



2020

MEDIA GUIDE

FOR TODAY'S COURTS



MANAGING THE MESSAGE



**National Association
for Court Management**

CONFERENCE OF COURT PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICERS



THE ASSOCIATION FOR COURT COMMUNICATORS



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No successful collaborative project is the result of a single person, but rather a group of individuals; volunteering their time, effort, and expertise toward a project goal. The 2020 Media Guide is a prime example of such success. Two organizations and dozens of volunteers, contributing toward a guide that will serve our courts in their media efforts for years to come.

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A Media Guide for Today's Courts

NACM / CCPIO

2020

Foreword

The overarching objective of court communications is to create, strengthen, and preserve support for the judicial system by demonstrating the branch's commitment to its mission and vision. This support is achieved through meaningful, professional communication between the courts and their internal and external stakeholders.¹ To be consistently meaningful and professional in both regular operations and unusual conditions, court communications should be handled by trained and designated spokespersons following guidelines reflective of the styles appropriate to various media and consistent with the judicial system's strategic purposes and goals.

In the United States, a majority of the public receives its information about the courts from media sources. Historically, these sources have been traditional media outlets associated with print and broadcast journalism, with supplementary information coming from dramatic portrayals in books, on television, and in movies. Increasingly, however, information about courts and the larger justice system is communicated through newer media. In the latest comprehensive public information survey conducted to gauge public trust and confidence in the courts, one key finding has been that the public, especially younger Americans, is heavily dependent on online news and social media as sources of information. Understandably, there are large discrepancies in social media usage based on age, gender, and race/ethnicity.² Given the great variety of media now available for court communication, those who would speak for the courts must be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each medium, as well as what medium or media are best for reaching particular audiences.

Since early in its history, the National Association for Court Management (NACM) has recognized the need for good public communication and the importance of relations with traditional media outlets. NACM has also recognized that the Judiciary has done the least, among the three branches of government, to assist the public and the news media in truly understanding its governmental functions. For that reason, starting in 1994, NACM has published several guides to help court leaders with media relations and the broader subject of court communication:

- *Media Guide* (1994);
- *Developing Comprehensive Public Information Programs for Courts* (1996);
- *Community, Creativity, Collaboration: A Community Dialogue for the Courts* (2001); and
- *The NACM Media Guide for Today's Courts* (2010).

The first of these guides focused on how courts should interact with traditional news media, and the guidance it offered was oriented toward practical considerations that related to media needs and perspectives, such as this “Summary of General Reminders for Media Relations”:

1. Establish ground rules.
2. Be available and be accurate.
3. Be sympathetic and aware of press deadlines.
4. Be honest and clear.
5. Always be on the record.
6. Speak in plain English.
7. Be fair and open in media relations
8. Respect the competitive nature of the media.
9. Be prepared for interviews.³

Even in 1994, in trying to provide advice about “The Media’s Perspective,” NACM recognized that there was no universal code of ethics governing the conduct of journalists. The 1994 Guide chose to remind court leaders that journalists’ general motive was to promote accuracy, fairness, and objectivity in news stories to serve the media’s primary mission of informing the public about events of importance and interest that the public had a right to know. By 2010, NACM had recognized that the existence of new technologies and new media had altered traditional assumptions about the intentions and ethics of those who reported about the courts, and the Guide published that year asked up front whether, in this new reality, recommendations about interactions between the media and court officials (judges and other professionals) needed to change.⁴

The 2010 Guide—a collection of articles written by court professionals, experts close to the courts, and reporters who cover the courts—addressed both the familiar fundamentals of court-media relations, e.g., Lorri Montgomery’s “As the Media World Changes, Don’t Abandon Many of the Basics” and Charlie Hall’s “How to Speak to the Media,” and the new reality in which the courts now found themselves, e.g., Ari Shapiro’s “The Changing Media” and Chris Davey’s “Putting Social Media to Work for the Court.” Among these articles were reassurances that the basic lessons of good communication still hold true, as well as acknowledgments that new technologies have the potential to help or hurt the courts with communication. There was a clear theme that simply ignoring new technologies and associated media was a good way to make sure that they would hurt. In our modern world, the public has an expectation that public information will be made available in a timely manner via convenient channels. By failing to take prudent advantage of new media channels to communicate important information, courts not only undermine public confidence in the effectiveness of their operations but also surrender themselves to the whims of modern “journalists” whose motives and ethics may offer no hindrance to the publication of stories that are unsupported by the facts.

In 2019 NACM decided that it should develop a new guide for court-media relations. NACM leaders believed that this guide should be designed as a comprehensive and cohesive resource covering the range of issues that are relevant to the subject rather than following the model of the 2010 Guide. As such, the new guide would have chapters devoted to the major issues, and the team of NACM members who had agreed to work on the project began to consider what the chapters should be and who should write them.

Although there were a number of NACM members who quickly agreed to assist with the writing, the project task group recognized that they should reach out to a group of professionals whose role in the courts had grown significantly since 1994 and from whose ranks some of the 2010 writers had been recruited. These, of course, were the court public information officers. So it was that NACM extended an invitation to the Conference of Court Public Information Officers (CCPIO) to collaborate on the development and publication of a new court-media relations guide. This guide is the result of that partnership.

The opening chapter of the *2020 Media Guide for Today’s Courts* is “Communicating the Court’s Message.” From the outset, this Guide attempts to convey that court communications with the media should take the form of conscious, purposeful messaging, not casual, unplanned remarks. Written by Karen Dalton-Koch, Krisanne M. LoGalbo, Dawn Palermo, Julie S. Van Hook, and Craig Waters, chapter 1 focuses on the basics of communication, including important goals in the larger context of advancing a court’s purposes and responsibilities. Courts have an affirmative duty to communicate effectively about their societal role and actual operations so that the public can witness and recognize when justice is being done. Properly addressing the media is necessary not merely to discourage the speculation that will inevitably occur in an information vacuum but also to actively counter the kinds of disinformation campaigns that thrive in our modern reality.

Chapter 2, “Drafting an Effective Press Release,” by Troy Brown, Nadine Maeser, and Jeffrey Tsunekawa, addresses how to prepare effective media communications. The authors describe appropriate content, style, and formatting considerations. They also distinguish a media advisory from a general news release and explain the different circumstances in which a court might choose to use one or the other. The chapter appendix includes sample advisories and news releases.

In Chapter 3, Zenell Brown, Kevin Lane, Sara Miles, Deirdre Roesch, and Craig Waters explore the realm of social media. Beyond discussing the general benefits of using social media, the *2020 Media Guide* identifies several common social media platforms and the communication uses to which each may be best suited. The authors offer practical guidance for employing social media, including how having codes of conduct and social media policies can improve the effectiveness of social media messaging while reducing the possibility of embarrassing or even ethically inappropriate posts.

There are circumstances in which media attention and communication pressures on the courts are greater than is the case during regular operations. Such circumstances are the subject of Chapter 4, “Managing High-Profile Trials and Emergency Situations,” in which Spencer Bickett, Karen Dalton-Koch, Kevin Lane, Nadine Maeser, Barbara Peck, and Craig Waters explain communication concerns and best practices in the context of conspicuous trials or conditions in which the status of a court facility or public health disrupts normal business. Again, the authors stress the theme of intentionality and planning to achieve best results. Recommendations address the benefits of having rules or orders—samples of which are provided—for managing the media and related security concerns. Similarly, the contents advise courts of the advantages of preparing a media packet to better serve media representatives while reducing workload demands on court staff. The chapter closes with a special addendum recounting communication lessons that courts have recently learned during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; for example, research in the spring and summer of 2020 indicates that social media such as Twitter and Facebook have proven to be the single most important component of crisis communications for many courts.

NACM and CCPIO encourage courts to take a positive approach and proactive role in managing relations with the media. The media play an important role in informing the public about the business of the courts. The successful fulfillment of courts’ purposes and responsibilities depends greatly upon public trust and confidence in the courts and the support of other branches of government, without which the legitimacy of court decisions may be questioned and the resources and conditions needed for judicial independence may be lost. Effective communication through traditional and new media enable the courts to raise their perceived social value and overall performance. It is the wish of our associations that this guide be a helpful resource to court professionals.

Kenneth G. Pankey, Jr., editor, NACM

Endnotes

- ¹ *Delivering Our Message: Court Communication Plan for the Judicial Branch of Florida* (Tallahassee: Supreme Court of Florida, 2016), p. 4; http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/pub_info/documents/2016-Judicial-Branch-Court-Communication-Plan.pdf.
- ² GBAO Strategies, *State of the State Courts: 2019 Poll* (National Center for State Courts, survey conducted November 18-23, 2019); <https://www.ncsc.org/survey>.
- ³ *Media Guide* (Williamsburg: NACM, 1994), p. 3.
- ⁴ “Executive Summary,” *The NACM Media Guide for Today’s Courts* (Williamsburg: NACM, 2010), p. 1.

CHAPTER 1



COMMUNICATING THE COURT’S MESSAGE

Media play an important role in the criminal justice system, functioning most often as a public watchdog. Used well, coverage can help instill confidence in our court system and the procedures used to bring guilty parties to justice, favorably influencing the public’s perception of the judiciary and the justice system.

Public knowledge of justice is largely derived from media coverage, as most in today’s society will never come to the court or observe a trial or hearing. The public relies on the press, social media, and technology to keep them current.

1.1 Importance of Effective Media Communication

Disinformation Thrives on Fear of the Unknown

The media has a duty to impart fair, impartial, and accurate information. If a court does not give the media the facts, reporters will speculate, which could taint their coverage. A court should be committed to facilitating access to court calendars, documents, and proceedings. It should also be ready to provide information regarding why restrictions on access or proceedings may need to be put into play.

Disinformation exploits fear of the unknown. If people know little about courts, they tend to believe false information in public commentary, including on social media. This situation feeds a lack of public trust and confidence and is one of the most characteristic features of public discourse in the 21st century.

Justice Must Be Seen

To counter this fear of the unknown and the disinformation that arises from it, courts must increasingly assume an active role in transmitting good information about themselves to the public. Such communication cannot be a one-time event; rather, it must be continuous because disinformation has become a continuous phenomenon due to 24/7 instant worldwide communications. More than ever in today's world, it is not enough that justice be done. People must also see justice being done. And they must be reminded of the historical role that courts have played and continue to play to benefit society.

Making sure that "justice is seen" does not mean courts must become less dignified. The goal is to make sure people see the courts as positive parts of the day-to-day life of the communities they serve. Some people mistakenly assume that, to maintain judicial independence and neutrality, courts must be aloof from society. Such a mindset can isolate courts in a kind of ivory tower—elitist, mysterious, and unaccountable. But such aloofness feeds people's fear of the unknown, encouraging disinformation about courts. Therefore, an important goal of court public relations in the 21st century is to show the human face of judges and courts as they interact in positive ways in the daily life of communities.

Turn Negatives into Positives

Almost any situation in life can be viewed in a negative way or in a positive way. Courts are no different. One of the worst mistakes to make in court public relations is to accept negative viewpoints of others by failing to offer an opposing positive viewpoint. Even an embarrassing public mistake can be turned into something more positive if a court acknowledges the mistake and then immediately outlines steps it is taking to make sure it does not happen again. Manage expectations.

Transparency

In its best form, court transparency and the dispersal of accurate and meaningful information can help combat corruption, promote greater judicial independence, and help the public understand the rights and obligations of the law and the courts. However, information can be changed, and people may not have the time, attention, or interest necessary to correctly follow and ascertain facts and the accuracy of information.

A court public information officer can cultivate support for a court and its judiciary simply by distributing accurate and meaningful information. Keep in mind, though, that confidentiality within the judiciary is often viewed as (and often is) essential to proper ethics. Refer to the court's guidelines regarding judicial ethics as to both the judiciary and court employees. Ensure awareness of security guidelines that the court may have in place and what comments, if any, a spokesperson could make about those guidelines. Finally, be familiar with the public records rules and non-disclosure requirements a court must abide by and follow them completely.



1.2 Key Components for Effective Media Communication

Establish a Communications Plan

A communications plan is essential to promote effective communications with the media and the public. It serves as a road map for delivering a court's key message(s) to its target audience(s) and provides a framework to coordinate and organize communication activities.

A communication plan should outline the issues, goals, and strategies for each communication objective and indicate a time frame for implementation. The Judicial Branch of Florida has prepared an exemplary communication plan that includes these essential functions. The plan can be viewed online at:

<https://www.floridasupremecourt.org/content/download/242814/2141713/2016-Judicial-Branch-Court-Communication-Plan.pdf>

Sending a Unified Message

Sending a unified message is of the utmost importance in communicating effectively. Courts must have the trust of the public to function, and public trust in courts grows from public understanding of courts.

This is why having a Public Information Officer (PIO) or designated media contact is so important. Designating someone to deal with the press can be helpful and very time-saving for court administration. A designation allows the court to respond to media inquiries when they arise and communicate the court's message in a prompt and accurate way to the media—tasks which can become prodigious during times of crisis.

Courts must ensure the PIO or designated media contact is kept informed at all times to ensure accurate and timely dissemination of information. Another benefit is the opportunity to build relationships, which enhances the communication process among the media, the courts, and the public. If a court does not have a PIO, it can contact the Conference of Court Public Information Officers organization at www.ccpio.org/contact-us/ for assistance.

