

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

FILED
U.S. DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT ARKANSAS

IN THE MATTER OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES
IN THE COURTHOUSE

APR 16 2009

JAMES W. MCCORMACK, CLERK
By: Hauke Robinson
DEP. CLERK

AMENDED GENERAL ORDER NO. 54

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. Electronic devices are prohibited in courthouses beyond the security checkpoint except as allowed by this General Order and Local Rule 83.2.
2. The prohibition in paragraph 1 does not apply to the possession of electronic devices by employees and visiting employees of courthouse tenant agencies and contractors approved by the General Services Administration.
3. Members of the public may bring into a courthouse cell phones, Blackberries and PDA type devices that do not have the capacity to take photographs or to make films. However, each cell phone, Blackberry or PDA type device must be turned off and put away before a person carrying it enters into a courtroom and must remain off and remain put away while in the courtroom.
4. Lawyers and staff employed by the Department of Justice or the Federal Public Defender's Office may bring cell phones, laptop computers, Blackberries and PDA type devices into courthouses whether or not those devices have the capacity to take photographs or make films.
5. Upon request, the Court may issue an order authorizing other lawyers, their staff or support personnel, and law enforcement officers attending a proceeding to bring cell phones, laptop computers, Blackberries, and PDA type devices into a courthouse while attending the proceeding whether or not those devices have the capacity to take photographs or films. An

order authorizing a lawyer, his/her staff or support personnel, or law enforcement officer to bring an electronic device into a courthouse will identify the person so authorized by name and specify the date or dates during which permission is granted. That person must then present the order and a photo I.D. to Court Security Personnel at the security checkpoint. A person who is allowed an electronic device into a courthouse pursuant to this paragraph, and has subsequent court hearings within the courthouse on the same day, will be allowed to retain the electronic device during his or her time at the courthouse.

6. Active attorneys licensed to practice in Arkansas and the Eastern District of Arkansas may request issuance of a “Court Technology Permit” by the Clerk of Court. The permit card will be effective for two years. The Clerk will issue the permit card to those attorneys who make written request when paying their biennial assessment. The permit card will contain the attorney’s name, firm, city, state and Arkansas bar number. If an attorney presents a permit card and a photo identification upon entering the courthouse, he or she will be allowed to bring cell phones, lap tops, Blackberries and PDA type devices into the courthouse whether or not those devices have the capacity to take photos or make film. In the event an attorney’s permit is lost, the attorney should notify the Clerk’s office as soon as possible.

7. A person who brings an electronic device into a courthouse pursuant to paragraphs 4, 5, and 6 above will be subject to the following rules:

- (a) that person may not record, photograph, or film anyone or anything inside the courthouse;

- (b) cell phones, Blackberries or PDA type devices must be turned off and put away when in courtrooms; and
- (c) wireless internet components of electronic devices must be deactivated when in district courtrooms.

The United States Marshals Service is hereby directed to enforce this General Order. A violation of paragraph 7(a), (b), or (c) may result in seizure of the electronic device, withdrawal of the privilege to bring an electronic device into the courthouse, or other sanctions. A violation of the prohibition on recording, photographing, or filming anyone or anything inside the courthouse may be punished as contempt of court.

8. Before persons with electronic devices are granted entry into the courthouse, all devices must be examined by the United States Marshals Service or Court Security Personnel. This examination includes, but is not limited to placing the device through electronic screening machines and requiring the person possessing the device to turn the power to the device off and on.

9. The United States Marshals Service may further restrict electronic devices from entering the building should a threat assessment so dictate.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 16th of April, 2009.



J. LEON HOLMES, CHIEF JUDGE