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**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2010-05 ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE COURTS BULIDINGS  
OF THE 7<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

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**General Considerations**

1. Today most people have wireless devices such as cell/smart phones, laptops, I Pads or similar devices. In order to protect our court proceedings including jury selection, trials and the jury deliberation process, it is important that courts place appropriate limits on the use of such devices.

2. Anyone may bring a cell/smart phone, I Pads, laptop computer, digital camera or similar wireless communication devices into the courthouse, subject to inspection and security checks. The devices must be on silent and or vibrate at all times except as noted in paragraph #3 below.

3. In courtrooms no persons shall use electronic devices except as may be approved by the presiding judge. Devices shall be turned to OFF. Individuals shall only answer calls or make reply outside of the courtroom except as directed by the presiding judge. Persons shall not use these devices to make or receive telephone calls, take photographs or make audio or video recordings. The presiding judge may prohibit or further restrict use of such devices if they interfere with the administration of justice, the security of the proceeding and or the integrity of the court process.

4. Attorneys, their staff, and law enforcement may use computers, smart phones, etc. during all court proceedings, so long as they are on silent and or vibrate. Except as directed by the presiding judge, no attorney or their staff shall make or answer telephone calls in the courtroom.

5. Security officers and on-duty law enforcement may leave their cell/smart phones on in vibrate or silent modes. Security Officers and on-duty LE shall only answer calls or make reply outside of the courtroom except as directed by the presiding judge or in an emergency.

6. In the hallways and public areas of the court buildings (not including the courtrooms) electronic devices may be used by so long as such use is not disruptive of court proceedings. Cell/smart phones shall be set to vibrate and or silent ring settings and may not be used to capture images, videos, or sound recordings. Use of any type of audio- or video-recording device, including, but not limited to, cameras, cell/smart phones in the clerk's office, clerk's window, or jury assembly room, is strictly prohibited. A judicial officer may allow exceptions or further restrict use and possession of electronic devices that are disruptive of court proceedings.

7. Media. Members of the media desiring access to the courthouse with cameras or other recording devices shall be required to present a valid media credential or other valid photo identification and business card at the security checkpoint. With a valid media credential, cameras may be permitted for limited purposes and may be used in the hallways and public areas of the courthouse as long as they do not disrupt operations of the courts in any manner.

### **Jury Trials and Special Considerations for Jurors**

8. It is important not to make the prospect of jury service less attractive and more cumbersome by prohibiting use of wireless communications devices except as necessary to protect the integrity of trials and dignity of the court. However the consequences of allowing electronic devices in the courtrooms for jury selection outweigh the advantages in most cases.

9. No electronic devices shall be allowed by jurors or any person in the courtroom during jury selection except as approved by the presiding judge. Once a jury is selected, jurors will be permitted to contact family, employers, schools, babysitters to make the arrangements which are regularly required in such circumstances. All selected for the jury shall be given access to a telephone. This will occur under the supervision of the bailiff. Jurors may not have such electronic devices in the courtroom or jury room at any time unless the court instructs otherwise.

11. During lunch and overnight, jurors shall be allowed to use their electronic devices so long as they do so in accordance with the restrictions in the following paragraph.

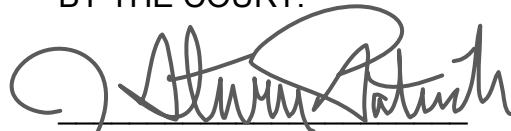
12. Trial judges already admonish jurors not to try to learn about a case outside the courtroom and not to discuss the case except during jury deliberations. Similarly, the trial judge should clearly admonish jurors not to use wireless communication devices to read news accounts of the trial, conduct research related to the case, ask legal questions of anyone, discuss the case with anyone, or express their views online via blogs, Twitter accounts, instant messaging systems, text messaging or other means. The admonition should include an explanation of why these prohibitions are necessary to protect the integrity of the trial.

13. Some jurors may desire to take notes on electronic devices. This is not currently feasible in our courthouses without upgraded infrastructure, additional staff support and technological safeguards for the electronic data. Until then, we cannot provide jurors with anything more than the means to take notes on paper.

*Failure to comply with any of the directives shall result in the confiscation of the device by security staff and can result in a citation for contempt of court, a fine or time in jail. Exceptions to these rules may be granted solely by permission of a judicial officer of the 7th Judicial District*

Done this 20 day of April 2011

BY THE COURT:

  
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J. Steven Patrick  
Chief Judge