

State	Cell Phone Policy Overview
<b>Alaska</b>	Permitted; used regularly in family law proceedings. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Arizona</b>	Permitted; may use portable electronic devices (PED) in the courtroom to retrieve/store information, access the internet and send/receive text messages or information; prohibits calls, other audio functions, photography or recording in courtroom. <sup>2</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Phone of client's family member rang during a hearing, and the judge fined her \$50.<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Arkansas (First Judicial Court)</b>	Permitted; must be turned off and if it rings in the courtroom, it may result in confiscation. <sup>4</sup>
<b>California</b>	<u>Court of Appeals</u> : permits use of computers and tablets in courtrooms during appellate oral arguments but prohibits cellphones; violators are removed. <sup>5</sup> <u>Superior Court of California San Bernardino</u> : permits phones; prohibits photography, broadcasting or recording without prior approval; violations may result in confiscation with citations or monetary sanctions. <sup>6</sup>
<b>Connecticut</b>	Permitted to only make calls, send/receive emails and/or send/receive text messages but not in a courtroom/hearing room; may use in hearing/trial with judge permission; prohibits photography, audio/video recordings and broadcasting sound, images or videos. <sup>7</sup>
<b>D.C (District Court)</b>	Cellphone lockers located at public entrances.
<b>Georgia</b>	Permitted; must be turned off or on silent and can't be used; recommends calling ahead to find out if they are allowed in the courtroom. <sup>8</sup>
<b>Idaho</b>	Permitted in court facilities or courtrooms; may be used for note taking and such notes may be transmitted; prohibits recording/transmission of sounds or images. <sup>9</sup>
<b>Illinois (Cook County)</b>	Prohibited only at the Hon. George N. Leighton Criminal Court Building; limited number of free storage lockers available. <sup>10</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Removed cellphone lockers because people were allegedly storing contraband.<sup>11</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Kansas</b>	Permitted; must be turned off and put away out of sight in the courtroom; unrepresented parties may use a phone during court proceeding if sound is off, no disruption occurs and that person is sitting in a designated area. <sup>12</sup>
<b>Louisiana</b>	District Courts, Family Courts & Juvenile Courts: Judge may prohibit use of cellphones in a courtroom. <sup>13</sup>
<b>Maine</b>	Permitted; must be turned off prior to entering courtroom; any usage of devices with a camera may be confiscated unless authorized. <sup>14</sup>
<b>Maryland</b>	Permitted into court facility; sending/receiving calls and messages is allowed in the courthouse but recording/transmitting photos or videos is prohibited; must be turned off in the courtroom

<sup>1</sup> Stacey Marz, Director of Self-Help Services, Alaska Court System, 11/21/2017.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.azcourts.gov/Portals/20/2013%20Aug%20Rules/R%2013%200013.pdf> (effective 1/1/2014)

<sup>3</sup> Dina Afek, Volunteer Attorney Program Director at New Mexico Legal Aid, 11/28/2017.

<sup>4</sup> <https://courts.arkansas.gov/circuit/?q=node/2>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/4DCA-Electronic-Devices-in-the-Courtroom.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.sb-court.org/GeneralInfo/CellPhonePolicy.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.jud.ct.gov/ElectronicDevices\\_superior.pdf](https://www.jud.ct.gov/ElectronicDevices_superior.pdf) (effective 3/3/2014)

<sup>8</sup> [http://municipal.georgiacourts.gov/sites/default/files/Basic%20Rules%20of%20Court%20Conduct/basic\\_rules\\_of\\_court\\_conduct.pdf](http://municipal.georgiacourts.gov/sites/default/files/Basic%20Rules%20of%20Court%20Conduct/basic_rules_of_court_conduct.pdf) (revised 2013)

