar; (v) an electronic book reader; (vi) a smart watch; or (vii) any other electronic personal communication device.

"Visitor to the court" means a member of the public who is not an active or retired judge, a magistrate, an attorney-at-law who possesses and presents a valid state bar identification card, a law-enforcement officer as defined in § 9.1-101 or court security officer, a probation officer who possesses and presents proper credentials and who is at the courthouse in the conduct of his official duties, a state or local agency employee who possesses and presents proper credentials and who is at the courthouse in the conduct of his official duties, a court reporter during the course of his official duties within the courthouse, and any other individual who has been authorized to possess a portable electronic device in the court upon a determination by the sheriff of the city or county in which the court sits that such individual's possession of a portable electronic device does not pose a security risk or threat and that access to such portable electronic device is necessary for conducting such individual's work or business in the court.

Visitors to the Court shall be permitted to possess and use portable electronic devices in both the courthouse and the courtroom conditioned upon the following:

1. Security screening of portable electronic devices upon entrance to the courthouse;
2. All portable electronic devices shall be turned off upon entry to the courthouse;
3. Any use of portable electronic devices in the courthouse or courtrooms to take photographs, make audio or video recordings or transmit live video streaming shall be prohibited except with prior written authorization by a judge of the circuit court;
4. Use of portable electronic devices while in the courtrooms is prohibited except with the express permission of the presiding judge;
5. If permitted to be used, all portable electronic devices shall remain on silent mode at all times;
6. The use of portable electronic devices without the express permission of the Circuit Court or presiding judge is restricted to specifically designated areas, including the lobby, hallways, public conference rooms/attorney and witness rooms, mediation rooms, jury assembly room, jury rooms and the Circuit Court Clerk's office while conducting business.
7. Any permitted use of portable electronic devices shall be restricted to a manner which maintains safety, security, proper behavior, order and the administration of justice.
8. Any portable electronic device used in violation of a circuit court's policy or related court order may be confiscated and the court or sheriff's department responsible for providing court security shall not be liable for any damage to or loss of such confiscated portable electronic device.


June 30, 2026