Implementing a media policy that tells staff who may communicate with the media and what to do if they are approached by the media is another important factor in communicating a unified message. Staff members need to be educated about the court policy so they are prepared for when press appear at the courthouse or contact the court.

It is also important to set expectations for employees when dealing with social media. It is a fine line to walk trying to control an employee's actions outside of work, but some basic policies need to be in place. The Guide discusses these policies in more detail in [Chapter 3, Section 3.4](#).



Website Accessibility

A court's website serves as a valuable tool for effective communication, serving as the vehicle for delivering key messages and information to the public and the media. Ensuring that the website has accurate, up-to-date, and easily accessible information is of key importance. If the media need to know who to reach out to for information, they should be able to find it quickly on the website without much searching.



Important factors to consider are that around 90% of all Internet users have mobile access and more than half of all website traffic worldwide is generated through mobile phones.¹ Consequently, ensuring that a court's website is mobile friendly is prudent.

In a recent article for the *Court Technology Bulletin*, the National Center for State Courts recommends [mobiReady](#) as a free tool for testing court websites for mobile connectivity.² To use mobiReady, a court can simply enter its web URL address in mobiReady's website field. mobiReady shows what a website looks like on a computer as well as three different mobile phone browsers. This tool will also identify issues and provide specific advice and actions a court can take to improve its website's connectivity.

1.3 Interacting with the Media

The worlds of the judiciary and the media could not be more dissimilar. The very word "judiciary" shares the same linguistic origins as judicious, a word synonymous with studied, prudent, and discerning, terms rarely attached to today's media. For reporters working under a "now is too late" deadline, judicious fact-gathering is not the norm. Such studious reporting can be desired, but it is not the reality. Most reporters parachute into court for a day, without time to prepare, and have to project expertise.

Courts cannot assume the media understands the judiciary. The days of specialized reporters versed in legal knowledge or, at least, perfunctory familiarity with the judicial system, are gone. Many times, young, transient reporters have no knowledge of the court system or its rules. Social media deadlines pressure these reporters to post stories quickly with cursory vetting. This environment can lead to the public digesting incorrect information and gaining false perceptions of the court.

Realize that it is important to develop and maintain a professional relationship with the media and, whenever possible, be committed to a policy of transparency and openness when interacting with journalists. Understand that many journalists who cover the courts have little or no training regarding the intricacies of the justice system. The court's spokesperson may need to be the expert and should therefore be prepared to address basic as well as complex questions about the workings of the judicial system and trial process.

Be Proactive

If a court wants its local media to have an understanding of the court's business, it is best to communicate proactively:

- Post simple, understandable information about the court and its rules on the court's website. Refer the media to the site whenever possible.
- Create simple, bullet-point handouts that simply spotlight court information and distribute these to the media. Reporters will read bullet points more than large paragraphs.
- Create an email group of all local media so that a spokesperson can communicate with the group simultaneously about important issues or to push out information such as the handouts.
- Make this group aware that the court is developing this email system so as to provide information that will help them do their jobs quickly and efficiently. Proactive and equal communication is always appreciated by the media.
- Do not over-promote with this group. When the court does send information, it should be important so that the media will want to read it. If the court's spokesperson is diligent in responding to emails from this group, the media will reach out to that person in good times and bad.
- Host an educational meeting at your court to discuss policies and procedures (courtroom rules) or show reporters how to effectively research court files.
- Hold media/judicial round tables to provide information to help the media cover the courts. Such events also serve the purpose of placing judges and reporters in the same room in a non-courtroom environment so they get to know one another. Be aware, this activity does not ensure the media will "give you a break" when a bad story comes the court's way, but it does ensure they see court personnel as people as opposed to an institution.
- Team up with the local bar association to host events where judges, attorneys, and the media congregate to discuss current issues (not pending court cases, of course).

In Conclusion

Yes, the worlds of the judiciary and the media could not be more dissimilar, but they do have one thing in common: The public. The better the courts learn how to work effectively with the media and how to clearly communicate through the media, the better the chances are that the public will understand and appreciate the important role that courts play in our democracy.

1.4 Media Interviews

Once the media have been provided with information about a court, its spokesperson should be ready when a reporter knocks on the door.

When caught in a media spotlight, judges and court staff must learn to organize quickly and build simple messages because the public wants quick and simple information. While the judiciary may deal in details, media messaging involves stripping away information to the essential: The ability to blue-pencil paragraphs of information and details into simple sentences will give the court the best chance of communicating its message. Sometimes the spokesperson's role is simply that of a traffic cop—directing reporters to court files, trials, or general information. Other times, staff and the court are part of the story, and the media will want to speak with someone.



The first step in speaking with the media is to understand why reporters are on the court's steps. Usually, their appearance involves themes that have traditionally attracted the public to the media. These themes are often referred to by the Courts as the **C's of News**: Catastrophe, Crisis, Conflict, Crime/Corruption, and Celebrity. Once a court figures out where it fits in a scenario, it can fashion an appropriate media approach. For example, if the court has been impacted by a natural disaster, how it addresses the media will be different from a situation in which a staff member has been arrested for hoarding court files. Some media approaches may be more difficult. For example, an investigative reporter may compile a story and then ask for a response after most of the fact-finding is through. The court's response then becomes reactive as opposed to proactive.

Always remember that the reporter is only a gatekeeper to the real audience. The court's goal is to communicate with the reporter's readers, listeners, or viewers, and, to do that, the court needs to craft its message in a way that it has the best chance of getting to the public.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA INTERVIEW

- **Be Prepared**

KEY MESSAGES.

What do you want people to know?

- **K.I.S.S.**

Keep It Short and Simple.

- **If Possible, Give It Color**

This is much like a color commentator in a football game. The reporter can provide the facts but you can provide the color commentary: For example, if the story is about an errant employee, the reporter can give the who, what, when, where, and how but you can provide the emotion or color to the story: "We are so very sorry this has happened."

- **Pause—Think Before You Speak**

Don't rush through your answer just to get the interview over. Sometimes reporters deliberately pause when an interviewee finishes a sentence because one's natural reaction is to fill in the silence. Reporters can sometimes get more information this way.

- **Refuse to Take Any Question Personally**

- **Be Positive**

Don't repeat a negative.

- **Maintain Eye Contact—Body Language**

Positivity in both eye contact and body language is a plus. Make eye contact. Sit up straight and look confident.

- **Define Your Side—Don't Defend**

- **Give Information—Don't Argue**

- **Don't Use Jargon**

- **NEVER Lie /Avoid Just Saying "No Comment"**

If you can't comment, explain why.



- **Understand the medium.**

How one approaches a TV reporter should be different from how one approaches a reporter for a legal magazine. The former needs short, simple answers while the latter wants more detail and understands legal jargon.

- **Understand the reporter's mindset.**

Is this a hostile reporter? Is this a "feel good" story?

- **Who is the best spokesperson?**

Are there court rules prohibiting a judicial officer from speaking?

Interview Techniques

When someone participates in a news interview, there are three techniques the spokesperson can use in front of a microphone or notepad. For example, if an interview is arranged because an employee has been caught hoarding (not processing) files:



- **Bridging**

Bridge back to the court's key message.

If the reporter tries to take the interview in a different direction, bridge back to the key message. For example: The reporter asks "How was your employee able to hoard all those files?" the spokesperson bridges back to the key message which is: "We are in the middle of the investigation right now and plan to make changes based on what we discover. We are taking this very seriously." The court has not directly answered that question but put its key message out instead.

- **Flagging**

This technique lets the reporter know that the court is providing important information. "If you leave here today with anything, it's that the court is taking this seriously."

- **Hooking** (also referred to as a **News Hook**)

A spokesperson answers a question so that it entices a reporter to ask a specific question that the court wants to answer. "This incident will not happen again because of the new computer system going into effect next month" is an answer that can hook a reporter into asking "What system?" One is then able to talk about something the court wants to make public about new systems and procedures.

¹ "What Percentage of Internet Traffic Is Mobile in 2020?" *hostingtribunal.com (blog)*, accessed July 24, 2020, <https://hostingtribunal.com/blog/mobile-percentage-of-traffic/#gref>.

² "Mobile Device Tools for Courts," *Court Technology Bulletin (blog)*, National Center for State Courts, Thursday, August 13, 2020, <https://courtechbulletin.blogspot.com/2020/08/mobile-device-tools-for-courts.html#more>.

For quick reminders about interviewing tips and techniques, see [Appendix A-1, pages 54-55](#).

CHAPTER 2



DRAFTING AN EFFECTIVE PRESS RELEASE

2.1 What Is a Press Release (News Release)

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a “[press release](#)” as “an official statement that gives information to newspapers, magazines, television news programs, and radio stations.” Although this definition worked well throughout the 1900s, today, this common public relations tool has broader use. Because the information in a release now can be provided directly to an organization’s various audiences via the Internet, without solely relying on the media (“press”) to communicate the information, many modern public relations practitioners favor the name “[news release](#).”

Whether a court calls it a press release or news release, a “release” enables the court to accomplish multiple goals, such as:

- Share consistent, timely information with the court’s key audiences
- Concisely state the court’s position on an issue
- Develop a foundation of messaging for use on other communications platforms (e.g., blog posts, social media, opinion-editorial pieces)

Ideally, a news release should answer the [five “W’s” of journalism](#): Who, What, When, Where and Why. The five W’s help provide a reader with a more complete understanding of the topic. Of course, all five do not need to be given the same amount of emphasis in a court’s release.

The specific subject will dictate how much detail to provide for each W. For example, if a court is announcing a new courts-in-schools program, the release likely will emphasize the What and Why points much more than the When. As is discussed below in [Section 2.3](#), the decision on which points to emphasize in a release should be driven by the target audience’s interests and needs more than the court’s own interests.

When releases were targeted primarily to print media, public relations practitioners often included the phrase “[For immediate release](#)” near the top of the document. This let the journalists know they could use the release’s contents as soon as they received it. Today, however, given the faster speed of news cycles and that content can appear immediately on the Internet, it is not necessary to include this phrase because it is implied that the content can be used upon receipt of the release.

News releases typically include the following sections/content:

Headline

The [headline](#) should clearly and concisely capture the essence of the news release and grab the reader’s attention. Avoid overly long headlines—fewer than 10 words is ideal. If needed, a court can include a sub-head to amplify the topic announced in the headline. Read newspaper headlines to get a better feel for crafting an effective news release headline.

Dateline

To help audiences better understand whether the release will be of interest to them, include a [dateline](#)—generally the city and state where the news is taking place. Alternatively, if the news originates across multiple locations, use the location of the court’s central administrative office for the dateline.

Date

Including a date is crucial to help readers understand the timeliness of an announcement. It also helps avoid confusion if readers come across a release online years later.

Photo(s) and multimedia content

Releases with photo(s) that are relevant to the topic help draw readers in and provide important visuals for news media. Links to videos, audio clips, and other online content are helpful to include and boost the odds that people will share the court’s news on social media.

Introductory paragraph

To keep a court’s readers engaged, it is crucial to get to the point in the first paragraph. The introduction should provide all the relevant information a reader needs to understand the gist of an announcement. Avoid using inane introductory sentences such as, “Metropolis Municipal Court announced today...” A release is an announcement, so a bland, cliché statement such as that turns readers off—especially journalists, who will roll their eyes at that phrase.

✓ One to five body paragraphs

The topics of most news releases can adequately be covered in one to five body paragraphs following the introductory paragraph. These paragraphs should provide additional detail without going overboard. Readers will not slog through an overly long release. Within one of the body paragraphs, a court can include a quotation from a court spokesperson to provide additional color to the topic.

✓ Contact information

Including a name, email address, and phone number that the media can use to contact the court for more information and to schedule interviews with its spokespeople is essential.

✓ Organization's "about us" boilerplate

Many releases include an "about us" **boilerplate** paragraph at the end. As with all other parts of a release, it is important to focus on information that is useful to one's readers rather than being a vanity piece.

Where to Distribute a Release

Many courts have a newsroom or similar section on their website where they publish their releases. This allows their news to be discoverable when people are doing Internet searches or when reporters are researching news stories. For an example of how to use this resource, visit the [Maryland Courts website](#). Additional ways of getting the word out include sending a release directly to media outlets or publishing it on a news release service.

Many print and broadcast media outlets have a news tips email address to which one can send a release. Additionally, it is helpful to send a release to targeted journalists. When sending the release to a reporter or producer, be sure the topic fits with that journalist's **beat**. For example, sending a release about the opening of a new courthouse to a restaurant critic would be inappropriate (yes, it happens!). Appropriate beats might include "criminal justice," "crime," "city government," "local interest," etc.

For a fee, a news release service will distribute a release to many media contacts. Several such services exist in the U.S. and worldwide, with fees ranging from a few hundred dollars per release to several thousand. Examples of such services include Cision (<https://www.cision.com/us/>) and Business Wire (<https://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/home/>).

2.2 When to Use a Press Release (News Release)

Importance of Being Newsworthy

Government organizations and businesses often get so caught up in their own programs they forget that their audiences do not care as much about them as they would hope the audiences did. To help ensure that a court's news release is read and acted upon, think carefully about whether what the court plans to announce is truly newsworthy.

For example, assume a municipal court judge in a major metropolitan area earns a new credential. That fact is likely very important to that judge, but will anyone else care? This news might still warrant a release, but be sure to emphasize how the judge having that credential would benefit the target audience—whether the audience is the court's own employees and other judges, court users, or the general public. Also, keep in mind that, in a major metropolitan area, dozens or hundreds of prominent people are earning credentials every month; so, unless the judge is well known or the credential is unique, the media might not deem it sufficiently interesting to cover.



