Superior Court of California
County of Alameda
Courthouse
1225 Fallon Street
Oakland, California 94612

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

GENERAL DIRECTIVE BY THE PRESIDING JUDGE

DIRECTIVE NO: **2011-18**

SUBJECT: **ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN COURTHOUSES AND COURT FACILITIES**

General Provisions: Effective September 6, 2005, individuals are permitted to carry electronic devices into the courthouses and court facilities, but all electronic devices will be subject to x-ray or visual inspection by an authorized employee of the Alameda County Sheriff's Office.

Prohibition of Photographing or Recording: Unless otherwise ordered by a judge, between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and at all other times when the court is in session, the use of any form, means or manner of photographing or recording is prohibited in:

(1) Any and all courtrooms occupied by any judge.

(2) Any and all chambers assigned to any judge.

(3) Any and all areas used by the clerk and court staff.

(4) Any garage or parking facility, or any portion thereof, reserved for the judges.

(5) All hallways and public areas adjacent to the above-specified locations.

Cellular Phones: Absent permission of a judge, cellular phones must remain off in all courtrooms and in other designated areas.

Exceptions to this Directive:

(1) Official Recordings of Court Proceedings: Recordings made by official court reporters in the performance of their official duties are exempt from this directive.

(2) Ceremonial and Educational Programs: Photographing, recording (audio or video), broadcasting, transmitting, or televising of investitures, and other court approved ceremonial and educational programs may be permitted.

(3) Electronic Recording of Depositions: Videotaping or other electronic recording of depositions for trial purposes, or the preparation and perpetuation of testimony is permitted when taken by or under the direction of a judge of this court.

(4) Personal Recording Devices for Personal Notes: Inconspicuous personal recording devices may be used in a courtroom to make sound recordings as personal notes of the proceedings. A person proposing to use a personal recording device for personal notes must obtain permission from the judge in advance of its use. The recording must not be used for any purpose other than as personal notes.

Enforcement: Violation of the terms of this directive may result in the confiscation of the electronic device and the violator may be held in contempt of court as set forth in Code of Civil Procedure section 1209 and subject to sanctions, including civil liability for damages pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 177.5. The Alameda County Sheriff's Office is charged with the responsibility of taking necessary steps to enforce this directive.

Media Requests: Rule 1.150 of the California Rules of Court governs media requests. This directive does not apply to requests by the media.

Definitions:

"Electronic Devices" include cameras, video recorders, audio recorders, cellular or digital phones, palm pilots, personal digital assistant devices (pda's), and all similar electronic, cable, digital, computerized or other forms and methods of recording, transmitting, or communicating. This definition does not include notebook computers unless equipped with video or sound recording capability.

"Judge" means presiding judge, assistant presiding judge, supervising judge or the judicial officer or officers assigned to or presiding at the proceeding.

"Photographing" means recording a likeness, regardless of the method used, including by digital or photographic methods.

"Recording" means the use of any device to aurally or visually preserve court proceedings. As used in this directive, recording does not include the official court record.

This directive shall expire on December 31, 2011.

Issued: January 3, 2011

Hon. Jon R. Rolefson – Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of Alameda