

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND**

GENERAL ORDER
REGARDING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES
BY MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA

This General Order is hereby issued regarding the use of electronic devices by members of the media, and applies only to proceedings in which the judicial officer has approved a standing exemption to LR Gen 112.¹ The judicial officers who have approved a standing exemption can be found on the Media Resources section of the Court's website and in the attached notice.

Subject to the prohibition against photographing, recording, and video or audio broadcasting, members of the media may bring electronic devices into the U.S. Courthouse and the portion of the John O. Pastore Building ("Courthouse") occupied by the Court, and may use those devices in a courtroom for reporting on those proceedings, including electronic transmissions, if the following conditions are met:

1. A **Request for the Use of Electronic Devices Form**, which is available on the Court's website or by clicking [here](#), must be completed and approved. A completed form must be submitted to the Clerk's Office via email to media@rid.uscourts.gov. The Clerk's Office will promptly notify the applicant of the action taken on the request. Approved requests are non-transferrable, and are valid for as long as the member of the media maintains employment or affiliation with the media organization identified on the form. If there is a change in media organization affiliation, the member of the media must submit a new request.
2. Upon arrival at the Courthouse, those members of the media who have an approved request for the use of electronic devices must present valid picture identification to the court security officers, and submit to standard security screening. The identification must match that of the name appearing on the approved list in order to enter the Courthouse with electronic devices. No exceptions will be made.
3. The provisions of LR Gen 112 prohibiting the photographing, recording, and video or audio broadcasting of any proceedings, events or activities in or from any interior portion of the Courthouse remain in effect, and those actions are strictly prohibited.
4. In addition to the prohibition on photographing, recording, and video or audio broadcasting, members of the media will be expected to operate any devices in such a manner as to not interfere with or distract from the proceedings. All devices must be in silent mode, with ring tones and other functional sounds disabled. Only quiet keyboards may be used. Please note: there is no Wi-Fi access in the Courthouse.

¹ This General Order supersedes the General Order Regarding the Use of Electronic Devices by Members of the Media issued on January 31, 2014. The General Order is being reissued in light of the deletion of LR Gen 111 from the Court's Local Rules and amendments to LR Gen 112 effective December 1, 2016.

5. The use of electronic devices is permitted in public areas in the Courthouse and in areas designated for use by members of the media. However, members of the media should not use a device for voice telephone or audible electronic communication in close proximity to a courtroom.
6. A presiding judge may always limit the applicability of this standing exemption in any given case. Members of the media with any questions should consult the courtroom deputy prior to the start of the proceeding.
7. Other than those courtrooms presided over by a judicial officer who has adopted the standing exemption, the provisions of LR Gen 112 remain in full effect as to all other court proceedings. Members of the media must surrender their electronic devices to the court security officer at the entry screening post if they want to enter a courtroom of a judicial officer who has not adopted this standing exemption.
8. Members of the media who violate any of these provisions will be asked to leave the Courthouse. Failure to abide by these rules and practices may result in court sanctions, including the revocation of an approved Request for the Use of Electronic Devices.

December 1, 2016

/s/ William E. Smith, Chief Judge