Who Is the Audience?

Before writing a release, be sure to consider who the **target audiences** are for the information. Example audiences include attorney users of the court, plaintiffs and defendants, policy makers, bar associations, the general public, the court's judges and employees, and other members of the judiciary.

As is discussed further in **Section 2.3**, a release should speak to audiences' interests and needs. In some cases, the needs of various audiences may overlap one another, but, in other instances, the needs might differ substantially. For example, the launch of a mock-trial program would be interesting to many different audiences. In contrast, instructions on how to electronically file a case in the court will be of most interest to attorneys and self-represented litigants while being of little to no interest to the general public.



Media Advisory vs. News Release

Similar to a news release but with some important differences, a [media advisory](#) is another communication tool to consider. A news release is typically written to convey all the essential information needed to inform an audience or to entice a journalist to cover one's story. In some cases, news outlets publish a release in whole or in part. In contrast, for upcoming events or news that has not yet fully transpired, a court might want to use a media advisory.

A media advisory informs journalists of an event they might want to attend to do a story. Because the event has not happened yet, a court is not likely to have all the information that typically would be available for a news release. Instead, the media alert notifies journalists about when and where the event will take place and how it would be of interest to their readers/viewers/listeners. Samples of both a press/news release and a media advisory can be found in [Appendix B-1, pages 62-71](#).

Special Considerations for High-Profile Trials

Navigating high-profile trials can be challenging for a court depending on several different factors, including the size of the court/jurisdiction, how many [media outlets](#) are in the region, the size and staffing of the court's public information office, and staff's ability to access the presiding judge. Before any decision is made about distributing a news release or media advisory, consult with the presiding judge and court administration.



Sometimes less is more, and, if that is the case, a media advisory gives the court the opportunity to keep messaging clear and concise. It forces one to pinpoint the "nuts and bolts" of the information to be distributed for the high-profile trial. A media advisory, during high-profile trials, can prove to be an efficient way to inform news outlets because the court likely will have a lot of information to share with them before, during, and even after the trial. Using a media advisory instead of a news release will reduce the amount of writing needed for the communication and will allow for distribution of the information in a timelier manner.

Keep in mind, even if there is a lot of media interest in a certain trial, most trials are not considered "high-profile." There is a certain threshold a trial must meet to be considered "high-profile." For more information about high-profile trials, please refer to [Chapter 4](#) of this guide.

2.3 Writing Tips

News releases can be very useful for court events that have already transpired but may not have received the media attention a court had hoped they would. News outlets are trying to do more with less—meaning they do not always have the staffing to cover events such as a courthouse ribbon cutting or drug court graduation. However, a court's communication team can avoid falling victim to the daily news cycle by finding a way to feature the event through a colorful news release.



Writing a thorough news release, with quotations and even pictures, can generate news interest even after the event is over. Try to find a unique angle, and, instead of quoting a judge, perhaps find a drug court graduate to interview. Quotations with emotion will humanize a court event and will help grab a news outlet's attention. Such content may also spur journalists' interest in the next event or court topic. Examples of these types of press releases can be found in [Appendix B-2, pages 72-73](#).

One important consideration if a spokesperson decides to feature a court participant in a release is the participant's privacy. If possible, choose participants who are eager to share their experiences; there is almost always one who is willing to do so. It is also a good idea to consult participants ahead of time to learn how they wish to have their names displayed in any release. Journalists prefer to use an actual name in a news story, as opposed to using an anonymous name such as Jane/John Doe. There are simple ways to satisfy a journalist's needs while still honoring a participant's privacy requests. Using only the participant's first name in the release usually provides enough ambiguity to satisfy the issue of privacy.

Before sending a picture of a court participant along with a release, be sure to seek permission from the participant first. After the court has received permission from the participant, it is a good practice to have him/her sign a waiver stating the court has permission to use the photo and information for the story. This protects the court if something unforeseen happens later. An example of a form for this purpose can be found in [Appendix B-3, page 74](#).

When writing a news release, keep in mind that some of the smaller news outlets will take the release and "copy and paste" it to their website to ensure their online content is fresh and new. Make sure the content in your news release is timely, accurate, interesting, impactful, and relatable with the understanding that a news outlet may post it "as is."

There are many helpful articles online that provide guidance on drafting an effective press release. One article written by author John Hall, "[5 Ways to Boost Your Press Releases' Chances of Getting Picked Up](#)," provides useful strategies to appeal to journalists through a press release. Russell Working, staff writer for Ragan Communications and former reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*, also wrote an article worth reading titled "[7 tips for writing a killer press release](#)." This article provides helpful tips to make sure that a press release catches the attention of journalists and ultimately gets the court's story covered.

To help ensure the information is properly and accurately communicated to the public, keep these factors in mind when drafting and distributing a release:

KEY TIPS FOR DRAFTING A RELEASE:

✓ Avoid jargon/legalese	✓ Keep the release to 1 - 2 pages maximum
✓ Identify the audience	✓ Make sure the headline grabs an individual's attention
✓ Identify the key message(s)	✓ Make sure the language is at a sixth-grade reading level
✓ Include contact information	✓ Prepare for follow-up questions and/or a request for an interview
✓ Include data/statistics, if possible	✓ Provide examples, if possible
✓ Keep the content short and simple (similar to an elevator pitch)	✓ Provide quotations from subject matter experts

For quick reference tips on drafting a release, see [Appendix A-2, pages 56-57](#).

Associated Press (AP) Style



AP style is the “go-to” style for many news and media organizations; therefore, a court’s public information office or designated spokesperson may want to write most, if not all its content, in AP style. The goal of AP style is to standardize mass communication through style and usage guidelines and rules.

The Associated Press issues a new version of its “AP Stylebook” each year. The stylebook is a living document and usually implements both minor and major changes to its style guidelines annually. As a result, it is crucial to be aware of any changes in the stylebook. One can take advantage of email alerts and webinars offered through the AP. For more information one can visit the AP Style website at:

<https://www.apstylebook.com>.

CHAPTER 3



At some point in time, most court leaders have chuckled, “It must be true; I read it on the Internet.” This epigram acknowledges the omnipresence and power of the Internet if also adding a note of skepticism. Social media is the heart of the Internet, facilitating the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through virtual communities of friends, followers, and networks. Social media can transform a court’s ability to engage and interact with staff, court users, the legal community, justice partners, and the public. This chapter discusses some of the most noticeable ways in which courts use and can benefit from social media engagement.

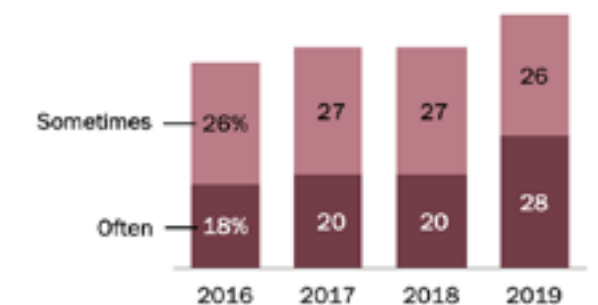
According to a newly published [Pew Research Center report](#), 55% of U.S. adults now get their news from social media either “often” or “sometimes”—an 8% increase from last year. About three-in-ten (28%) said they get their news “often,” up from 20% in 2018.

As the Pew Research’s reporters noted, “social media is now a part of the news diet of an increasingly large share of the U.S. population.”

There is no one-size-fits-all for getting started. Available resources and a court’s comfort level are two key determinants of how courts begin.

Getting news from social media sites is an increasingly common experience

% of U.S. adults who get news on social media sites ...



Source: Survey conducted July 8-21, 2019. “Americans Are Wary of the Role Social Media Sites Play in Delivering the News”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Here are a few examples of how courts are using social media platforms:

Maryland offers an example of a robust use of YouTube for sharing court stories. In the winter 2019 edition of [CONNECTED](#), the Maryland Judiciary is showcased for its video storytelling. At the time of this writing, the Puerto Rico Judiciary is recognized as having the most Facebook followers. On its page, [Rama Judicial de Puerto Rico](#), there are videos, photos, upcoming events, and comments, as well as the court system's address, map, and phone number.

The D.C. Court System's Twitter Page, [@DC_Courts](#), has over 3,000 followers. It has been active since 2009. Posts include Valentine's Wedding Celebrations, retweets correcting information about the jurisdiction of the courts, and a thank you to a juror who commented on the jury service orientation video.

The Third Judicial Circuit Court ([@3rdccorg](#)) and Macomb County Courts ([@MacombCourts](#)) in Michigan are relatively new to Twitter, joining in 2014. Their court administrators and some IT staffers are curating and posting content. They have not yet reached 1,000 followers but are using the platform to post current events, job openings, and tweets from the Michigan Supreme Court ([@MISupremeCourt](#)).

For additional examples, the [National Center for State Courts](#) provides a list of courts by state that are using social media, including links to their social media platforms. The Joint Technology Committee (JTC) Resource Bulletin, [Social Media Marketing for Courts](#), provides helpful information courts can employ to improve their use of social media.

Defining the purpose of a court's social media account is paramount to its success. Is it to spread information quickly to the community; is it to interact with the public, or is to promote the good work of the court? Identifying and adhering to this purpose will give social media postings a focused voice.

Discussed further in Section 3.1, social media empowers courts and offers a multitude of benefits—from helping to increase website traffic to improving public trust and confidence. Platforms have different strengths and offer varying opportunities depending upon communication goals ([Section 3.2](#)). This chapter provides general guidance as well as tips specific to each of the major social media platforms ([Sections 3.2 through 3.4](#)). Ultimately, after more than a decade of experience, it is clear that it is time for courts to step up their online presence and engage on social media. It is time for courts to tweet, follow, and like.



3.1 Social Media Benefits

Meeting Public Expectations

Many Americans rely on social media as their primary source of daily news and information. Courts can become part of the daily news hub with their social media presence. By establishing a social media presence, courts can not only meet the public's expectation of having its news where the public expects to find news but also have quick and easy access to local, national, and even international audiences, who can spread the news even farther.

Promoting the Rule of Law and Justice in the News

Often, reporters swarm courts for sensational news but are slow to respond when courts are seeking to raise public awareness on common issues or to share a feel-good human interest story. Social media removes reporters and news station managers from the seat of authority in deciding which court stories are newsworthy. Courts are positioned to determine what is appropriate to report and when and how to report it.

Courts can report stories in real time, be out in front of the events, and shape the narratives. This control of messaging allows courts to explain and promote the rule of law and the value of justice. Social media enables a court to manage its public relations with tools that are more effective than press releases. In addition, even if a news outlet does break a story, a court that is active on social media can select the best social media platform, counteract any inaccuracies, and add its perspective.

Increasing Website Traffic

It is commonplace for courts to have websites. Websites offer an Internet presence of one-way communication. Courts post their location, the names and courtrooms of judges, various court policies, news, notices, and updates on their websites. Minimally, social media can engage audiences and increase website traffic. For example, Facebook and LinkedIn profiles can list information such as court locations and hours, and the contents of posts can announce upcoming events, programs, and services while providing hyperlinks that allow readers to navigate back to court websites for more complete details.

Recruiting and Training

Social media is a wide-reaching and cost-effective information-dissemination, training, and marketing tool. Social media is a low-cost option to advertise job openings. With graphics and videos, courts can recruit the next generation of public servants through Facebook and LinkedIn. Job postings on social media are easy to share. Courts may also realize cost savings by using social media platforms such as YouTube to record orientation and training videos for current employees. Staff can review the videos from the comfort of their desks on demand.

Increasing Public Trust and Confidence

Social media can be used to increase engagement and improve transparency. Courts may announce changes in local processes, report court performance measurements, and share Adoption Day and other human interest stories. Posts can elicit public outcry or applause, and both types of feedback can help courts determine the level of public satisfaction and confidence. In addition to the comment feature allowing viewers to leave their feedback on posts, many social media platforms offer polling and survey options to invite public feedback.

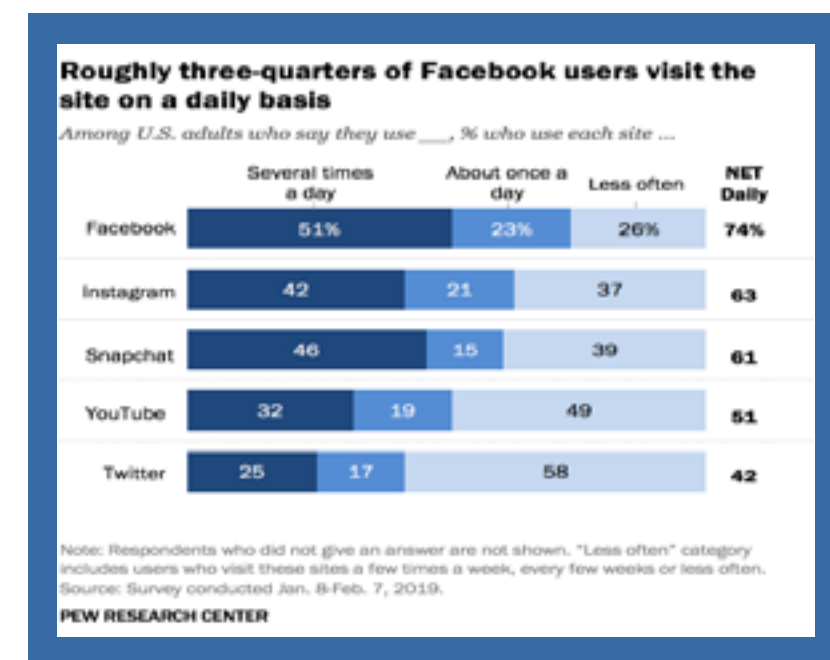
Furthermore, courts are also able to leverage the 24-hour accessibility of social media. Even when the courthouse is closed, information posted about the court and its events and news are available for its audiences. Social media is an effective tool for crisis communication as well. Courts can quickly communicate emergency closures and provide ongoing updates. Court staff, court users, media, and the public can easily access the latest update and share it with their friends, families, and networks. Courts can use social media to allow the public to see inside courthouses; to understand what to expect in court proceedings; and to provide feedback as to the integrity, transparency, and accountability of court operations.



