



COURT OF APPEAL OF QUEBEC

GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES IN COURTROOMS

Issued: April 15, 2013

Updated: June 1, 2016; February 21, 2020

Principles

Judges, whether sitting alone or on a panel, may, at their discretion:

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

An electronic device is equipment with one or more of the functions contemplated in these guidelines, including cellular phones, smart watches, electronic tablets, portable computers and any other equipment the judge considers to be an electronic device.

General prohibition for members of the public

Subject to the rules applicable to journalists, members of the public in attendance at a hearing must not use an electronic device. Consequently, all electronic devices must be turned off. Moreover, members of the public must not handle such a device in a manner that suggests it is being used.

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 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 prepare or consult notes, an agenda, doctrine, legislation or jurisprudence.

Nonetheless, counsel and unrepresented parties must never:

- make or answer a phone call;
- take photographs or make any audio or video recordings; or
- broadcast an audio or video recording of a hearing.

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 prepare or consult notes, an agenda, doctrine, legislation or jurisprudence.

Nonetheless, journalists must never:

- make or answer a phone call;
- take photographs or make any video recordings, but may make audio recordings, the latter being permitted as a work tool; or
- broadcast an audio or video recording of a hearing.

The Honourable Nicole Duval Hesler
Chief Justice of Quebec