

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT* FOR HOWARD COUNTY

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2012-02

ORDER AMENDING ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2011-07

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT, CELL PHONES AND COMPUTERS

In conformity with MD Rules of Procedure § 16-110, it is this 18th Day of April 2012, by the undersigned Administrative Judge of the Circuit Court for Howard County, Maryland,

ORDERED, that cell phones, computers and other electronic equipment may be brought into the courthouse, subject to inspection by security personnel and the restrictions set forth below:

Once a cell phone, computer or other electronic equipment is inside the courtroom, it must at all times be turned off – not in vibrate mode (except as allowed by a Judge or Master in the courtroom). All electronic equipment must also be stored so that no part is visible.

Electronic equipment may not be used for sending and receiving calls and/or messages except in the following circumstances: (i) in the courtroom when expressly authorized by a Judge or Master; (ii) in a jury assembly room or jury deliberation rooms when the jury is NOT deliberating or when a presiding Judge has not prohibited their use during a particular case; or (iii) in the courthouse lobby, hallways or court offices, or any area in which court staff and others waiting are not disturbed by the use of electronic equipment.

The use of any electronic equipment as a camera is expressly prohibited in all areas of the courthouse with the exception that the head of an agency department may allow photographic equipment within the confines of their offices only. In addition, exceptions to this order may be granted for adoption proceedings, marriage ceremonies and high school mock trial competitions; and it is further

ORDERED, that if there is any violation, the electronic equipment, cell phone or computer will be confiscated by the Sheriff's Office and will only be returned to the person between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. If the person leaves the building prior to that time, he or she will need to return during the designated hours to retrieve the equipment from the Sheriff's office; it is further

ORDERED, that there will be no liability on the part of the Court, Court personnel, Sheriff's Office, or any one else for a lost or damaged equipment; and it is further

ORDERED, that this policy be available at the Security Checkpoint entering the Courthouse, and posted on the public notice board near the entrance to the Courthouse. It will also be posted on the Circuit Court for Howard County's website. Jurors will be provided this information during juror orientation. All persons bringing a cell phone, computer or electronic equipment into the courthouse will be bound by the terms of the policy.

/s/

Lenore R. Gelfman
County Administrative Judge

*Any time the word "Court" or Courthouse" is used, it shall also include any area location in which Court business is being transacted/conducted.