3.2 Common Social Media Platforms and Their Uses

Whether it is an Instagram post or a Facebook post, the first thing one should ask is: “Will this get someone to stop scrolling?”

According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in early 2019, the most commonly used social media platforms are YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Reddit. YouTube and Facebook had the most users. The same survey said roughly three-quarters of Facebook users (74%) visit the site daily, including about half who do so several times a day. So how can the courts benefit from this?



The use of social media offers courts the ability to communicate messages and information to a large audience to provide real-time information about the court, news, and events; improve access to court services; promote transparency and accountability; and advance the administration of justice.

Facebook

Facebook’s mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. People use Facebook to stay connected with friends and family, to discover what’s going on in the world, and to share and express what matters to them. Users can post as often as they like, but, if a user wants people to see her posts, she has to get them to stop scrolling. One way to do this is through creative, interesting, thoughtful posts and images. Facebook is used for publishing information to and for court staff, the public, attorneys, media, court participants, and governmental agencies.



IDEAS FOR CONTENT:

- Driving traffic to main website
- Educating the public with tips, how-to’s, and facts/stats
- Explaining court processes and procedures
- Highlighting awards and recognizing judges and staff
- Hosting live question-and-answer sessions (Q&A’s)
- Monitoring news and information
- Posting changes in operations due to emergencies, holidays, or other issues/ events impacting access to the courts
- Posting job openings
- Promoting events
- Relaying crisis communication
- Releasing decisions or information about high-profile cases
- Sharing information on new judicial officers, retirements, and ceremonies
- Sharing human interest stories and photos
- Sharing reports, press releases, newsletters, new website features, other communication efforts, etc.
- Sharing stories from local news affiliates

According to **Buffer**, photos are one of the best ways to increase engagement and **likes** on a Facebook page. In fact, Facebook photos receive 53 percent more likes than non-photo posts.¹ To keep people interested, it is a good practice to post a variety of content—pictures, information graphics (“**infographics**”), video, etc.—rather than only links or text. Facebook also features the ability to go “**Live**.” This is a way to host a live question-and-answer session with one’s audience or stream an event happening at one’s courthouse, such as an investiture.

The National Center for State Courts’ website has a helpful guide to assist with setting up a court’s Facebook page. They provide instructions for setting up a page with the appropriate privacy settings, monitoring an account, and other useful information on using a Facebook account effectively. To utilize this resource, visit their webpage at: <https://www.ncsc.org/topics/media/social-media-and-the-courts/social-media/social-media-101>.

Twitter

Twitter was founded in 2006 and has grown into a real-time short messaging service (SMS) that works over multiple networks and devices worldwide. “**Tweets**” are up-to-280-character messages posted to an author’s page and delivered to his or her “followers.” Users can restrict access or allow open access to messages. Twitter has been used in legal proceedings, education, emergencies, and opinion surveys.

Courts are primarily using Twitter to interact with the news media, recruit employees, issue news releases, and post emergency management notifications. The biggest thing to remember with Twitter is not that there is a character limit but that one cannot go back and edit after posting. Users must make sure that a post is right the first time.



IDEAS FOR CONTENT:

- Driving traffic to main website
- Educating the public with tips, how-to’s, and facts/stats
- Explaining processes and procedures
- Highlighting awards and recognitions of judges and staff (new judicial officers, retirements, and ceremonies)
- Monitoring news and information
- Posting courtroom schedules and court calendars
- Posting job openings
- Promoting events
- Relaying crisis communications
- Releasing decisions or information regarding high-profile cases
- Sharing changes in operations due to emergencies, holidays, or other issues/ events impacting access to the courts

When posting to Twitter, a good practice is to use relevant **hashtags** to make finding related posts easier and draw attention to events or resources. However, one should not use too many hashtags—two or three are acceptable per message. Also, tweet regularly. Post at least once a week, even if it is “evergreen” or non-time-sensitive information. According to Primoprint, tweets have a shelf life of about an hour. Therefore, a court will see higher rewards (**likes**, **retweets**, and **follows**) by posting more frequently on Twitter, somewhere between 5 and 20 times a day.²

Instagram

Instagram is a community built on the power of visual storytelling by sharing photos and videos. It is commonly referred to as “the Facebook of photography.” As with Facebook or Twitter, everyone who creates an account has a profile and news feed. Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook have a very intertwined and transparent relationship.

According to the 2019 Social Media Marketing Industry Report,³ 73% of marketers are using Instagram, up from 66% in 2018. The report also shows Instagram to be the second most important social platform for marketing with Facebook being the first. Whether it is a post about a court closure, the retirement of a judge, or a scenic photo of a courthouse, courts can use Instagram to provide a snapshot of the judicial system. For Instagram, it is all about one’s aesthetic.

Similar to Facebook, Instagram offers the ability to go “**Live**,” allowing users to stream video to followers and engage with them in real time. Instagram also offers a feature called **IGTV**, a standalone video application providing users with a personalized channel to post videos up to 15 minutes in length on mobile devices, and 60 minutes in length on desktop web browsers. Instagram accounts with an IGTV channel receive an IGTV tab on their profile page. Additionally, uploads on IGTV can be mirrored to a linked Facebook page.



IDEAS FOR CONTENT:

- To highlight activities, awards, and events such as recognitions of individual judges or court staff (new judicial officers, retirements, and ceremonies)
- To inform the public of changes in operations due to emergencies, holidays, or other issues/events impacting access to the courts
- To provide directional, cultural, and historical information about courthouses through photos and videos of interesting art, buildings, rooms, signs, etc.

YouTube

YouTube has over a billion users—almost one-third of all people on the Internet—and, every day, people watch hundreds of millions of hours on YouTube and generate billions of views. According to Social Media Examiner (SME), YouTube was the number-one video channel used by 57% of marketers, followed by Facebook native videos (50%).⁴ This makes YouTube the most popular choice for watching videos.

SME asked marketers to indicate the average duration of their live videos. The majority (62%) preferred videos that were shorter than 10 minutes. People are more likely to connect with a short video than with something they read, and videos usually get more clicks and shares on social media. YouTube is affiliated with Google—so a court would get a better reach in terms of viewing audiences who search for a topic. Courts can use YouTube to share information with court participants, news media, the public at-large, and other governmental agencies.



IDEAS FOR CONTENT:

- Helping people understand the courts, including self-help, how-to, or what-to-expect videos (e.g., explaining jury duty)
- Highlighting issues of concern, such as jury scams
- Improving self-represented litigants' access to justice
- Sharing positive, court-related events with the public
- Supplementing training of court staff (internal videos)
- Streaming court events or archived hearings

Pinterest

Pinterest allows users to visually share and discover new interests by posting (known as “pinning”) images or videos to their own or others’ “Pinterest boards” (the term for a collection of “pins” that usually share a common theme) and browsing what other users have pinned.⁵ Pinterest, a highly visual medium, gives organizations a chance to engage stakeholders with compelling images and colorful infographics. Courts can replicate the kinds of how-to infographics that are often found on Pinterest to provide helpful guidance to the public. It can be as simple as posting a step-by-step graphic on such topics as “How to find your courtroom” and “Tips for going to court.” A court should always link to its website to push people there for more information.

According to Civic Savvy,⁶ Pinterest reported having 322 million monthly active users worldwide at the end of 2018. Pinterest’s usership remains strong because its audiences frequently turn to the platform for shopping, organizing social activities, learning things through how-to posts, and planning life’s moments with boards for visual inspiration. Photos are optimal for sharing and can promote upcoming events, a new courtroom or courthouse redesign, or any other appealing photos that will make people want to share on their boards.



IDEAS FOR CONTENT:

- Promoting upcoming events
- Providing information about courthouses with photos of interesting art, buildings, rooms, signs, etc.
- Sharing how-to infographics and step-by-step guides



LinkedIn

[LinkedIn](#) is the world's largest professional network with hundreds of millions of members and growing rapidly. LinkedIn's mission is to connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. LinkedIn is used to connect with professionals in the same industry, current and former employees, job seekers, or those with similar interests.



IDEAS FOR CONTENT:

- Announcing and viewing job openings
- Building and maintaining an individual's professional network
- Driving traffic to the court's website
- Informing the public of changes in operations due to emergencies, holidays, or other issues/events impacting access to the courts
- Posting press releases or newsletters
- Promoting events
- Sharing articles of interest

Conclusion

Remember, while a tweet is different from an Instagram post and that, in turn, is different from a YouTube video, a court should convey the same message across all platforms. Social media managers should tailor the message to the platform they are posting on. They should also experiment with different types of content. Consider posting inspirational quotations or an interesting how-to. Find out what types of content people engage with the most on each platform.

Courts should also try posting at different times of day to find out what time each platform receives the most engagement from stakeholders and when people are most likely to see posts. There is an excellent online social media blog by Neil Patel, who is hailed by *Forbes* as one of the top 10 U.S. marketers. In [one of his social media blog posts](#),⁷ Patel covers the best times/days to post on different social media platforms. His information is backed by research and studies that are linked throughout the post. For a quick reference diagram on the best times to post based on the information from this blog posting, along with other helpful social media reminders, see [Appendix A-3, pages 58-59](#).

3.3 Practical Guidelines for Using Social Media

Importance of Social Media

First, let us establish why courts should use social media in the first place. According to the American Bar Association, "(Social media) has become part of worldwide culture.... Social interactions of all kinds can be beneficial to judges to prevent them from being thought of as isolated or out of touch."⁸

In an article in the *Texas Bar*, authors John G. Browning and Justice Don Willett explain why social media is significant. "With judges elected in 39 states (including Texas), social media is a fruitful way to engage with the community as well as invaluable means of raising visibility, building awareness, and leveraging the support of key influencers and opinion leaders."⁹



In other words, it is more important than ever for courts and judges to communicate with the public via social media. But it is also imperative that courts be careful about what they post.

To Post or Not to Post

That becomes the inevitable question when courts are dealing with social media. To date, 23 high courts and AOCs, including D.C., and two U.S. territories have a Facebook account; 34 states, D.C., and three U.S. territories have a Twitter account; and six states, D.C., and one U.S. territory have an Instagram account.¹⁰ Social media among the court community is growing. Interactions between judges and constituents on Twitter and Facebook are becoming more commonplace. Town hall meetings are trending, and Facebook Live sessions are streaming.

Influence and Disinformation

One of the features of all public discourse is that some people have a big influence over others, e.g., journalists, legislators, governors, etc. One of the major goals of court public relations is to influence these influencers in positive ways. Social media is an especially valuable tool for this purpose. It helps establish a constant base of positive information about the courts.

Disinformation will increase as artificial intelligence (AI) becomes better, e.g., through the use of "deepfakes." Disinformation will come not only from groups with political agendas but also from foreign agents and others intent on disrupting U.S. governmental processes/elections and from those who hope to turn a profit from disinformation. Social media monitoring is an important tool for tracking and countering disinformation.

A Code of Conduct Can Save a Court's Bacon

If a court has a social media account or is about to establish one, it should provide a crystal clear code of conduct concerning profanity, discrimination, and threats. Having a code of conduct in place, a court that encounters an individual who is breaking the rules will have every right to block an individual or delete any content that is derogatory, offensive, or illegal.

Be aware: Hiding and deleting comments are two different things. Even if a court hides comments on the court's social media page, the commenter's friends can still view the comments. Not only that, the follower can continue the conversation by replying to the comment, without knowing that the comment is no longer public on the court's page. Hiding a user's comments may also violate [someone's First Amendment rights](#).¹¹

Kristy Dalton, CEO of Government Social Media, explains that "the problem with hiding comments is that it is a purposeful move by an agency's representatives to be secretive about displaying something a citizen wrote on their department's Facebook page."¹²

The 2019 ruling of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in [Davison v. Randall](#) is one to follow. Summarizing the Court's reasoning, Vera Eidelman explains, "[T]he interactive portion of a public official's Facebook page is a 'public forum,' so an official cannot block people from it because of the opinions they hold."¹³

Think Before Clicking



A few best practices to keep in mind before you post:

- **When in doubt, leave it out.** If there is any doubt in a spokesperson's mind that a court could get in trouble for a post, **DO NOT POST IT**. Better safe than sorry.
- **Use common sense and good judgment.** Deep down, an employee knows right from wrong. When creating text or graphics, make sure it is professional and unopinionated.
- **Ask before acting.** If an employee ranks below a judge, it never hurts to ask a judge for approval or permission to publish an official post.
- **Use "netiquette."** Always be polite and professional on social media.
- **Do not put content in ALL CAPS.** Followers may feel a court is yelling at them and take things personally. This could potentially bring unwanted commentary to a social media account.

