

**Albemarle Charlottesville Juvenile And Domestic Relations Court**

**Electronic Device Policy**

As defined in this Policy, Portable Electronic Devices include personal computers, tablet computers, 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, and “smart” watches.

**Possession and Use of Portable Electronic Devices**

The following policies and procedures govern the possession and use of Portable Electronic Devices in the courthouse and in the courtroom.

A. In the Courthouse: Portable Electronic Devices are not allowed in the courthouse other than as delineated below:

(1) A presiding judge may authorize the possession and use of Portable Electronic Devices in the courthouse for use to present evidence in the courtroom. Any Portable Electronic Devices that are allowed in the courthouse are subject to security screening, including courthouse screening devices.

(2) All Portable Electronic Devices must be turned off, at all times within the courthouse, other than when permitted to be turned on by the judge for the presentation of evidence.

(3) Portable Electronic Devices may not be used to take photographs, make audio or video recordings, or to transmit live audio or video streaming and is strictly prohibited except with prior written authorization by a judge of this Court.

(4) Other Electronic Devices: Cameras, video cameras, video recording equipment and recording devices (“other electronic devices”) not classified as Portable Electronic Devices are not allowed in the courthouse. Other electronic devices may be allowed in the courthouse only with prior written authorization by a judge of this Court.

(5) Attorneys, as Officers of the Court, and law enforcement officers in uniform, may bring Portable Electronic Devices into the courthouse. They must be in silent mode while within the courthouse. Portable electronic devices that are brought into the courthouse shall only be used in the designated waiting rooms of the courthouse unless there is prior authorization from

the judge presiding over the case. In order to maintain safety, security, proper behavior, order, and the administration of justice, mobile telephone conversations are only permitted in the waiting rooms or on the front porch area of the courthouse.

**B: In the Courtroom:**

Portable Electronic Devices shall not be brought into or used in the courtroom without authorization from the judge presiding over the case. A presiding judge may authorize the possession and use of Portable Electronic Devices in the courtroom. If the possession of Portable Electronic Devices in the courtroom is authorized, they must remain off at all times. They shall only be turned on and used for the purposes and in the manner authorized by the presiding judge. Photography, video recording, audio recording, or video transmission or communication of any information using any media from inside the courtroom is prohibited without prior written authorization of the presiding judge.

**C. Confiscation of Equipment and Ejection of User:**

Any person using a Portable Electronic Device in violation of this or any other court order or policy may be removed from the courthouse, found in contempt of court, and subject to penalties as provided by law. Any Portable Electronic Device used in violation of this or any other court order or policy may be confiscated, and the Sheriff shall not be responsible or liable for any damage to or loss of a confiscated device.

**D. Further Limitations by Judges:**

A judge may further limit or ban the possession or use of any Portable Electronic Device:

- (1) pursuant to Virginia Code § 19.2-266 (to regulate media coverage of judicial proceedings);
- (2) if possession or use of the Portable Electronic Device may or does interfere with the administration of justice or cause any threat to safety or security; or (3) for any other reason.

**E. Posting Notice of this Policy**

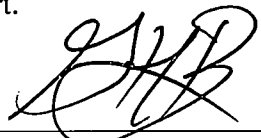
This policy regarding the possession and use of Portable Electronic Devices shall be posted on the court's home page on the Virginia Judicial System website; at the courthouse entrance; and, in the Clerk's Office.

F. Storage of Portable Electronic Devices.

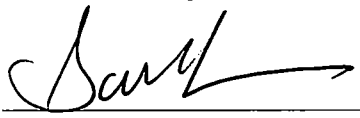
Storage for Portable Electronic Devices is provided at the security entrance to the courthouse in storage locker units which are available as the means for storing the devices.

Storage of devices is limited to persons who represent to security personnel that they have no other means of storage available to them, such as a vehicle parked on or near the courthouse premises.

It is HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED that this POLICY is in effect for the Albemarle/Charlottesville Juvenile and Domestic District Court building for this date of signing until modified or terminated by a subsequent order of this court.

ENTER:   
Judge

  
Judge

  
Judge

DATE: 2/6/2024