

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT OF THE CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS

IN RE: RULES GOVERNING THE PUBLIC'S POSSESSION OF PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE COURT BUILDING AT 550 BOULEVARD, COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA

The general public shall not bring into the court building portable electronic devices (defined as personal laptops, tablets, 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, smart watches, or smart glasses) or other technological, electronic, recording or communications devices unless the device is necessary to present evidence in court or for conducting work or business in the court building. All such portable electronic devices are subject to security screening, including courthouse screening devices.

A party to a court case may use a device as needed to present evidence with the approval of the presiding judge of the case. If the device is a mobile telephone, then a deputy at the magnetometer located at the main entrance of the court building shall place it in a secure pouch and give the pouch to the party. A courtroom deputy shall unlock the pouch when the party is ready to present evidence. Once the evidence has been presented, then the mobile telephone will be returned to the pouch by the courtroom deputy. Prior to departing the court building, the party shall return to the magnetometer, provide the pouch to a deputy, and the mobile telephone shall be returned to the party.

All other devices held by a party to a court case shall be powered off and remain powered off until the party needs to utilize the device to present evidence. At that time the device may be powered on with the supervision of a courtroom deputy. Once the evidence has been presented, then the device shall be powered off and remain powered off until the party departs the court building.

A visitor to court building may use a device if it is necessary to conduct work or business in the court. The visitor must inform a deputy at the magnetometer located at the main entrance of the court building that their device is necessary to conduct work or business in the court. If the device is a mobile phone, then a deputy shall place it in a secure pouch and give the pouch to the visitor. The device may only be used in designated areas to include the Circuit Court Clerk's Office (including the records room), the General District Court Clerk's Office, and the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office. A visitor shall inform an authorized representative within the designated areas of the purpose of the device in the work needed to be performed. The authorized representative has the discretion to approve or deny all requests in designated areas. If the request is approved, then the authorized individual shall unlock the pouch for the visitor to conduct work or business. The device shall only be used in the presence of the authorized representative or an individual authorized by the designated representative. The device shall be in silent mode while in use unless otherwise permitted by the authorized representative. Once the task has been completed, the mobile telephone will be

returned to the pouch by the authorized representative. Prior to departing the court building, the visitor shall return to the magnetometer, provide the pouch to a deputy, and the mobile telephone shall be returned to the visitor.

All other devices held by a visitor shall be powered off and remain powered off until needed to conduct work or business in the court. The device may only be used in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office (including the records room), the General District Court Clerk's Office, and the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office. A visitor shall inform an authorized representative within the designated areas of the purpose of the device in the work needed to be performed. The authorized representative has the discretion to approve or deny all requests in designated areas. If the request is approved, then the device shall only be used in the presence of the authorized representative or an individual authorized by the designated representative. The device shall be in silent mode while in use unless otherwise permitted by authorized representative. After the task is complete, then the device shall be powered off and remain powered off until the party departs the court building.

If a visitor disagrees with any determination made by a designated representative under this policy, they may request to speak to the designated representative's supervisor.

No photographs, still or otherwise, shall be taken within the court building. No one shall be permitted to make any video or audio recordings or to transmit live audio or video streaming within the court building.

Any person using a portable electronic device in violation of this Order or policy may be removed from the court building, found in contempt of court, and subject to penalties as provided by law. Any such devices may be confiscated, and the Sheriff shall not be responsible or liable for any damage or loss of a confiscated device. A Judge may further limit or ban the possession or use of any device if possession or use may or does interfere with the administration of justice or cause any threat to safety or security or for any other reason. Violators may be held in contempt at the discretion of the presiding Judges.

This Order shall be posted on the websites and in the Clerk's Offices of the Circuit and General District Courts and at all courthouse entrances.

ENTER:

Jayne A. Pemberton, Chief Judge