Do Not Say Something Regretful

Some judges have taken risks, submitting unprofessional, inappropriate posts on social media.



Here are some of the best examples of the worst posts:

- "Some things I guess will never change. [I just love the stress of jury trials](#). In a felony trial now state prosecuting a pimp. Cases are always difficult because the women (as in this case also) will not cooperate. We will see what the 12 citizens in the jury box do."¹⁴
- "[Must be nice](#) to take such an expensive trip but not pay your bills. Just sayin'."¹⁵
- "It goes without saying but the tenant wasn't the [brightest bulb in the chandelier](#)."¹⁶
- "Support these folks who are just trying hard to [earn some money in an honest way](#)."¹⁷

Planning Is Everything



Before a court joins social media, it should consider the following steps:

- **Ask other courts what they learned.**
Does court staff find they have the time to monitor the account? What are the benefits of specific social media networks in their court? Have they faced any ethical issues with staff or followers?
- **Establish which platforms would be the best fit for the court.**
Each platform is different. Do research. If the court takes a lot of pictures, Instagram might be right for the court. If the court is in a populous state with a plethora of court news, tidbits, and opinions, Facebook and Twitter may be a good fit. For more information on this topic, see [Section 3.2](#).
- **Create a social media code of conduct for the court and followers online.** (Discussed in "A Code of Conduct Can Save a Court's Bacon" above in [Section 3.3](#))

- **Develop a social media content calendar.**

Planning out the types of content will help keep constituents informed and court staff organized. This will also allow a court to think about the potential “danger” of posting specific content. Useful, affordable platforms to consider: [Hootsuite](#), [Later](#), and [Buffer](#), to name a few.

- **Include social media icons on promotional and other communication materials.**

By including social media icons on promotional materials, a court allows constituents to feel more welcome and engaged in the court community. Publications in which icons might be added include flyers for distribution at public events (such as at conference booths), instructions for jury duty, how-to brochures, etc.

- **Evaluate analytics.**

Discover what kinds of posts are working and which ones are not, what times get the best engagement, what posts cause the most controversy, if any, and how many followers the court has gained each month.



3.4 Importance of a Social Media Policy

Ideally, before a court establishes a social media account, a comprehensive social media policy should be developed.

A good social media policy will establish the authority for the use of social media. It will include what platforms the court would like to use (i.e., Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) and their intended purposes. Each platform has its own unique strengths and style. A policy would also be the place to establish content standards. If the declared purpose of a social media profile is education, then a court will want to ensure that messages are educational rather than opinionated. Similarly, if a purpose is to provide legal information to the public, then a court will want to make sure its information is accurate, is legal in nature, and is consistent with the official position of the court on specific topics.

The policy should also define who will post content—for example, a Public Information Officer in a large court or perhaps an administrator in a smaller court. Guidelines for determining whether a post should be monitored and the process for deleting comments or postings should be clearly defined if the content or comments are found to be inaccurate, inflammatory, or not in the best interest of the court.

Additionally, having an employee social media policy is also pivotal to effective communication. It is advisable to include employee expectations within a court’s social media policy. This means setting clear expectations of employees when dealing with social media. It is a fine line to walk trying to control an employee’s actions outside of work, but some basic policies need to be in place.

Confidential, copyrighted, personal, and other sensitive information should never be posted on a court’s social media account. This prohibition should tie in with the court’s employee code of conduct and the goal of protecting the court’s reputation.

Writing a policy about what employees are not allowed to do will be very demeaning to staff, but promoting employee advocacy of court activities can make the platform personal and fun for staff. For example, an employee might respond to an official court posting with their positive feelings about working at an adoption event or a veterans treatment court program.

Finally, the social media policy should have a component addressing the retention process. State record retention laws apply to social media postings for agency business. A court’s policy should clearly state how and where records will be retained. A court will also need a depository of removed content and a document explaining why it was removed.

Examples of social media policies in the judiciary:

- United States District Court Northern District of Illinois**
([Appendix C-1, pages 75-79](#))
<https://www.ilnd.uscourts.gov/assets/documents/forms/lca/Social%20Media%20and%20Social%20Networking%20Policy.pdf>
- State of Nebraska Judicial Branch**
([Appendix C-2, pages 80-81](#))
<https://supremecourt.nebraska.gov/personnel-and-miscellaneous-rules/other-personnel-related-policies/2-use-social-media>
- Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media**
([Appendix C-3, pages 82-102](#))
https://courts.michigan.gov/Administration/SCAO/Resources/Documents/standards/sm_stds.pdf

TOP 10 SOCIAL MEDIA MUST-HAVES



Chapter 3 Endnotes

- 1 **Know the demographic.**
A message is very different when speaking to attorneys vs. the general public. Focus posts to the target audience.
- 2 **Own the content.**
Post messages about court activities. Ensure the message is approved from the top down. If a court chooses to allow comments, be interactive with the audience.
- 3 **Integrate social media but don't duplicate it.**
Different platforms get their messages out uniquely. Facebook is good to share a news story and engage in feedback. Twitter is brief and is good for headlines and soundbytes. Instagram is all about the photo telling the story, and YouTube is good for a brief video of an event or occasion.
- 4 **Be creative!**
Make social media posts engaging. For example, using a photo depicting a judge in front of school children raising their hands is a great post showing that the court is open to engagement with the community. The public loves a picture with a quick headline. Such a post can get the message out succinctly and in a timely, responsive manner when events are unfolding quickly. Use analytics to see if it is successful.
- 5 **Just like a retailer, use the "brand" on every posting so viewers know it's the court.**
This can be in the form of **hashtags** for Twitter, a graphic placed on a posted picture, or anything that tells the viewer this is the court.
- 6 **Be interactive.**
The community expects active engagement whether it be merely acknowledging posts with a comment or simply liking a comment. An engaged court can use such interaction to its advantage when it wants to gauge public opinion about a topic.
- 7 **Post regularly.**
If weeks or months pass between a court's posts, its audience will realize that the court is not engaged. Make a plan to post on a frequent schedule so the audience can depend on seeing something regularly.
- 8 **Make postings current.**
Post about what is happening now or in the near future. This gives the audience the feeling of being up-to-date with what is happening at the court.
- 9 **Analyze social media posts.**
Free analytics come with each platform and can help improve social media strategies. Use these statistical reporting tools to evaluate engagement.
- 10 **Be flexible.**
If analytics indicate that people are not "liking" the posts, adjust to actively engage the audience.

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- ¹⁰ "Courts and Social Media Accounts," National Center for State Courts' web page, last updated April 3, 2020, <https://www.ncsc.org/topics/media/social-media-and-the-courts/social-media/overview>.
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- ¹⁵ *In re Bennington*, 24 N.E.3d 958 (Ind. 2015), <https://www.in.gov/judiciary/opinions/pdf/02101501per.pdf>.
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CHAPTER 4



Every so often, courts are in the spotlight where there is elevated interest from the media and public. Whether preparing for a high-profile trial or reacting to an emergency situation, the key to successful communication with the media is having a plan in place. Having a [media plan](#) in place well before a case or emergency materializes will give the court, the media, and the public guidance on how everything will be handled and benefit everyone involved.

The court will want to develop an internal decision-making team to address situations, requests, and the unexpected occurrences that may happen during these times. The chief judge, the clerk of the court, the IT manager, and the security liaison as well as the public information officer would be ideal for this team. Understanding that not all courts have the benefit of a public information officer, it is not unusual for the clerk to fill this role if necessary. Either way, the team should then decide who is going to be the spokesperson for the court.

4.1 Media Plans

The goal of the media plan is to anticipate and address as many situations as possible so that early decisions can be made. There will inevitably be circumstances and situations that do not go as planned, but the media plan will address a majority of concerns. Flexibility is paramount in managing situations successfully for the court's benefit as well as in understanding and meeting the needs of the reporters, bloggers, etc.

The media plan should include essential information that the media need to know about the court. The court's webpage is one tool by which to update a large group of interested people simultaneously. Some courts recently have begun utilizing social media for this purpose. Social media posts can be timelier and go well with the changing demands of news reporting.

The media plan must also address the physical needs of reporters. In the event of a high-profile trial, ensuring there will be a courtroom that is the right size to handle the increased interest of the case, designating locations in front of the courthouse for news crews to broadcast, and even designating parking for large news vans are important elements to avoid an overwhelming list of last-minute decisions.



Communication is the common goal of the media and the court. Anticipate questions and be proactive in addressing any concerns. Court responsiveness may involve a wide range of issues including security, case information, or just educating the media.

Even if a court does not know what crisis could crop up in its future, here are a few simple ways to be ready:

Plan to be Proactive.

When the crisis happens, proactively reach out to the media. Let them know the court will get them information ASAP. Let the media know that there will be either an interview or the release of a statement at a certain time, then stick to that deadline.

Be Prepared.

Sit down with the principals involved and write down the 10 worst questions that could be asked and come up with the answers. Make those answers simple and understandable. Those will be the spokesperson's answers when he/she goes into the interview.

Admit. Apologize. Advance.

If there is fault on the court's part and the spokesperson can legally say it, admit it, apologize, and explain future intentions. The public is very forgiving to those who show sincere contrition and then take action so the event does not happen again. Ensure the apology is real; if it is hollow, the media and the public will know.

Do Not Put Your Head in the Sand.

Finally, ignoring the media is not an option. A spokesperson may want to avoid any reporters, but a story will not go away just because the court chooses not to communicate. If a court wants the public to understand its side of a story, its spokesperson needs to present the court's perspective. Do not make reporters work to get the court's side of the story. Whether it is a written statement (not the best method but better than nothing) or a full-on news conference, get the court's side out there.

5 Steps to an Exceptional Media Plan

- 1. Know the court's target audience**—Courts are no longer dealing with journalists who exclusively cover courthouses. Media now includes bloggers, editorial writers, and photojournalists.
- 2. Define the media plan goal(s)**—The media plan should have a goal, and, ideally, it will map out how a media event will occur. A goal could be to educate the media and public about court processes and even provide positive information about courts and juries.
- 3. Use available tools**—Understanding by what medium or media to connect with those who report about the court can be crucial. One option is to use a dedicated page for high-profile cases on the court's web page such as this one in California: <https://www.courts.ca.gov/2964.htm>. The use of Twitter allows courts to quickly disseminate information such as the progress of a case, logistics for reporters, or a jury verdict.
- 4. Facilitate news coverage**—Make the court's physical environment conducive to conducting court business as well as enabling the media to report. Steps may include designating media waiting rooms, reporting locations, parking, and media pooling.
- 5. Execute the plan**—Ensure the media plan is available for the court, security, and the media to make sure everyone is playing by the same rules. Be flexible when situations do not go as planned, and work with the media to reasonably accommodate requests.

In the end, the media should not be perceived as adversaries but as partners with the courts. A court should be as transparent and informative as possible, so the public will understand the role of the courts in today's society.



Planning Resources

The following sections address the importance of planning today for what might occur when it is least expected. Even the best of plans can sometimes miss an aspect of a unique circumstance, so below are reference materials to assist in planning.



AUDIO VISUAL RESOURCES

NACM has posted a relevant video titled “Crisis to Communities—The Role of Court Communications,” which discusses the importance of communication in our courts and expands into strategies for effective communication during crisis situations.

NACM has a podcast series titled “[Court Leader’s Advantage](#).” This forum, curated by court professionals, focuses on sharing experiences and lessons learned among court professionals nationwide. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the series broke from its normal schedule of once monthly to once weekly, focusing on how courts are handling issues such as budgets, juries, procedural changes, safety, and communication. This resource provides an opportunity for courts to share what is working and discover new ways to tackle obstacles within their courts.

DOCUMENTED RESOURCES

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) has a microsite, “[High Profile Cases in the 21st Century](#),” dedicated to the subject of managing high-profile cases. The site offers best practices, techniques, and tools that have proven useful to courts that have experienced high-profile trials, in addition to checklists to help the trial judge, administrative officer, security personnel, jury managers, and others provide public access while ensuring a fair trial. The website also features the top six considerations for courts confronted with a high-profile trial, such as who will be on the leadership team and what unique challenges will arise from this case.

The NCSC also has an e-collection of articles, “[Media Relations](#).” The titles in the collection explore the effects that media has on the judicial system by examining references to media and policies regarding cameras in the courtroom as well as the social impact media has on various court players, such as attorneys, judges, and juries. Other topics include the impact and ethical challenges of dealing with media in high-profile cases and the role of public information officers.

For those in the federal courts, the Public Affairs Office of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts has a [Journalist’s Guide to the Federal Courts](#), developed to help working reporters gain a better understanding of the court and perform their professional duties.

4.2 Definition of a High-Profile Trial

The complexity of handling a case with a high-profile party involved becomes even more daunting when there is increased media interest in the hearing. This section will touch on areas of planning for a high-profile case, how to interact with the media, the logistics of having the media at court, and some references and checklists to make the process beneficial to the court and media partners.



What is a **high-profile case** and how is it different from other cases on the daily calendar? A rough definition of a high-profile case is a case that attracts enough media or public attention that the court must or should make significant alterations to ordinary court procedures to manage it. It is critical to remember that each case is important to the parties involved. Ensuring the high-profile case does not interfere with the other business of the court will also be a concern. The court may have a case with a celebrity, a political figure, or just a high-profile community member who garners the attention of the media. Knowing how to handle these cases is paramount to ensuring that the court stays in control of its message and image.

