

# TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT CIRCUIT COURT OF WILL COUNTY



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DANIEL L. KENNEDY  
Chief Judge

## PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2022-4**

Earlier this month, the Supreme Court of Illinois established a policy regarding the use of portable electronic devices in court facilities. Chief Judge Dan Kennedy has today issued Administrative Order 2022-4, which modifies current court practices to comply with the new Supreme Court policy. Court visitors will be permitted to bring portable electronic devices (*i.e.*, smartphones, tablets, computers, smartwatches, and e-books) into Twelfth Judicial Circuit Court facilities (*i.e.*, the Will County Courthouse, the Will County Court Annex, the River Valley Justice Center, and all branch court facilities) effective January 31, 2022.

Administrative Order 2022-4 (attached) allows individuals to bring portable electronic devices into court facilities but restricts the time, place, and way such devices may be used. All devices brought into Court facilities must be put on "silent" mode. Within common areas of court facilities, visitors will be able to use portable electronic devices if they are not causing a disruption to court facility operations or to others within court facilities. However, the taking of photos, audio recordings, or video recordings, whether they are in the courtrooms or in common areas is strictly prohibited. Individuals violating the Administrative Order may have their device confiscated, be removed from court facilities, be found in Contempt of Court or be subject to penalties as provided by law.

"Electronic devices such as cell phones and tablets have become essential tools today, and the Courts must adapt with the times. Many of these devices are used by self-represented litigants in their cases, and they have become more vital for presenting evidence," said Chief Judge Daniel Kennedy. "We greatly appreciate the cooperation of Sheriff Kelley and all elected and appointed officials in creating and implementing this Order. Of course, there will be some challenges along the way, but I am confident that our bailiffs, court security officers and judges will be able to balance the need for these devices with the safety of everyone working and using the Courts." Chief Judge Kennedy added.

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STATE OF ILLINOIS        )  
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COUNTY OF WILL         )

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2022-4

PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICE PROTOCOLS

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WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of Illinois issued a Policy on Portable Electronic Devices in January 2022 (hereinafter “the Policy”);

WHEREAS, the Policy sets forth the time and manner in which said Portable Electronic Devices may be used in Court Facilities;

WHEREAS, the Policy defines Portable Electronic Devices as “mobile devices capable of electronically storing, accessing, or transmitting information and is defined to include personal computers, tablet computers, mobile telephones (including cell phone and any form of telephone with cameras and audio and video recording and transmission capabilities), electronic calendars, e-book readers, smart watches, or similar devices.”

WHEREAS, for the purposes set forth in this Order, Court Facilities means the Will County Courthouse, the Will County Court Annex, the River Valley Justice Center, and all branch court facilities.

WHEREAS, in summary, the Policy states:

1. All court visitors may use Portable Electronic Devices in the common areas of Court Facilities, such as lobbies and hallways, unless otherwise Ordered by the Court. Such use must be conducted with proper decorum and with courtesy for other Court visitors. However, the taking of photographs, and audio and video recordings in all areas of Court Facilities are prohibited without prior approval of the Chief Judge/Trial Court Administrator.
2. All Portable Electronic Devices must be placed in “silent” mode at all times within Court Facilities.
3. Court visitors are prohibited from taking photographs, video images or making audio recordings of prospective jurors or jurors at any time. No court visitor may use a Portable Electronic Device to communicate or attempt to communicate with a potential juror or juror at any time.
4. Court visitors are prohibited from taking photographs, video images or making audio recordings of witnesses at any time. No court visitor may use a Portable Electronic Device to harass, intimidate, or communicate about given testimony with a witness at any time.

5. Cameras, video cameras, video recording equipment and recording devices not classified as Portable Electronic Devices are not allowed in Court Facilities without the expressed written approval of the Chief Judge/Trial Court Administrator and only on such conditions as approved. Examples of such circumstances include ceremonial events (e.g. weddings, Problem-Solving Court graduations, etc.) and where Extended Media Coverage has been approved.
6. If the Chief Judge of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit determines (based upon the recommendation of the Presiding Judge of the applicable division) that Portable Electronic Devices interfere with the administration of justice or cause a threat to safety or security, she/he may prohibit Portable Electronic Devices in specific courtrooms.
7. Court visitors using a Portable Electronic Device, or possessing other electronic devices, in violation of this or any other Court Order or policy, may be removed from Court Facilities, found in contempt of court, or subject to penalties as provided by law.
8. Any Portable Electronic Device used in violation of an Order may be confiscated and held until the possessor leaves the Court Facility. Court personnel shall not be responsible or liable for any damage to or loss of a confiscated Portable Electronic Device.

The Twelfth Judicial Circuit expressly adopts the Supreme Court Policy on Electronic Devices (attached) effective January 31, 2022.

Twelfth Judicial Circuit Administrative Orders 2009-19 and 2012-20 are hereby rescinded.



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Daniel L. Kennedy, Chief Judge

Circuit Clerk (Original)  
Judges  
State's Attorney  
Public Defender  
Will County Bar Associations



## Supreme Court of Illinois

January 6, 2022

### ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ANNOUNCES NEW POLICY ON PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The Illinois Supreme Court announced today the adoption of a policy which will require every state courthouse in Illinois to adopt individual orders or rules regarding the use of portable electronic devices in their courthouse buildings and in their courtrooms.

In adopting this policy, the Court recognizes that portable electronic devices such as cell phones, computers, tablet, e-book readers are essential tools of today's society. Many courthouses already possess policies which address the needs of lawyers, jurors, and other court users and staff to possess portable electronic devices in courthouses yet some bar members of the public and self-represented litigants (SRLs) from carrying their devices. The new policy acknowledges that portable electronic devices are often necessary for these court users and SRLs to access resources, conduct court business, accomplish procedural steps, and present evidence or arguments in their cases. The policy is available [here](#).

"The courts must adapt with the times, and this is an important way to address the needs of court users," Chief Justice Anne M. Burke said. "It is no longer realistic to ask people to leave cell phones and other electronics at home when they visit courthouses.

The new policy allows for individual courts to address any security issues by allowing restrictions on the use of portable electronic devices in the circuit court's local orders or rules. Courthouses will need to provide free storage for the equipment should the use of devices be restricted.

Courts will be required to post signs with information about their portable electronic device policies prominently in the courthouses, including at the entrances, in the clerks' offices, and outside each courtroom. This information must also be publicized on the courts' and clerks' websites and in other publicly available places.

"We thank the Supreme Court for adopting the policy and in recognizing the importance of cell phones and other portable electronic devices to SRLs and other individuals conducting business in our courthouses." said Justice Mary K. Rochford. "The Access to Justice Commission also expresses appreciation to the various stakeholders who helped form and develop this crucial policy."

The Illinois Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission (ATJ Commission) recommended the new policy to the Supreme Court with input from the Conference of Chief Judges. The Chair of the ATJ Commission is Justice Mary K. Rochford of the First Appellate District. The then Chair of the Conference of Chief Judges was Chief Judge Michael Kramer of the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial District.

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**(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Chris Bonjean, Communications Director to the Illinois Supreme Court at 312.793.2323 or [cbonjean@illinoiscourts.gov](mailto:cbonjean@illinoiscourts.gov).)**