

Chief Judge, Twelfth Judicial
District

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



**CHIEF JUDGE
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
2024-02**

In accordance with the inherent authority of the Twelfth Judicial District (the “Courts”) to manage its facilities and proceedings, as well as the authority granted the Chief Judge of the Judicial District by Chief Justice Directive 95-01, the Chief Judge of the Twelfth Judicial District enters the following Order governing the use of electronic devices inside all court-related facilities located within the Judicial District including, but not limited to: the courthouse facilities in Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache Counties, and all probation and administrative offices whether located inside or outside of the above-listed courthouses (“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 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 must also provide a secure environment for all who enter the grounds of the Court Facilities. The Courts must further minimize activities that unreasonably disrupt or interfere with the 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 all court-related facilities located within the Judicial District including, but not limited to the courthouse facilities in Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache Counties, and all probation and administrative offices whether located inside or outside of the above-listed courthouses. Court Facilities also include, but are not limited to security screening areas, lobbies, elevators, judges’ chambers, clerk’s offices, collections offices, the Judicial Resource/Self Help Center, and probation offices as well as the hallways adjacent to these areas. This Order does not apply to the portions of the Court Facilities that are occupied and controlled exclusively by either the executive or

legislative branches of government, such as county commissioners' rooms and administrative offices, unless those facilities are being used as alternate court facilities.

This Order does not limit the authority of individual judicial officers to issue necessary and reasonable orders governing the use of electronic devices inside their courtrooms or in matters pending before them. An individual judicial officer may also further restrict or expand the use and possession of electronic devices in Court Facilities including, but not limited to, permitting the use of electronic devices at ceremonial events such as investitures, graduations, adoptions, and weddings.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

1. In Courtrooms:
 - a. If an electronic device is muted and is not disruptive, and if the presiding judge has not prohibited or restricted its use, electronic devices may be used for written communications (e.g., emails, text messages) and for access to the internet. This includes activities such as taking notes, preparing work product, scheduling future proceedings, displaying evidence, internet searching and browsing, and engaging in other similar functions. Unmuted devices may be used for court proceedings as specifically authorized by the presiding judge.
 - b. Except for security personnel and court personnel, no person shall use an electronic or other device to take photographs, make audio or video recordings, make telephone calls, or transmit live audio or video streaming of any proceeding or person.
 - c. 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.
2. All Other Areas of Court Facilities: Electronic devices may be used so long as they are not disruptive to 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 to do so by judicial officer or security personnel.
3. 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.

4. 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 any other electronic or other device 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 (e.g., “nannycams”), and any other recording or photography devices attached to or concealed in clothing or other objects.

This Order shall be enforced by the respective law enforcement departments in the Judicial District, and any other Court Facilities security staff or law enforcement officers as necessary and appropriate. This specifically includes enforcement of C.R.S. §§ 18-9-111 and 18-9-117, and enforcement of orders in furtherance of the Court’s contempt authority under C.R.C.P. 107. All persons shall comply with 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 Twelfth Judicial District.

Dated this 8th day of February 2024.

BY THE COURT:



Amanda C. Hopkins
Chief Judge, 12th Judicial District