4.3 Navigating a High-Profile Trial

The court’s public information office or designated media contact should communicate directly with the presiding judge well in advance of a high-profile trial to understand how the presiding judge would like to handle the execution of such a trial. If the presiding judge does not want to have direct contact with the court’s public information/communications office, the designated public information officer may want to ask the presiding judge for permission to communicate with either the judge’s law clerk or administrative assistant. Please note: It is crucial to establish some line of communication with the presiding judge during these situations.

Navigating high-profile trials can be challenging for a court depending on several different factors, including the size of the court/jurisdiction, how many media outlets are in the region, the size and staffing of the court’s public information office if they have one, and staff’s accessibility to the presiding judge. Courts will find it beneficial for the public information officer or designated media contact to establish a strong working relationship with the court’s administrative judge (or other respective judge in the state/jurisdiction) as well as any clerk/court administrator and jury commissioner.

Before any decision is made about distributing a news release or media advisory, consult with the presiding judge and court administration. Because each trial is different, there is no absolutely right or wrong way to determine whether to issue a news release or media advisory. Generally, one of the first things to do is outline the message that the court wants to convey and identify the audience, which will then help guide the court in deciding what kind of communication to send, if any. For example, if the court has to send specific information regarding parking restrictions for television satellite trucks during a high-profile trial, the court most likely will want to send a media advisory.

The court's public information office(r) or designated media contact should discuss several issues with the presiding judge to determine such details as:

- Date(s), time(s), and location of the event.
- Who will serve as the designated media contact (this is usually the public information officer).
- Who will handle security logistics and communications.
- What, if any, restrictions will apply to the media and their coverage of the event, including cameras in the courtroom, pool cameras, live truck parking, etc.
- Courthouse/courtroom logistics, including overflow rooms, closed circuit televisions, seating arrangements, emergency plans, media workspaces, sketch artists, public wifi and available bandwidth, etc.
- Use of electronics in the courthouse and courtroom.
- How to handle violators of a rule or order, and whether they will be subject to the contempt powers of the court.
- Who may be considered a member of the media.

The NCSC microsite for high-profile cases mentioned earlier in [Section 4.1](#) also contains a thorough checklist for managing high-profile cases that can be accessed in [Appendix D-1, pages 103-115](#) of this guide, or online at: <https://www.ncsc.org/hpc/high-profile-case-team/media-relations>.

4.4 Planning Considerations for High-Profile Trials

Evidence

Will the court allow and designate time for the media to review evidence?

- If so, will cameras be allowed to photograph/record the evidence?
 - If so, will it be done by a [pool camera](#) (both for newspaper and television?)
- How much time will be allotted?
- When and where will the review take place?
- Who (local law enforcement, court administration, court clerk, etc.) will oversee this process?
- Should any items (murder weapon, graphic pictures, etc.) be excluded from the review?



Juror Interaction with the Media

Will jurors be allowed to interact with the media?

- Is there a rule within the judiciary or a state statute that prohibits members of the media from approaching, speaking to, or photographing jurors (either potential or impaneled)?
- What is the state's/court's retention policy regarding jury records?
- Does the judge need to file a "[Gag Order](#)" in this specific trial?
- Are members of the media and general public allowed to sit inside the courtroom during jury selection/voir dire?

Generally, the public and media are permitted to sit inside the courtroom during jury selection/voir dire. In the first of two cases involving the *Press-Enterprise Company* and the Superior Court of California, the Supreme Court of the United States held that the guarantee of open criminal proceedings applies to voir dire examinations and that closed proceedings, while not precluded, must be rare and only for a demonstrated reason that outweighs the value of openness.¹

In a later case discussing *Press-Enterprise*, the Court stated, "The conclusion that trial courts are required to consider alternatives to closure even when they are not offered by the parties is clear not only from this Court's precedents but also from the premise that the process of juror selection is itself a matter of importance, not simply to the adversaries but to the criminal justice system." *Id.*, at 505. The public has a right to be present whether or not any party has asserted the right."²



4.5 Importance of a Media Packet

If a high-profile case brings a surge of media members to your court, it is recommended that a court provide them with a [media packet](#) consisting of important information they will need to do their jobs effectively. Different reporters will often pose the same questions to a court, so providing a media packet also ensures that everyone is getting the same information at the same time, and no one is receiving preferential treatment.

In the past, such a packet might have been a paper copy handed to reporters when they arrived at the courthouse, but that distribution method will no longer suffice in the digital age. A digital PDF document posted on a court's webpage or a specific case webpage ensures staff can quickly send a URL via email to a reporter looking for information.

When determining what information to include in a media packet, one should assume this packet will likely go to a reporter who has not heard of the court before an editor or producer assigned him/her to cover the case. Knowing this, one should include as much information as any court rules regarding public information allow. Contents could include information on parking, building access, workspace, seating, security, credentialing, wireless capabilities, electronic device restrictions, interviews, photography and audio-recording rules, calendaring, and expected courtroom and courthouse behavior. A packet can also address questions about how to access case documents, procedural resources, exhibits, the courthouse, the courtroom, subject-matter experts, judicial officers, IT support, the court administration, and security.

A media packet should include a primary point of contact for media covering the case. Please note: this contact should *not* be the trial judge because many judicial codes of conduct significantly limit what a trial judge can say about a case.

Refer to [Appendix D-3, pages 124-168](#), for examples of media packets prepared for high-profile trials.

4.6 Sample Rules and Orders

The presiding judge and the court should establish guidelines for interacting with the media during a high-profile case or emergency. These guidelines, which can be promulgated through an order or rule, will set clear expectations and restrictions for both the media and general public and will reduce the chance for potential issues before, during, or after a specific trial or event.

In most instances, a media order will be the most effective option for the court, presiding judge, and court information office to address issues like those above. The media order, which will need to be signed by the presiding judge and filed within the clerk's office, will provide a roadmap for both the media and the general public to follow. In certain circumstances, the presiding judge may ask the court information office or court administration to draft the media order. In those circumstances, refer to the examples provided below in this section, use them as a template, and tailor them to the specific needs of the trial and/or event.

The court may want to consider combining any media order with a security order although this is not necessary in every circumstance. The media/security order will address all aspects of the trial, including security concerns, and it will clearly identify points of contact for both the information office and the agency tasked with securing the courthouse/courtroom.



The public information officer should discuss the option of creating different media orders for different phases of a trial. For example, the presiding judge may want to prohibit cell phones, among other items, in the courtroom during jury selection, but he/she may choose to allow them during the actual trial. In this situation, the information officer may want to have a media order drafted specifically for jury selection and another media order for the trial proceedings.

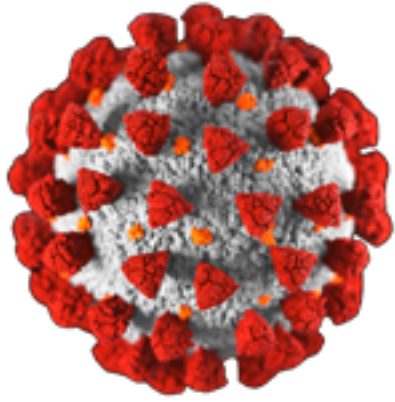
Media orders or security/media orders may help reduce the number of inquiries the information office receives in regard to a specific trial or event. It may be helpful to attach orders to a media advisory or press release that the office prepares and sends before the scheduled start date. Orders should cover all potential questions to allow media outlets to plan for their coverage of the hearing, jury selection, or trial. Examples of these types of rules and orders can be found in [Appendix D-2, pages 116-123](#).

Any order or rule drafted and signed by the presiding judge should be sent to the court's [listserv](#) as well as any local agencies or divisions that will play a part in a high-profile trial or event. Those agencies may include local law enforcement, the state's attorney's office, and the public defender's office.

4.7 (COVID-19) Crisis Communications: Lessons Learned

In the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, social media like Twitter and Facebook proved to be the single most important component of crisis communications for many courts. This finding was one of the highlights of research done by a Rapid Response Team (RRT) for communications created in the spring of 2020 as a joint project of the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators. It was confirmed in a nationwide survey of court judges and staff conducted by the RRT during the summer of 2020, several months into the pandemic. The research reveals a path going forward in which even more courts will use social media for communications in the future.

According to the research, courts with previously approved social media accounts run by trained and experienced staff fared better when the pandemic hit than those who lacked them. Some courts described their lack of existing social media as an unanticipated obstacle to successful crisis communications considering the problems that would arise. Many scrambled to set up social media platforms once it became obvious that the pandemic was a long-term crisis rather than a short-term one.



One reason for the rapid adoption of social media seems obvious. COVID-19 quickly pushed courts away from traditional means of interacting with the public and into the “virtual” online realm. This occurred in several ways. Confronted with restrictions on in-person gatherings, most courts moved away from face-to-face meetings toward videoconferencing using relatively new tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and similar software. Social media fit in well with the new regime of “social distancing” that was suddenly thrust upon courts by public health guidelines.

This trend was augmented by the economic wallop of the pandemic.

Traditional news media were among the most hard-hit industries as the economy began to lag. News organizations were left no choice but to make even more cutbacks than had occurred before. To meet revenue shortfalls, newspapers and television stations cut staff coverage, limited news content, and closed news bureaus. Court news coverage always had been a low priority and became even lower as the pandemic progressed.

The media cutbacks added to a pre-existing information vacuum. The dearth of news reporting about the legal community quickly grew worse as the pandemic persisted for months. Many courts were left with no choice but to communicate their own crisis messages directly to the public. They no longer could rely on traditional news media to transmit the message. Among the best tools for direct public communication are social media, especially when social media posts link to more detailed material on court websites. Other useful methods of court pandemic communications cited in survey results included smartphone text messages and emails sent directly to end users. These text messages and emails also usually included links to court websites. The most commonly used social media platforms cited in survey results were Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Florida’s approach to courts’ use of social media and crisis communications was favorably noted in the survey reports. Since 2016, Florida’s state courts have operated under a statewide [Court Communications Plan](#) unanimously approved by the state Supreme Court. The plan is implemented on an ongoing basis by Florida’s professional association of court PIOs, called the Florida Court Public Information Officers (FCPIO).³

Under this plan, courts at all levels had implemented social media policies and developed their own social media accounts long before the crisis hit. These accounts already had proved critical in several major hurricanes prior to the pandemic. So, FCPIO had crucial experience in using social media specifically for crisis communications.

Florida’s courts especially use Twitter and Facebook to distribute general crisis news. Posts there are designed to be shared, taking advantage of the ability of social media items to spread in a “viral” nature from friend to friend and from group to group. This increases their impact in a manner much like computerized “word of mouth.”

For example, the communications staff of Florida’s unified state bar association is a member of FCPIO and routinely shares the crisis social media posts of state courts. This sharing allows the information to spread much more deeply into the legal and judicial communities most interested in the information. Furthermore, this ability to reach deeply into the communities most affected by the judicial crisis gives social media platforms special value.

There are other factors contributing to the exponential or “viral” reach of social media messages. Among Florida’s state courts, for example, the Florida Supreme Court had the largest number of Twitter followers (more than 17,000) and Facebook followers and “friends” (more than 18,000) by August 2020. Supreme Court communications staff routinely share crisis-oriented social media posts from Florida’s lower courts with their own subscribers, further broadening their reach into the target populations.



As another factor, a large percentage of Florida Supreme Court Twitter and Facebook followers and friends are members of other governmental bodies, crisis coordinators, media organizations, and other “influencers” in the state’s communities. By “influencing the influencers,” the Florida Supreme Court has helped get word out widely about developments in the crisis. The court’s communication efforts have also helped set the tone for governmental transparency even in a time of crisis.

It is clear from these developments that social media now have become crucial for court crisis communications. In 2020, courts that either lacked social media policies or forbade the use of social media reported they were left at a disadvantage as the pandemic worsened. Developing uniform crisis messaging was cited as a critical factor in meeting the challenge. Crisis messaging that worked best used social media and other digital means of communications, including smartphone texting and emails, that linked people to timely and more detailed information on court websites. Thus, the RRT’s survey results suggested that court crisis planning in the future should have a communications component that includes an ongoing use of social media coordinated with website content. Having court PIO staff to manage these tools is also important.

Chapter 4 Endnotes

- ¹ *Press-Enterprise Co. v. Superior Court of California, Riverside Cty.*, 464 U.S. 501, 501 (1984), accessible online at <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/464/501/>.
- ² *Presley v. Georgia*, 558 U.S. 209 (2010), with the internal quotation being from page 505 of the first *Press-Enterprise* case. Accessible online at <https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/boundvolumes/558bv.pdf> and <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/558/209/>.
- ³ The Florida Supreme Court’s Public Information Office, <https://www.floridasupremecourt.org/About-the-Court/Departments-of-the-Court/Public-Information>, manages the judicial branch Communication Plan, <https://www.flcourts.org/content/download/216628/1965714/2016-Judicial-Branch-Court-Communication-Plan.pdf>, in coordination with FCPIO. This plan has become a model discussed and studied by court-related professional associations and judicial conferences around the nation.

AP Style (Associated Press): the grammar, capitalization, and punctuation style of the Associated Press news agency, used by newspapers and other news and media outlets. An example of the AP style is the writing style found in the local U.S. newspapers.

