



COURT OF APPEAL OF QUEBEC

GUIDELINES OF THE COURT OF APPEAL OF QUEBEC CONCERNING THE USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES IN COURTROOMS

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Principles

A judge sitting alone or a panel, may, at their discretion:

- issue any order to ensure the maintenance of decorum and order and the proper conduct of the hearing; and
- authorize exemptions from these guidelines, according to the conditions they determine, whether on their own initiative or upon express request to that effect.

Definition and application

- An electronic device is equipment with one or more of the functions contemplated in these guidelines, including cellular phones, smart watches, electronic tablets, computers, audio recorders, video recorders, cameras and any other equipment the judge considers to be an electronic device.
- These guidelines apply, with the necessary changes, to every hearing, whether it is held in person or remotely and regardless of the technological means used.
- Everyone who violates these guidelines may be cited for contempt of court.

General prohibition for members of the public

- Unless it is to compensate for a disability, members of the public attending a hearing in person on Court premises must not handle or use an electronic device, which must be turned off at all times.
- Members of the public attending a hearing remotely are permitted to use an electronic device solely to access the hearing.
- No one may take photographs, take screenshots or make any audio or video recording of a hearing, and no one may disseminate such photographs, screenshots or recordings, in whole or in part.

Rules applicable to counsel and unrepresented parties

Counsel and unrepresented parties may, provided they respect the decorum and the orders in effect and provided they do not affect the maintenance of order, the conduct of the hearing (in person or remotely) or the digital recording system:

- use an electronic device (which must be kept at all times in silent or vibrate mode) for purposes of a file, including in order to participate in the hearing, make or consult notes, or consult an agenda, the appeal file, doctrine, legislation or jurisprudence.

Nonetheless, counsel and unrepresented parties must never:

- make or answer a phone call; or
- take photographs, take screenshots or make any audio or video recording, or disseminate such photographs, screenshots or recordings, in whole or in part.

Rules applicable to accredited journalists

Accredited journalists may, provided they respect the decorum and the orders in effect and provided they do not affect the maintenance of order, the conduct of the hearing or the digital recording system:

- use an electronic device (which must be kept at all times in silent or vibrate mode) for purposes of a file, including in order to participate in the hearing (in person or remotely), make or consult notes, consult an agenda, doctrine, legislation or jurisprudence, or disseminate or communicate short text messages, observations or information.

Nonetheless, journalists must never:

- make or answer a phone call;
- take photographs, take screenshots or make any video recording of a hearing, but may make audio recordings, the latter being permitted as a work tool; or
- disseminate such photographs, screenshots or recordings, in whole or in part.

The Honourable Manon Savard
Chief Justice of Quebec