

VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF WINCHESTER  
AND COUNTY OF FREDERICK

Joint Judicial Center Order Regarding Portable Electronic Devices

Whereas, the term "Portable Electronic Device" is defined to include personal computers, tablet computers, mobile telephones (including cell phones and any form of telephone with cameras and audio and video recording and transmission capabilities), electronic calendars, e-book readers, and "smart" watches; and

Whereas, the use and possible misuse of portable electronic devices present legitimate security concerns including: weapons can be disguised as portable electronic devices; portable electronic devices can be misused to create unauthorized video and audio recordings that could be posted on social media or in other public forums; portable electronic devices could be misused for unauthorized communications with jurors or witnesses or for threats and intimidation directed toward parties, witnesses, jurors or others; and

Whereas, every person who enters the City of Winchester/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center must be protected from such dangers and behavior; and

Whereas, the use and misuse of portable electronic devices can cause either intentional or unintentional disruptions in the order and processes of the courts; and

Whereas, the City of Winchester/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center has two points of public entry; and

Whereas, while it would be advantageous for the public to be able to use portable electronic devices in the common areas of the City of Winchester/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center such as lobbies and hallways, the advantage to the public is outweighed by the cost to the public to post additional security at the entrance to each courtroom to monitor compliance with a portable electronic devices policy for each courtroom; and

Wherefore, it is ADJUDGED, ORDERED, and DECREED that all portable electronic devices are prohibited within the City of Winchester/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center. The following individuals are exempted from this prohibition:

1. A Federal, State or (Virginia) law enforcement or probation and parole officer who displays his or her credentials upon request.
2. An employee of the Winchester City/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center.
3. Any attorney displaying a Bar Card or the employee of an attorney entering the courthouse for the purpose of conducting court or an official hearing, and who displays his or her credentials upon request.
4. An individual who displays a current jury summons and who is entering in response to such summons.

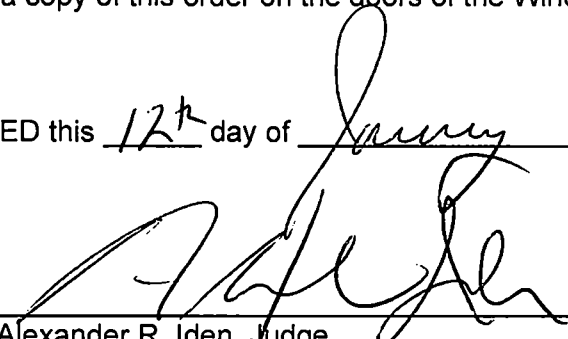
5. An official of a governmental agency entering the courthouse for the purpose of conducting court, an official hearing or court duties, and who displays his or her credentials upon request.
6. A litigant having evidence needed for court stored on a portable electronic device, after gaining permission from the court.
7. Any person displaying written permission to bring such device into the courthouse issued by a resident Judge holding court in the Winchester City/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center or by express permission by the Winchester City Sheriff.

It is further ADJUDGED, ORDERED, and DECREED that the Sheriff for the City of Winchester shall provide secure storage lockers, prior to the point of entry, at the security entrance to the City of Winchester/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center for anyone who is not allowed to bring their devices into the City of Winchester/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center.

It is further ADJUDGED, ORDERED, and DECREED that any person using a Portable Electronic Device in violation of this or any other court order or policy may be removed from the City of Winchester/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center, found in contempt of court, and subject to penalties as provided by law. Any Portable Electronic Device used in violation of this or any other court order or policy may be confiscated, and the Sheriff shall not be responsible or liable for any damage or loss of a confiscated device.

This order supersedes and replaces all previous orders concerning Portable Electronic Devices. The Clerk is directed to post a copy of this Order on their Bulletin Board, Website, and to prominently display a copy of this order on the doors of the Winchester City/Frederick County Joint Judicial Center.

ENTERED this 12<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Alexander R. Iden, Judge

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William W. Eldridge, IV, Judge

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian M. Madden, Judge