Beat: a particular topic or subject area that a reporter covers. Most journalists working in print and online news cover beats.

Boilerplate: any written text (copy) that can be reused in new contexts or applications without significant changes to the original. The term is used in reference to statements, contracts, and computer code, and is used in the media to refer to hackneyed or unoriginal writing.

Bridging: a media interview technique used to take control of an interview, or conversation. A communication bridge can be used to get from a question asked of you to the message that you want to get out. It can help you avoid getting trapped into saying something you didn't mean to say.

Buffer: a software application for the web and mobile, designed to manage accounts in social networks, by providing the means for a user to schedule posts to Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Instagram Stories, Pinterest, and LinkedIn, as well as analyze their results and engage with their community.

Business Wire: a U.S. company that disseminates full-text press releases from thousands of companies and organizations worldwide to news media, financial markets, disclosure systems, investors, information web sites, databases, bloggers, social networks, and other audiences.

(5) C's of Court News: themes that have traditionally attracted the public to the media: Catastrophe, Crisis, Conflict, Crime/Corruption, and Celebrity.

Dateline: is a brief piece of text included in news articles and releases that indicates the city the journalist was in when he or she reported on the story. It also indicates the date the story was filed.

Deepfakes: are synthetic media in which a person in an existing image or video is replaced with someone else's likeness. While the act of faking content is not new, deepfakes leverage powerful techniques from machine learning and artificial intelligence to manipulate or generate visual and audio content with a high potential to deceive.

Facebook: free social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages, and keep in touch with friends, family, and colleagues. The site, which is available in 37 different languages, includes public features such as:

Marketplace—allows members to post, read, and respond to classified ads.

Groups—allows members who have common interests to find each other and interact.

Events—allows members to publicize an event, invite guests, and track who plans to attend.

Pages—allows members to create and promote a public page built around a specific topic.

Presence technology—allows members to see which contacts are online and chat.

Five W's of Journalism: Who, What, When, Where, and Why. These provide a reader with a more complete understanding of the topic.

Flagging: a media interview technique used to emphasize or prioritize what you consider to be the most important points.

Follow/Follower: one who subscribes to a feed on social media.

Friend: the term used on Facebook to represent the connections you make and the people you follow. These are individuals you consider to be friendly enough with you to see your Facebook profile and engage with you.

For Immediate Release: these words appear at the top left of the page, in upper case, and indicate the news are sharing is ready to be made public.

Gag Order: a judge's order that a case may not be discussed in public.

Hashtag: a tag used on a variety of social networks as a way to annotate a message. A hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by a "#" (e.g., #InboundMarketing). Social networks use hashtags to categorize information and make it easily searchable for users.

Headline: a head of a newspaper story, article, or release usually printed in large type and giving the gist of the story or article that follows.

High-Profile Case: a case that attracts enough media or public attention that the court must or should make significant alterations to ordinary court procedures to manage it.

Hooking (also known as a News Hook): a media interview technique used to increase curiosity about a topic—usually involves ending your message with a statement that likely will prompt a follow-up question. Hooking can create dialogue focused on what you want to get across.

Hootsuite: a social media management system that gives users an integrated user interface from which to manage their social networks and interactions in one convenient dashboard.

IGTV (Instagram TV): a free app to share long-form videos.

Infographics: a visual image such as a chart or diagram used to represent information or data.

Instagram: a free photo, and video-sharing app available on Apple iOS, Android, and Windows Phone where people can upload photos or videos to our service and share them with their followers or with a select group of friends.

Later: a powerful social media management platform that allows marketers to schedule social media posts across multiple platforms. Later social media scheduling pairs detailed visuals with easy-to-use features that help to inform and streamline your social media marketing strategy.

Like: an action that can be made by a Facebook or Instagram user. Instead of writing a comment or sharing a post, a user can click the Like button as a quick way to show approval.

LinkedIn: a social networking website designed for business professionals. It allows you to share work-related information with other users and keep an online list of professional contacts.

Listserv: an electronic mailing list.

Live (also known as Live Stream): a real-time video shared over the Internet. Most social networks offer live streaming options, which allow users to interact with viewers and submit written comments and questions throughout the broadcast.

Media Advisory: a notice provided to media outlets that announces an event or news item, and provides information to solicit possible coverage. The advisory functions as an enticing and compelling invitation to your event.

Media Outlet: a publication or broadcast program that provides news and feature stories to the public through various distribution channels. Media outlets include newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet.

Media Packet: as it pertains to the courts, a package of information for journalists to help them write their story or navigate a high-profile trial with greater ease.

Media Plan: a document describing objectives, strategy, tactics, resource allocation, and media schedule and media mix to be used in reaching a targeted audience.

Media Platform: a service, site, or method that delivers media to an audience. Its functions are to deliver, but also sometimes to allow for feedback, discussion, or sharing.

Netiquette: short for "Internet etiquette." Netiquette is the correct or acceptable way of communicating on the Internet.

News Hook (also known as Hooking): a media interview technique used to increase curiosity about a topic—usually involves ending your message with a statement that likely will prompt a follow-up question. Hooking can create dialogue focused on what you want to get across.

News Release (see also Press Release): a short attention-grabber piece of writing that gives information about events, products and other exciting details of a company. In its basic form, a press release is a written statement meant to generate interest and publicity and attract potential customers.

Pin: an image added to Pinterest. A pin can be added from a website using the Pin It button, or you can upload images from your computer. Each pin added using the Pin It button links back to the site it came from.

Pinning: posting images or videos on yours, or others, Pinterest boards.

Pinterest: a social networking website that allows you to organize and share ideas with others. You can share your own content as well as things that other Pinterest users have posted.

Pinterest Board: the term for a collection of "pins" that usually share a common theme.

Pool Camera: pool coverage is sometimes required because of the nature of the news event being covered. For example, judges will often allow only one broadcast camera in the courtroom during a trial. As a result, interested broadcasters will select one of their own to provide the "pool camera" for the day, with that organization agreeing to share the footage with all other broadcasters in the pool.

Press Release (see also News Release): a short attention-grabber piece of writing that gives information about events, products, and other exciting details of a company. In its basic form, a press release is a written statement meant to generate interest and publicity and attract potential customers.

Retweet: a reposted or forwarded message on Twitter.

Target Audience: the intended audience or readership of a publication, advertisement, or other message.

Tweet: a message posted on Twitter.

Twitter: a free social networking microblogging service that allows registered members to broadcast short posts called tweets. Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other users' tweets by using multiple platforms and devices.

YouTube: a video-sharing service that allows users to watch videos posted by other users and upload videos of their own. Videos that have been uploaded to YouTube may appear on the YouTube website and can also be posted on other websites, though the files are hosted on the YouTube server.

QUICK REFERENCE MEDIA INTERVIEWS

GUIDE

DO & DON'T *of media interviews*

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always Be On The Record • Be Forthcoming Whenever Possible • Be Honest • Be Prepared For Interviews • Develop A Relationship Of Mutual Trust • Keep Confidences With Reporters • Use Plain Language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hide Bad News Or Deny Something True • Say "No Comment" Or "Off-The-Record" • Schedule During Peak Times • Speculate, Guess, Or Assume Opinions • Use Complicated Terminology |
|---|---|

MEDIA INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

HOOKING

create curiosity by ending your message with a statement that will likely prompt a follow-up question.

BRIDGING

getting back to the talking points you brought to an interview. Answer naturally with a brief statement that acknowledges the topic of the question, then "bridge" back to your most important point.

FLAGGING

emphasize or prioritize what you consider to be the most important points.

QUICK REFERENCE PRESS RELEASE

GUIDE

DOES YOUR RELEASE ANSWER THE...



PRESS RELEASE

- Headline
- Sub-head (optional)
- Dateline (city & state)
- Date
- Photo(s) and multimedia content
- Introductory paragraph
- One to five body paragraphs
- Organization's "boilerplate" (about us)
- Contact information

QUICK REFERENCE SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES






- WHEN IN DOUBT, LEAVE IT OUT**
- USE COMMON SENSE AND GOOD JUDGMENT.**
- ASK BEFORE YOU ACT.**
- USE "NETIQUETTE."**
- DON'T PUT CONTENT IN ALL CAPS.**

SOCIAL MEDIA

Common Platforms and Uses

 TWITTER Public Education Promote Events Court Closures (due to Holidays, Emergencies, or Other events)	Job Openings High-profile case information (next court date, verdict, sentencing, etc) Gather and monitor news Crisis Communication
Highlight activities and awards Share communication efforts Explain court processes and procedures.	 FACEBOOK Live Streaming and Town Halls Human Interest Stories
 INSTAGRAM Photo and video sharing Creating stories	
Self-help or How-to Videos Share videos of events Supplement training of court staff	 YOUTUBE Improve self-represented litigants' access to justice Stream court events or archived hearings
 PINTEREST How-to Graphics Step-by-Step Guides Feature buildings and artwork	
Post and view jobs Build and maintain your professional network Share articles of interest Media Relations	 LINKEDIN Drive traffic to main website Collaborate with similar entities

Best Time & Days To Post To Social Media

	DAY	TIME
 FACEBOOK	Thursdays Thursday- Friday	8 pm 1 pm - 3 pm
 PINTEREST	Weekdays Weekends	8 pm late night
 TWITTER	Monday- Friday Wednesdays	12 pm - 3 pm 5 pm - 6 pm
 INSTAGRAM	Monday - Thursday	anytime EXCEPT between 3 - 4 pm
 LINKEDIN	Tuesdays Wednesday - Thursday	10 am - 11 am 10 am - 6 pm

QUICK REFERENCE HIGH-PROFILE TRIALS

GUIDE

TOP SIX CONSIDERATIONS FOR COURTS PRESENTED WITH HIGH-PROFILE CASES

6 SUPER

1. At what stage of litigation is this case?
2. Who will be on the leadership team?
3. What should the judge presiding over the case do?
4. What unique challenges will arise based on this type of case?
5. Who is interested in this case?
6. How best can we manage the case with existing resources?



TOP 10 HIGH-PROFILE BEST PRACTICES

- 1 Appoint a primary media liaison
- 2 Update the court's website with the latest information
- 3 Ensure that the judges and staff understand media procedures
- 4 Contact litigants' counsel and media before the event
- 5 Establish a clear electronics policy
- 6 Create media seating and an overflow area
- 7 Provide media credentials
- 8 Have a system in place for quick mass media alerts
- 9 Provide interview areas and TV news parking
- 10 Be prepared for the unexpected and be flexible

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 December 4, 2019

Media Advisory:
Baltimore City District Court Adult Drug Treatment Court Celebrates 25 Years
Drug Court graduates honored

Drug Court participants in Baltimore City will be recognized by Baltimore City District Court for their successful completion of the Baltimore City Adult Drug Treatment Court (DTC) program on Thursday, December 12, 2019, at a ceremony presided by District Court Judge Nicole Taylor. The celebration will also commemorate 25 years of the Baltimore City District Court Adult Drug Treatment Court, Maryland's pioneer problem-solving court.

The DTC was founded in 1994 as a comprehensive court-supervised and voluntary treatment-based program for substance users charged with misdemeanor and concurrent jurisdiction felonies in the District Court. Since then, more than 1,413 people have participated in 54 graduations at the Baltimore City District Court DTC. Its mission is serving the community and increasing public safety by integrating a coordinated treatment response for those with substance use disorders. In its 25th year, the DTC was restructured to perform in accordance with the National Association of Drug Court Professionals' best practices guidelines to better serve a community plagued by the opioid epidemic. The program's new motto is "Choose to Live."

Approximately six DTC graduates will be joined by family, friends, judges, prosecutors, and more than a dozen community partners to celebrate their sobriety and success.

WHO: Baltimore City District Court Judge Nicole Taylor, presiding
 District Court of Maryland Chief Judge John P. Morrissey
 Baltimore City District Administrative Judge Barbara Baer Waxman
 Adult Drug Treatment Court graduates

WHAT: Baltimore City DTC graduation ceremony and 25th anniversary celebration

WHEN: Thursday, December 12, 2019, at 11:30 a.m.

WHERE: Baltimore City District Court

Courtroom 1

5800 Wabash Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21215

NOTE: Please contact the Maryland Judiciary, Government Relations and Public Affairs, by email at communications@mdcourts.gov or 410-260-1488 if you plan to attend or have questions. The use of cameras inside the courtroom will be limited. Photographers will be allowed to take pictures of the graduates with Judge Taylor, but pictures are not permitted while the judge is on the bench. Photographers will be allowed to take still photography and/or video outside of the courtroom, but those requests must be approved in advance. Photographers must ask participants for their consent prior to taking pictures and/or video.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 18, 2019

Media Advisory:

Circuit courts in Maryland celebrate adoptions as part of National Adoption Day

In recognition of National Adoption Day on Nov. 23, Maryland circuit courts will hold adoption proceedings and family celebrations Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, Nov. 21, 22, and 23. National Adoption Day honors adoptive families and draws attention to the need for permanent, loving families for children in foster care.

Members of the media are invited to attend National Adoption Day activities in November in the following circuit courts:

Anne Arundel County

The Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County will hold up to five adoption proceedings on Thursday, Nov. 21, at 9 a.m. in Courtroom 4C. Circuit Administrative Judge Laura S. Ripken will preside over the hearings. Following the hearings, refreshments will be offered in the fourth floor gallery. Families will receive a gift to commemorate the occasion. Literature will be available about foster care and adoption programs through the Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services and private adoption agencies. If you are attending as a member of the media, contact Andrea Parks, Circuit Court Adoption Case Manager, at 410-222-2327. Persons being photographed should be asked for their consent before a picture is taken.

