

**STANDING ORDER AS TO USE OF CELLULAR PHONES, PORTABLE COMPUTERS,  
PHOTOGRAPHIC, RECORDING OR OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Rules of the Municipal Courts of the City of Houston, Texas gives the courts the responsibility of ensuring the dignity of court proceedings;


**WHEREAS**, technology continues to advance, making everyday devices capable of even greater variety of uses;


**AND WHEREAS**, the City of Houston Municipal Court Judges encourage the appropriate use of expanding technology in an effort to provide opportunities for parties, as well as their lawyers, assisting the court with moving their case in a timely and efficient manner without disruption to court proceedings;


**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** by the City of Houston Municipal Court Judges in an effort to protect the privacy of all parties, observers and court personnel conducting business from the unwanted conduct and intrusion from others in the courthouse that the following policy shall be in effect, commencing on June 1, 2025.

1. Photographing, filming, videotaping, audiotaping, broadcasting any person, object or proceeding or telecasting, in this courthouse, including courtrooms, jury assembly room and public/private spaces, is strictly prohibited, unless prior permission is obtained from the Director and Presiding Judge of the Houston Municipal Courts or their designee. Exceptions may include the following:
  - a. Ceremonial, marriage, or educational purposes, and exception to the above rule may be made by permission of the judge or court administrator;
  - b. Audio-recording, video-recording and photographic devices may be permitted during court proceedings with prior judicial permission.
2. **General Public Provision:** All smartphones, cellular phones, laptop computers and tablet computers shall be deactivated (turned-off) and not used in courtrooms. No social media shall be accessed while in the courtrooms. No broadcasting of court proceedings using any form of technology shall occur from courtrooms.
3. **Exemptions to This General Rule as Follows:**
  - a. Smartphones, cellular phones, laptop computers and tablet computers, placed on silent, may be used by attorneys, attorney staff, and defendants, in courtrooms under the following conditions: Permissible uses include but are not limited to: accessing proof of financial responsibility, accessing case files, taking notes during hearings or trials, and conducting research relevant to the instant case. Usage shall not delay or disrupt court proceedings. This portion shall also apply to juvenile case managers, court staff and law enforcement personnel doing court work from the courtroom.
  - b. Smartphones, laptop computers and tablet computers may be used in courtrooms by news media personnel for the limited purpose of making notes regarding the proceedings. Usage shall not disrupt court proceedings. Use of such devices in the courtroom shall be disclosed to the court clerk or bailiff prior to its use in the courtroom.
4. All persons appearing in the City of Houston Municipal Courts shall adhere to the Rules of the Municipal Courts of the City of Houston, Texas. Dignity and solemnity shall be maintained in the courtroom. There shall be no unnecessary conversation, loud whispering, newspaper or magazine reading, or other distracting activity in the courtroom while court is in session.
5. Failure to cease and desist upon request, or violation of this Court Order may result in confiscation of the cellular device, portable computer, photographic, recording, or other electronic equipment, formal escort out of the court building whereupon any attempt to re-enter may constitute and result in a charge of Criminal Trespass, and a finding of Contempt of Court.

**APPROVED:**

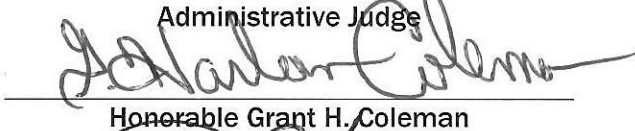
  
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Honorable Nelly Treviño Santos,  
Director and Presiding Judge

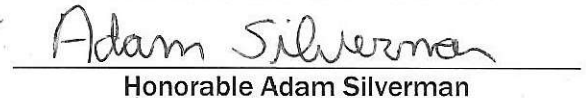
  
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Honorable Milhoa Vo,  
Associate Presiding Judge

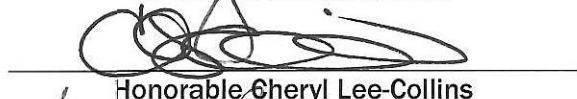
  
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Honorable Kim Edwards,  
Administrative Judge

  
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Honorable David O. Fraga,  
Evening Associate Presiding Judge

  
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Honorable Imelda Castillo

  
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Honorable Grant H. Coleman

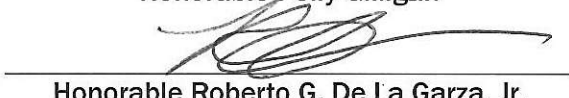
  
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Honorable Adam Silverman

  
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Honorable Cheryl Lee-Collins

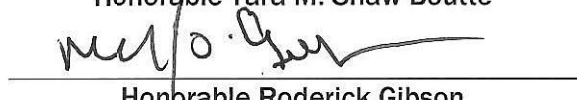
  
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Honorable Polly Gilligan

  
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Honorable Megan McLellan

  
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Honorable Tara M. Shaw Boutte

  
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Honorable Roberto G. De La Garza, Jr.

  
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Honorable Darryl Scott

  
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Honorable Roderick Gibson