

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

ORDER

**REGARDING POSSESSION AND USE OF PORTABLE
ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND RECORDING EQUIPMENT**

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. **PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** “Portable Electronic Device” means personal computers, tablet computers, mobile telephones (including cellular phones and telephone with camera(s) and audio and video recording and transmission capabilities), electronic calendars, e-book readers, smart watches, or any other electronic personal communication device.
2. **POSSESSION AND USE OF PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES (“PED”):** Possession of PED’s shall be permitted inside the courthouse, subject to security screening, including courthouse screening devices, **and/or** this Court’s February 28, 2025 Order **and** the following rules:¹
 - a. **USE IN COMMON AREAS:** Courthouse visitors otherwise authorized to carry their PED into the courthouse (see this Court’s 02/28/2025 Order) may use PED while in common areas of the courthouse, including but not limited to lobbies, hallways, or other designated areas within the courthouse. Further restrictions, including restricting cellular telephone conversations to designated areas, may be imposed as needed to maintain safety (including pedestrian traffic, ingress, and egress), security, proper decorum, order and the proper administration of justice. All PED must be placed in silent mode, such as vibrate, at all times within the courthouse.
 - b. **USE TO RECORD/BROADCAST/TRANSMIT/LIVESTREAM FROM INSIDE COURTHOUSE:** Photography, video recording, audio recording (subject to the provisions of Va. Code Ann. §16.1-69.35.2), and/or other audio or video transmission from inside the courthouse is prohibited except with prior written authorization from a judge of the Circuit or District Court.
 - c. **USE IN COURTROOMS:** Subject to the provisions of Va. Code Ann. §16.1-69.35.2 and this Court’s 2.28.25 Order, PED’s shall not be used inside of any

¹This Order may be subject to modification pending action by the General Assembly on SB 83.

courtroom without prior authorization from the presiding judge. A presiding judge may authorize the possession and use of PED's in the courtroom and may impose restrictions on such possession and use as needed to maintain safety, security, proper behavior, order, and the administration of justice. If PED's are permitted by the presiding judge, they must remain on silent mode at all times. PED's shall only be used for the purposes and in the manner authorized by the presiding judge.

- d. **CONFISCATION OF EQUIPMENT AND EJECTION OF USER:** Any person using a PED in violation of this Order, and the Court's February 28, 2025, Order, may be removed from the Courthouse, found in contempt of court, and/or subject to penalties as provided by law. Any PED used in violation of this Order, or any other court order or policy, may be confiscated. The Sheriff shall not be responsible or liable for any damage to or loss of a confiscated device.
- e. **FURTHER LIMITATIONS BY JUDGES:** A Circuit or District Court judge may further limit or ban use of any PED pursuant to Va. Code Ann. §19.2-266 (to regulate media coverage of judicial proceedings); or if possession or use of a PED may or does interfere with the administration of justice, or cause any threat to safety or security, or for any other reason within the discretion of the presiding judge.

- 3. **OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** Subject to Va. Code Ann. §19.2-266, other devices such as cameras, video cameras, video recording equipment and recording devices ("other electronic devices") not classified as PED are not permitted in the courthouse except for use at special events with prior written authorization by a judge of the Circuit or District Court. Other electronic devices may be allowed in the courthouse with prior written authorization by a judge of the Circuit or District Court.
- 4. Nothing in this Order is intended to either expand or limit the Circuit or District Courts' authority pursuant to Va. Code Ann. §19.2-266 to regulate media coverage of judicial proceedings.
- 5. This Order is effective this date and shall be read together with this Court's February 28, 2025, Order Regarding Alexandria Courthouse Screening and Prohibited Items Policy.

ENTERED this 11th day of March, 2026.


Kathleen M. Uston, Chief Judge