

GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES IN COURTROOMS

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Underlying principle: The presiding judge may issue any order necessary to ensure the maintenance of decorum, the serenity and proper conduct of a hearing.

Witnesses and members of the public must always turn off their electronic devices within a courtroom and keep them turned off.

Example: No one may use an electronic device within a courtroom so as to appear to:

- converse or otherwise communicate by using the device;
- take photographs, record or otherwise create an image of anything transpiring within the courtroom.

Providing the decorum, serenity, orders in effect and proper conduct of a hearing and the courtroom's digital recording system are unaffected, an attorney, a party to the proceeding and a recognized journalist may:

- have an electronic device turned on that is in the vibration or silent mode, without responding to push notifications or alerts;
- use an electronic device for the purposes of a court file, such as to draft or consult notes, an agenda, doctrinal sources, legislation or jurisprudence;
- transmit or communicate text messages, comments, information and notes.

It is prohibited at all times:

- to use or be in possession of any device that may interfere with the decorum or proper conduct of a hearing, to interfere in any manner with the digital recording system of a courtroom or otherwise to obstruct the course of justice;
- to place or answer a telephone call;
- to take photographs or make any audio or visual recordings in the courtroom;
- to distribute photographs or broadcast audio or visual recordings from within a courtroom.

Electronic devices include cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, tablet computers, laptop computers and similar devices.