<sup>9</sup> <https://isc.idaho.gov/icar49> (effective 1/1/2013)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.cookcountycourt.org/HOME/CellPhoneElectronicDeviceBan.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> <https://chicago.suntimes.com/opinion/courthouse-cell-phone-policy-guilty-as-charged/> (4/5/2016)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.kscourts.org/kansas-courts/supreme-court/Orders/2013/2013SC62.pdf> (6/12/2013)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.lasc.org/rules/dist.ct/titleI.asp> (effective 1/1/2012)

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.courts.maine.gov/rules\\_adminorders/adminorders/JB-05-16.html](http://www.courts.maine.gov/rules_adminorders/adminorders/JB-05-16.html) (effective 5/1/2008)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ “Notice that the possession and use of cell phones and other electronic devices may be limited or prohibited in designated areas of the court facility shall be included prominently on all summonses and notices of court proceedings.”<sup>15</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Massachusetts</b>	Trial Courts: Permitted; must be turned off or on silent prior to entering courtroom; prohibits recording photos or videos unless authorized. <sup>16</sup> Further restrictions/prohibitions at the discretion of the First Justice/Regional Administrative Justice.
<b>Michigan</b>	Chief Judge may establish policy regarding use of cellphones, but no photographs of jurors or witnesses may be taken. <sup>17</sup>
<b>Missouri</b>	Supreme Court: prohibits cellphones in the building. <sup>18</sup>
<b>New Hampshire</b>	Permitted, unless presiding justice finds the use of a particular device disruptive; must be on silent in the courtroom. <sup>19</sup>
<b>New Jersey</b>	Permitted; can use for any purpose other than taking photos, recording and/or broadcasting in common areas; using to take notes, transcribe and receive communications and information is allowed in the courtroom only if the person executed an agreement for the Use of Electronic Devices (valid for 1 year); permission to photograph, record, broadcast and/or transmit requires a separate request. <sup>20</sup>
<b>New Mexico (First Judicial District Court)</b>	Permitted; parties are allowed to use cellphones to present evidence stored on the phone in many instances, particularly in cases with self-represented litigants (use is discretionary with the judge). <sup>21</sup>
<b>North Dakota</b>	Permitted; must be muted or turned off; prohibits photography, recording, broadcasting, storing or transmitting a proceeding without prior permission. <sup>22</sup>
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	Criminal Justice Center in Philadelphia began using magnetically sealing cellphone pouches (Yondr); individuals seal their cellphones when they enter, carry it around with them, and unseal at the unlocking station on their way out (the city courts spent \$50,000 to buy 4,500 Yondr pouches). <sup>23</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ About 20-30 cases of people mutilating or destroying these pouches without visiting the official unlocking station. Some people allegedly found out how to turn on their phones by touch and use the phone through Siri. Philadelphia court officials are now working with Yondr officials to improve pouches so that they are more resistant and larger to fit newer, larger cellphones.<sup>24</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Rhode Island</b>	Permitted; cellphone camera and video is prohibited in the courthouse and all usage is prohibited in courtrooms. <sup>25</sup>
<b>South Carolina</b>	Permitted; must be turned off or on silent; prohibits usage by attorneys, jurors, staff, litigants, witnesses and the public in all courtrooms in the state unless express permission of presiding judge. <sup>26</sup>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.circuitcourt.org/maryland-rule-16-110-cell-phones-other-eletronic-devices-cameras>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/location-details/trial-court-policy-on-possession-use-of-cameras-personal-electronic-devices>. For a list of Trial Court facilities that have banned the public’s use of cellphones and portable electronic devices (PED), see <http://www.mass.gov/courts/court-info/trial-court/exec-office/ocm/banned-electronic-devices.html>

<sup>17</sup> <http://courts.mi.gov/Courts/MichiganSupremeCourt/rules/Documents/HTML/CRs/Ch%208/Court%20Rules%20Book%20Ch%208-Responsive%20HTML5/index.html#t=Court Rules Book Ch 8%2FCourt Rules Chapter 8%2FCourt Rules Chapter 8.htm>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=688>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.courts.state.nh.us/supreme/orders/order011108.pdf> (1/11/2008)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.judiciary.state.ni.us/public/assets/guidelines.pdf> (effective 2/2/2015)

