

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

IN RE: Electronic Communication Devices      ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER: 19-02  
in the Family Justice Center

**ORDER**

WHEREAS, there have been repeated instances in the courtrooms of the Family Justice Center of inappropriate and unlawful use of electronic communication devices, including – but not limited to – cellular telephones and related devices; and

WHEREAS, these instances have included, but are not limited to: (1) Spectators in proceedings involving youth under the Court’s jurisdiction or awaiting adjudication taking photographs or video of such youth in Family Justice Center courtrooms, and subsequently posting such photographs and videos on social media platforms accessible to the general public; and (2) persons otherwise recording or attempting to record proceedings being conducted in Family Justice Center courtrooms; and

WHEREAS, the use of electronic communication devices in this manner violates – among other provisions of Missouri law – Missouri Supreme Court operating rules and Jackson County Local Rules and is, in all other respects, contrary to the best interests of the youth served by the 16<sup>th</sup> Circuit’s Family Court;

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that, effective July 1, 2019, absent leave granted for good cause by the Judge or Commissioner presiding over any proceeding conducted in a courtroom at the Family Justice Center, and subject to the exceptions set forth below, no person shall bring an electronic communication device into any courtroom at the

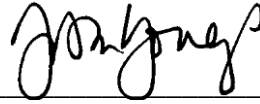
Family Justice Center. For purposes of this Order, the phrase “electronic communication device” shall include, but is not limited to, cellular telephones and “smart phones” such as iPhones and similar devices and any accessories thereto, Apple Watches and similar devices, iPads and similar devices, computers, personal digital assistants, digital cameras and video recorders, pagers, and two-way radios. All such devices shall be left outside the courtrooms. Family Court personnel will not secure such devices or otherwise accept any responsibility for their safekeeping. Persons entering the courtrooms and their personal belongings are subject to screening to ensure their compliance with this Order.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the provisions of this Order shall not apply to: (1) Attorneys and staff in the company of and subject to the direction of such attorneys; (2) employees of the Department of Social Services, including the Children’s Division and its contracted agencies, present in the courtroom for a case called by the Court; (3) employees of the Family Court; (4) CASA employees and volunteers present in the courtroom for a case called by the Court; (5) city, county, state, and federal law enforcement officers; (6) witnesses presenting testimony in a case called by the Court, (7) foreign language interpreters present in the courtroom for a case called by the Court; and (8) any other person granted specific permission by the Court for good cause shown. All electronic communication devices permitted within courtrooms pursuant to this Order shall be in silent mode.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any electronic communication device used in violation of this Order shall be subject to immediate confiscation. In addition, in the discretion of the Court, the violator or other responsible party may be subject to expulsion from the courtroom and other sanctions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

May 28, 2019



\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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J. DALE YOUNGS  
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

Copies to:

Presiding Judge  
Court Administrator  
Family Court Judges and Commissioners  
Deputy Court Administrator/Family Court  
Juvenile Officer  
Family Court Directors  
Assistant Legal Counsel/Family Court  
Office of the Guardian ad litem  
CASA Project  
Office of the Public Defender  
Children's Division, Jackson County offices  
Division of Legal Services (DSS), Jackson County office  
Chairs, Juvenile and Family Law Committees, KCMBA

  
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