

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
ARCHULETA, LA PLATA, AND SAN JUAN COUNTIES

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ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2021-24

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**ORDER REGARDING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN COURT  
FACILITIES**

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In accordance with the inherent authority of the Sixth Judicial District to manage its facilities and the proceedings before them, the Chief Judge of the Sixth Judicial District issues the following Order governing the use of electronic devices inside all court-related facilities located within the Sixth Judicial District (hereinafter "Court Facilities").

The courts have the responsibility and authority to ensure the efficient performance of judicial functions, to protect the dignity, independence, and integrity of the courts, and to make the lawful actions of the courts effective. Specifically, the courts must ensure the safe and orderly use of the Court Facilities. Those having business with the courts must be able to conduct their business freely, in a safe and orderly fashion, and unhindered by threats, confrontation, interference, or harassment. The courts also must provide a secure environment for all who enter the grounds of the Court Facilities. The courts further must minimize activities that unreasonably disrupt or interfere with the orderly and peaceful conduct of court business. It is imperative that the courts provide for the fair and orderly conduct of hearings and trials and maintain proper judicial decorum by ensuring a neutral forum free of actual or perceived partiality, bias, prejudice, or favoritism. Accordingly, the courts find that it is reasonable, necessary, and appropriate to impose certain restrictions on the use of electronic devices in Court Facilities.

This Order applies to the La Plata County Courthouse, the San Juan County Courthouse, and the Fred C. Harman Courthouse currently under construction in Archuleta County. Specifically, this Order applies to security screening areas, lobbies, elevators, judges' chambers, clerk's offices, court offices, probation offices, and the hallways adjacent to these areas.

This Order does not apply to the first floor of the San Juan County Courthouse, the San Juan County Manager's Office, the offices and chambers of the United States District Court, the United States Marshal's Office, or La Plata County offices in the La Plata County Courthouse. This Order applies to the courtroom at the north end of the La Plata County Courthouse when such courtroom is being utilized by the Sixth Judicial District. When such courtroom is being used by the Federal District Court, any United States District Court orders or rules regarding the use of electronic devices shall apply.

This Order does not limit the authority of judicial officers to issue necessary and reasonable orders governing the use of electronic devices inside their courtrooms or in matters pending before them. Such orders may be general or standing, case or matter specific, or

individual specific. A judicial officer may further restrict or expand the use and possession of electronic devices in the Court Facilities, including, but not limited to, permitting the use of electronic devices at ceremonial events such as investitures, ceremonies, adoptions, and weddings.

### **USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES:**

**Courtrooms:** All electronic devices shall be muted. They may be used inside the courtrooms subject to the following restrictions:

- If the use of an electronic device is not disruptive, and as long as the presiding judicial officer has not prohibited or restricted its use, an electronic device may be used for written communications and to access the Internet. This includes activities such as taking notes, preparing work product, scheduling future proceedings, Internet searching and browsing, communicating in writing by text, email, or other electronic means, and engaging in other similar functions.
- Except for security personnel and court personnel, no person shall use an electronic or other device to take photographs, make audio or video recordings, or transmit live audio or video streaming of any proceeding or person. No other person shall use electronic devices to make telephone calls unless specifically authorized to do so by the presiding judicial officer.
- Colorado Supreme Court Rules, Chapter 38, Court Rule 3, Media Coverage of Court Proceedings shall be followed for all requests for expanded media coverage inside courtrooms.

**All other areas of the Court Facilities:** Electronic devices may be used so long as the use is not disruptive of court-related business. However, except for authorized law enforcement officers and security personnel, no person shall use an electronic or other device to take photographs, make audio or video recordings, or transmit live audio or video streaming in any part of the Court Facilities, unless specifically permitted by a judicial officer or security personnel.

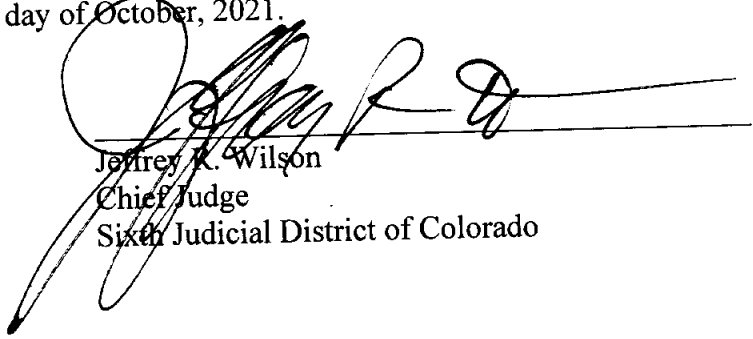
**Media Exception in Designated Areas:** Members of the media may use electronic or other devices to photograph, make audio or video recordings, or broadcast only in those areas clearly marked with signs for media use. Judicial officers may expand the areas designated for media coverage in matters pending before them as may be necessary.

**Certain Recording and Photography Devices Prohibited:** Except for authorized law enforcement officers, the following electronic devices are strictly prohibited in the Court Facilities: “GoPro” cameras, body-worn cameras, and electronic or other devices used to surreptitiously photograph or record. Surreptitious devices are those intended to operate covertly and include, but are not limited to, spy cameras, hidden surveillance cameras, and any other recording or photography devices attached to or concealed in clothing or other objects. This prohibition does not include cell phones, tablet

computers, laptops, or smart watches, although these and similar items remain subject to the prohibition on photography, audio or video recording, or transmitting live audio or video streaming described above.

This Order shall be enforced by the La Plata County Sheriff's Department, Durango Police Department, United States Marshals and their contract security personnel, The Archuleta County Sheriff's Department, The Pagosa Springs Police Department, the San Juan County Sheriff's Office and any other Court Facilities security staff or law enforcement officer as necessary and appropriate. This specifically includes enforcement of § 18-9-111 and § 18-9-117, C.R.S., and enforcement of orders in furtherance of the courts' contempt authority under C.R.C.P. 107. All persons shall comply with the lawful requests, directions, and orders of law enforcement officers and security personnel in the performance of their duties. Failure to do so will constitute a violation of this Order. This Order shall not operate to preclude law enforcement officers or security personnel from taking additional appropriate measures to ensure the orderly and peaceful conduct of court-related business in the Court Facilities.

APPROVED AND SIGNED this 14<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021.



Jeffrey K. Wilson  
Chief Judge  
Sixth Judicial District of Colorado