

POLICY REGULATING JURORS' USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING JUROR SERVICE

Purpose:

This policy regulates the use of electronic devices by jurors in order to minimize disruptions, preserve the integrity of court and other judicial proceedings, and avoid even the appearance of juror impropriety. In addition to all wireless communication devices, including but not limited to cell phones, personal computers, and personal digital assistants, this policy regulates the use of any device that is capable of providing Internet access and any device that can be used to record or transmit sound or images, whether video images or still images. This will cover microprocessor-based devices and mechanical.

Policy:

All jurors will be advised to turn off their electronic devices when in a courtroom or grand jury room, including rooms used for state grand jury.

Jurors who are seated on a trial or a grand jury will be instructed to turn off all electronic devices that have the capabilities described above, and that those devices cannot be used in a deliberation room or grand jury room, including rooms used for state grand jury. Use of such devices will be restricted to court recesses when a juror is outside the deliberation room or courtroom, unless ordered otherwise by the judge.

At no time during a juror's service in trial court is the juror permitted to provide an account of juror service to others, including any participants in the trial, through any electronic means, such as shared sites. Note that grand jurors cannot share information at any time, even after completion of their service, because of the confidentiality of grand jury proceedings. No juror is permitted to research information about the case, including any participants in the trial, through any means, including electronic means. Any violations will be reported to the judge. Jurors will be provided with a telephone number at which family members and others may contact them should that be necessary during their trial service or grand jury service.

This policy does not prevent a judge from ordering additional measures regarding the use or possession of such devices by jurors during a trial should the judge determine that such action is necessary. Such additional measures may include requiring jurors to temporarily surrender such devices. Among other options, judges may require that jurors store devices in a visible multipart holder; secure devices in a locked storage unit; or temporarily turn over devices to court personnel to maintain securely in an internet-blocking container.

Jurors will be advised of this policy at juror orientation and the policy will be available in juror assembly rooms and will be posted in deliberation rooms and grand jury rooms, including those used for state grand jury. As an alternative or in addition to the options above, judges may require jurors to sign a statement confirming understanding of this policy, including the potential consequences for violation.