

The Court may adjust the policy or deviate from its application as unique conditions warrant, at the discretion of the Presiding Judge and/or Court Administrator. This policy is a general guideline only. This policy is not a binding contract and may not be treated as such. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement should also refer to the appropriate agreement.



The Municipal Court of Seattle Court Administration Manual Policies and Procedures

Chapter Title: **Access & Use of Electronic Portable Devices in the Court & Courtrooms**

Section #: **MCS-10-1.08**

Effective Date: **November 15, 2010**

Purpose: To balance the use of electronic portable devices with the competing needs of the press, attorneys of record, judges, jurors, witnesses, and members of the public entering the courthouse and its courtrooms. These policy guidelines do not supersede or replace GR 16, Cameras in the Courtroom.

Policy: This policy sets forth guidelines for accessibility and use of electronic portable devices in the courthouse and in courtrooms.

I. Application of policy:

- A. Persons entering the courthouse and/or courtrooms
 - 1. Press
 - 2. Attorneys of record
 - 3. Judges
 - 4. Jurors
 - 5. Witnesses
 - 6. Members of the public
- B. Electronic portable devices
 - 1. Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
 - 2. Cell phones
 - 3. Blackberry and similar hand-held text messaging devices
 - 4. Pocket PCs
 - 5. Laptop computers

II. Guidelines

- A. Access of Electronic Devices in the Courthouse
 - 1. All persons granted entrance to the courthouse are permitted to possess electronic devices.
 - 2. Persons possessing an electronic device may use that device while in common areas of the courthouse, such as the lobby and corridors, subject to restrictions on the time, place, and manner of such use that are appropriate to maintain safety and pedestrian traffic.

- B. Access of Electronic Devices in the Courtroom - A judicial officer may prohibit or restrict use of electronic devices in courtrooms. The Department of Adult & Juvenile Detention's policy prohibits electronic devices in the jail courtroom in the King County Correctional Facility.

References: Media Law Resource Center
United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (Feb. 25, 2010)
Administrative Office of the U. S. Courts, *Considerations in Establishing a Court Policy Regarding the Use of Wireless Communication Devices*
Electronic Devices in Supreme and Appellate Courts, The Use and Possession of Electronic Devices in Superior Court Facilities (Connecticut)
United States District Court, Eastern District of Missouri General Order on Electronic Device Policy

Approved: Edsony Charles 11/10/10
Edsony Charles, Presiding Judge Date

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