VIRGINIA: **IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF WESTMORELAND COUNTY**

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 within the Westmoreland County Courthouse. The Court finds that such a policy is necessary to ensure safety, maintain decorum, and protect the integrity of judicial proceedings.

All visitors, as defined in §16.1-69.35:4, are permitted to possess portable electronic devices in the courthouse per Act of the General Assembly, ***subject to the following conditions***:

- All devices must be placed in silent mode, without vibration, before entering the courthouse.
- All devices are subject to security screening at the discretion of the Sheriff.
- Voice cell phone calls by visitors shall only be permitted in an area designated by the Sheriff. If such calls disturb the peace or proceedings, the Sheriff is permitted to require the call to be made outside of the courthouse.
- ***Use of a portable electronic device by a visitor to take photographs, make audio or video recordings, or transmit live audio or video streaming is strictly prohibited.***

ALL PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES POSSESSED BY VISITORS INSIDE THE COURTROOM OF THE CIRCUIT COURT MUST BE TURNED OFF AND STOWED AWAY OUT OF VIEW. If an electronic device is necessary for the presentation of evidence or research directly related to a proceeding, the individual seeking to use the device in the courtroom must obtain prior permission from the presiding judge.

The presiding judges of the General District Court and the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court may set their own conditions for use inside their respective courtrooms, per §16.1-69.35:4. If no separate order is entered, this ORDER shall apply.

Any portable electronic device used in violation of this policy shall be confiscated by the Sheriff. Additionally, any person, visitor or non-visitor, who uses a portable electronic device in a manner that threatens the safety, security, order, or administration of justice will be deemed in violation of this policy and the device shall be confiscated. The return of any confiscated devices shall be within the discretion of the Court.

A copy of this ORDER shall be posted at the public entrance to the courthouse and made available on the Westmoreland County website.

It is so ORDERED.

Entered this 1st day of July 2026:

Charles Clark, Judge

A TRUE COPY:
TESTE: _____ Clerk