<sup>21</sup> Sarah Singleton, Judge Pro Tem, First Judicial District, 11/27/2017

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.ndcourts.gov/court/rules/ndroc/rule10.1.htm> (effective 3/1/2015)

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.metro.us/philadelphia/to-crack-down-on-witness-intimidation-philly-courts-to-ban-phones/zsJqbW--FT1JB1B1hX8Q> (2/23/2017)

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.philly.com/philly/news/crime/Some-find-ways-to-defeat-Phila-courts-new-locking-cellphone-pouch.html> (4/7/2017)

<sup>25</sup> [https://www.courts.ri.gov/PublicResources/PDF/Court\\_House\\_Rules.pdf](https://www.courts.ri.gov/PublicResources/PDF/Court_House_Rules.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.sccourts.org/courtOrders/displayOrder.cfm?orderNo=2000-08-25-01> (8/25/2000)

<b>South Dakota</b>	The Second and Third Judicial permits cellphones in court buildings as long as they are turned off or on silent and are not used for recording or photography. <sup>27</sup> But the Fourth Judicial Circuit prohibits camera-equipped cellphones in all courthouses. <sup>28</sup>
<b>Utah</b>	Permitted; can use in common areas and also silently inside courtroom except for recording/transmitting images or sounds; judge may further restrict use in the courtroom but they are encouraged not to do so unless use of PED might interfere with administration of justice, disrupt proceedings, pose safety threat etc. <sup>29</sup>
<b>Vermont</b>	Permitted; can use in public areas and may even use in the courtroom for purposes other than oral communication (eg. text messaging); otherwise must be on silent in the courtroom. <sup>30</sup>
<b>Virginia (Eastern District of Virginia)</b>	<p>One court had a vending machine for storing phones. Some courts provided jurors with lockers for storing phones and belongings in the juror room using a quarter, which is given back once the key is returned (Abel Mattos, Admin. Office of US Courts, 11/21/2017).</p> <p>Model Policy on "Use of Portable Electronic Devices in Courthouses" (Endorsed by the Virginia Access to Justice Commission 12/7/2017)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Calls for a uniform statewide policy for authorizing the carrying and use of PEDs in courthouses</li> <li>▫ Recommendations: (1) allow PED, excluding purely video recording equipment, subject to screening; (2) allow device use in common areas or if needed, in designated areas; (3) allow attorneys, self-represented litigants and witnesses to use devices inside the courtroom to check calendars or present case-related information, unless the judge prohibits; (4) prohibit photography, video and audio recording/transmission; (5) any violations may result in removal from courthouse, penalties, and/or confiscation</li> </ul>

Note: Almost all of these policies allow changes, including further restrictions or prohibitions, at the discretion of judges.

<sup>27</sup> [https://ujs.sd.gov/media/secondcircuit/Tech\\_Brochure.pdf](https://ujs.sd.gov/media/secondcircuit/Tech_Brochure.pdf); [http://ujs.sd.gov/Third\\_Circuit/Local\\_Procedures/mediainfo.aspx](http://ujs.sd.gov/Third_Circuit/Local_Procedures/mediainfo.aspx)

<sup>28</sup> [http://ujs.sd.gov/Fourth\\_Circuit/Links/technology.aspx](http://ujs.sd.gov/Fourth_Circuit/Links/technology.aspx)

<sup>29</sup> [https://www.utcourts.gov/resources/rules/ucja/ch04/4-401\\_02.htm](https://www.utcourts.gov/resources/rules/ucja/ch04/4-401_02.htm)

<sup>30</sup> [https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/sites/default/files/documents/Administrative\\_Directive\\_28.pdf](https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/sites/default/files/documents/Administrative_Directive_28.pdf) (11/12/2008)