

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
McDONOUGH COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

COUNTY ADMINSTRATIVE ORDER 2022-1

POLICY ON PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES

WHEREAS, the Illinois Supreme Court has adopted a Policy on Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs);

WHEREAS, said Policy defines PEDs to include personal computers, tablet computers, mobile phones, electronic calendars, e-book readers, smartwatches and similar devices;

WHEREAS, the Illinois Supreme Court recognized that many courthouses have current policies banning PEDs except for lawyers, jurors and other employees who need them and that this privilege should be extended to others including self-represented litigants and court visitors;

WHEREAS, the Policy respects the interest and needs of people who enter the courtroom while recognizing and serving the needs to maintain order and safety.

WHEREAS, the Policy requires courthouse to adopt a local Order consistent with the Supreme Court Order and that said local Order be posted at courthouses, including at its entrance, at the Circuit Clerk's Office and at each courtroom entrance.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. Any person may bring PEDs into the McDonough County Courthouse.
2. PEDs may be used in common areas including lobbies and hallways as long as it a) does not disrupt others, b) does not interfere with operations of Courthouse business and c) does not threaten the safety and security of others. PEDs may not be used to photograph or record litigants and/or witnesses. Further, no court visitor may use a Portable Electronic Device to harass, intimidate, or communicate about given testimony with a witness at any time.
3. All Portable Electronic Devices must be turned off or placed in "silent" mode at all times within Court Facilities.
4. No person may use a PED in a courtroom. The ONLY exception, is that the Judge may allow lawyers, parties, self-represented persons, witnesses and the press to use a PED to check calendars, present case-related information or for some other specific purpose.
5. Attorneys should advise their clients, witnesses and support staff about this Order.

6. No person may take photographs or audio or video recordings except as authorized by Illinois Supreme Court Rule 44.
7. Court visitors are prohibited from taking photographs, video images or making audio recordings of prospective jurors or jurors at any time. No court visitor may use a Portable Electronic Device to communicate or attempt to communicate with a potential juror or juror at any time.
8. No camera, video camera, video recording equipment and recording devices are allowed in the courthouse except as permitted by a Judge for ceremonial events such as marriages, investitures, graduations from problem solving courts or as authorized by Illinois Supreme Court Rule 44.
9. Anyone violating this Policy may be removed from the Courthouse, found in Contempt of Court or subject to other penalties under the law. A PED may be confiscated and held until the possessor leaves the Courthouse. Court personnel shall not be held responsible or liable for any damage to or loss of a confiscated item.
10. This Order is effective March 1, 2022.

Date:

February 17, 2022

ENTER:

William E. Parnell
Administrative Judge
McDonough County, Illinois