Baltimore City

Circuit Administrative Judge W. Michel Pierson, Judge Emanuel Brown, and Judge Kendra Y. Ausby will preside jointly when up to 27 adoption proceedings will take place at the Circuit Court for Baltimore City on Saturday, Nov. 23. Following the 10 a.m. ceremony in the Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr., Courthouse, families will celebrate together during a reception featuring face painters, a balloon artist, and arts and crafts activities. The newly adopted children will receive personalized gift bags that also include gifts for their siblings. The ceremony has been coordinated with the Bar Association of Baltimore City, with support from the Baltimore City Department of Social Services. Persons being photographed should be asked for their consent before a picture is taken.

Montgomery County

The judges of the Circuit Court for Montgomery County will preside over the adoptions of eight children on Friday, Nov. 22. The ceremonies will begin at 3:30 p.m. in Courtroom 3E of the Montgomery County Circuit Court's North Tower in Rockville. The newly adopted children will receive personalized gifts. After the adoptions are finalized, the families will celebrate together at a reception hosted by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services with food and activities, including a face painter, balloon artist, and caricaturist. If you are attending as a member of the media, please contact Chanel Wainstein, Circuit Court Adoption Coordinator, at 240-777-9119. People who do not want to be photographed will wear stickers; persons being photographed should be asked for their consent before a picture is taken.

Prince George's County

On Thursday, Nov. 14, Judge Sheila R. Tillerson Adams, the Chief and Administrative Judge for the Circuit Court for Prince George's County and the Seventh Judicial Circuit, presided over "Celebrating Families," a National Adoption Day ceremony, with Prince George's County Circuit Court Judges Cathy H. Serrette, Beverly J. Woodard, who is an adoptive parent, and Family Coordinating Judge DaNeeka Varner Cotton. The event was held in the Prince George's County Courthouse in Upper Marlboro. The celebration included guest speakers and sponsors, a reception, and the presentation of gifts to the children and families by Senator Ben Cardin. The ceremony was in coordination with the Prince George's County Department of Social Services.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 December 2, 2019

Media Advisory:
**Winners announced for Maryland Judiciary's 14th Annual
 Conflict Resolution Day Bookmark Art Contest**

The Maryland Judiciary received 2,735 bookmark entries from students in 11 counties, plus Baltimore City, for its 14th Annual Conflict Resolution Day Bookmark Art Contest. The contest, which is sponsored by the Maryland Judiciary's Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office (MACRO), more than doubled in entries from students across Maryland.

The contest winners will be announced Thursday, Dec. 5, at a special celebration hosted by Maryland Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera, a former elementary school teacher, who will meet with students and congratulate them on their bookmark artwork. Students created bookmarks focused on the peacemaking theme preventing or resolving conflict peacefully. Many of this year's participants created artwork expressing messages about respect for others, inclusion, and self-acceptance.

Eleven first, second, and third place contest winners in grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-8 will receive prizes. Students' bookmarks will be printed and distributed throughout Maryland to promote conflict resolution. Fifteen students will garner honorable mentions for their artwork.

WHAT: Student bookmark artwork unveiled, and winners announced at awards ceremony and reception at the 14th Annual Conflict Resolution Day Bookmark Art Contest

WHO: Mary Ellen Barbera, Chief Judge of the Maryland Court of Appeals
 Students in grades K-8 and their families

WHEN: Thursday, Dec. 5, 4-6:30 p.m.

WHERE: Maryland Judicial Center
 Lobby area and rooms 132-133
 187 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401

NOTE: Please contact the Maryland Judiciary, Government Relations and Public Affairs, by email at communications@mdcourts.gov or 410-260-1488 to attend. Cameras and electronic recording devices will be allowed. Media outlets are responsible for getting permission from families, as needed, for the use of photos, video, and publication of the students and their artwork. More contest details can be found at: <https://www.mdcourts.gov/macro/eventsconflictresolutionday>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 18, 2019

**Towson District Courthouse scheduled to move to new
 Catonsville District Courthouse on January 6, 2020**

Towson location closing temporarily due to HVAC system repairs

BALTIMORE COUNTY, Md. – The Towson District Courthouse, located at 120 E. Chesapeake Avenue in Towson, will close at the end of the business day (4:30 p.m.) on Friday, January 3, 2020, and reopen on Monday, January 6, 2020, at its new temporary location at the new Catonsville District Courthouse, located at 1 Rolling Crossroads in Catonsville.

Towson District Court staff and operations will move to the new courthouse, due to HVAC system repairs, which are expected to take approximately six months.

“Towson District Court judges, staff, and visitors will start the year at a new location in Catonsville,” said Judge John P. Morrissey, Chief Judge of the District Court of Maryland. “The Maryland Judiciary is committed to making it a seamless transition with no disruption in services for court users. The temporary courthouse relocation ensures the safety and well-being of everyone while critical HVAC repairs are being made.”

All individuals that have business with the Towson District Courthouse should report to the new Catonsville District Courthouse beginning January 6, 2020. Signage has been placed in the current Towson District Courthouse to alert individuals of the upcoming location change. During the temporary move, all services provided at the Towson District Courthouse, including the commissioner’s office, will temporarily move to the new Catonsville District Courthouse.

Construction on the new Catonsville District Courthouse in Baltimore County is scheduled to be completed in early winter. The 130,000-square-foot facility, located on 5.9 acres in the Rolling Crossroads Professional Park, will have eight courtrooms. Convenient and free on-site parking is provided in an adjacent 425-vehicle parking garage. Additionally, the courthouse is accessible to commuters via Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) bus lines. For more information regarding bus routes and schedules, please visit the MTA website at <https://www.mta.maryland.gov/schedule>, or call the MTA at 410-539-5000.

“We are fortunate to have a new courthouse to operate from during the repair work taking place at the Towson District Courthouse,” said Baltimore County District Court Administrative Judge Dorothy Wilson. “It is important that employees, judges, and court visitors have a safe and secure environment for conducting the business of the court and hearing and processing cases.”

Baltimore County has three District Court locations (Catonsville, Essex, and Towson). The old Catonsville District Courthouse, located at 900 Walker Avenue in Catonsville, and the Essex District Courthouse, located at 8914 Kelso Drive in Essex, will remain open and fully operational during the temporary relocation of the Towson District Courthouse to 1 Rolling Crossroad in Catonsville.

Between 4:30 p.m. on Friday, January 3, 2020, and 7 a.m. on Monday, January 6, 2020, commissioner services will only be available at the Essex District Courthouse (8914 Kelso Drive) or the old Catonsville District Courthouse (900 Walker Avenue). Commissioner services include applications for public defender, petitions for domestic violence or peace orders, extreme risk protective orders, applications for charges, posting of bail, or any other matter for which a commissioner is needed. Beginning Monday, January 6, 2020, these commissioner services will also be available at the new Catonsville District Court (1 Rolling Crossroad).

Upon completion of the HVAC repairs, Towson District Court staff and court services will move back to the Towson District Courthouse and resume normal operations.

The public can email the court with questions, comments, and concerns about the temporary relocation to towsontempmove@mdcourts.gov. In addition to courthouse signage, FAQ sheets and transportation guides will be made available at all Baltimore County District Courthouses. You can also find more information online at <https://mdcourts.gov/district/about/move>.

For more updates on the courthouse move, follow the Maryland Judiciary on Twitter.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 1, 2019

Maryland Judiciary updates, digitizes guide to assist journalists covering Maryland's courts

ANNAPOLIS, Md. – A newly updated, comprehensive guide aimed at giving members of the media a better understanding of the Maryland court system is now available online.

The Maryland Judiciary released its third edition of the Journalist's Guide to Maryland's Legal System today. The release coincides with the American Bar Association's Law Day, which is held annually on May 1 to celebrate the rule of law in the United States. The 2019 Law Day theme is "Free Speech, Free Press, Free Society," and encourages the understanding and protection of these fundamental rights ensured by the U.S. Constitution.

For the first time, the Journalist's Guide will be offered exclusively online. The document has been thoroughly updated, rewritten, and reorganized under the direction of the Maryland Judicial Council's Court Access and Community Relations Committee and its Community Relations Subcommittee, drawing on the help and expertise of many attorneys and journalists in the community.

"It is significant that we are releasing the Journalist's Guide on Law Day," said Maryland Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera. "The Judiciary strives to improve public awareness and understanding of the Maryland judicial branch, as well as the court system, and its role in resolving conflicts, providing justice, and upholding the rule of law. A free press is vitally important to inform the public about court proceedings and events. This guide gives journalists the tools they need to report about our legal system with the necessary accuracy and thoroughness to inform and educate the people we serve."

The Journalist's Guide includes information on obtaining court records through Case Search, at the courthouse, or through the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) case management system; a review of journalists' rights; guidelines for coverage to avoid legal problems; an overview of the Maryland

Shield Law; a guide to the various components of Maryland's state judicial system and justice partners; and explanations of the criminal and civil court processes.

Research for the third edition started about three years ago when Prince George's County Circuit Court Judge Larnzell Martin, Jr., now retired, was chair of the Court Access and Community Relations Committee and District 10 Administrative Judge Pamela J. Brown (Howard County) was chair of its Community Relations Subcommittee.

"We were fortunate to have the help of several distinguished former journalists and representatives from the Maryland State Bar Association," said Judge Brown, who still chairs the subcommittee. "This has been an intensive effort by many dedicated committee members and experts, including Robert D. Anbinder, Esq., and Sue Kopen Katcef. Both Anbinder and Katcef made major contributions to the guide by dedicating many hours to research, write, and edit the content you see in this third edition."

The work has since been completed under the purview of Baltimore City Circuit Court Judge Pamela J. White, who became committee chair in 2018.

"This guide is extensive and inclusive," Judge White said. "We tried to answer every question and identify every resource that reporters might need to know about Maryland courts and how to cover judicial proceedings. The guide includes practical details and is quite 'user friendly,' while giving journalists a resource to rely on time and time again. We also believe that the online format will provide easy and instant access."

The Journalist's Guide to Maryland's Legal System is available online at <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/691761/>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cobb Mental Health Court Graduates Find Hope After Painful Battles With Depression and Abuse
 Graduates receive fresh start at graduation ceremony honoring completion of 24-month treatment program

Marietta, GA, October 22, 2015---The Cobb County Mental Health Court (MHC) will hold its first ever graduation ceremony on Thursday, October 22, 2015, at the Cobb Superior Court, Ceremonial Courtroom-2nd floor, at 2:00 PM. Seven men and women are expected to be among the graduates. This ceremony marks their completion of a 24-month treatment-based program for defendants with a documented mental health diagnosis.

"Tim came into MHC merely existing," recalls Adrienne Bowen, Mental Health Court Coordinator. Prior to finding MHC, alcohol had impacted Tim's health so negatively that his doctors had given him only 2 years to live. "I'm finally comfortable in my own skin," claims Tim, who turned to alcohol at the age of 15 as a way of coping with anxiety and depression.

Tim spent many years homeless, not knowing where he would lay his head down at night. He remembers being content with his situation, as long as he had alcohol. Now, after extensive treatment and therapy associated with MHC, Tim has discovered what contentment really is, and it isn't alcohol. "Life is a gift, and not a right. That's where contentment comes from," explains Tim. Having gone from owning nothing and not being able to hold a job, Tim now owns his own company, car, and has a place to call home.

Another graduate, who by no choice of her own, was born into a toxic environment riddled with abuse. After years of abusive relationships, having her children taken away, and turning to drugs as a relief from her pain, Tracy discovered MHC and was admitted into the program. "I remember entering into MHC and telling everyone what I needed, and a staff member said to me, 'Tracy, if you let us take the wheel, you'll see that this process really works.' And from then on, something just went right," said Tracy.

"I knew if I had to be in MHC, I was going to get everything I could possibly get out of them, and I did. I got a dentist, one-on-one therapy, medical assistance, housing, better relationships with people. I even got my license back and was able to buy a vehicle, but most of all, I am now able to recognize when I am going into something and I know how to ask for help instead of spiraling back down to the ground and giving up," claims Tracy. MHC has provided her with the tools to lead a more productive life, and now her life is better because of it.

"No one chooses to be mentally ill; mental illness is devastating to not only the individuals who suffer, but also to their families and communities," states MHC Judge Mary E. Staley. According to the Cobb County Sheriff's Office, 33% of the current inmate population is diagnosed with a mental illness, and an estimated \$300,000.00 is spent annually on medications to treat these illnesses. The Cobb County MHC seeks to stop the revolving door of people diagnosed with a mental illness, and address the actual problem instead of the symptom. "MHC is unique because it holds participants accountable for their conduct, and through various life skills training and therapy, teaches them a new way to live," continues Staley.

MHC is one of three Accountability Courts offered in the Cobb Superior Court, and began under the direction of Judge Mary E. Staley on April 24, 2012. MHC strives to improve mental health, promote self-sufficiency, reduce recidivism, and offer cost-effective alternatives to incarceration and hospitalization. MHC represents an effort to increase effective cooperation between two systems that have traditionally not worked closely together - The Mental Health System and The Criminal Justice System. MHC holds defendants accountable and assists participants in achieving long-term stability, become law abiding, and become successful family/ community members.

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For more information, or to schedule an interview with Tracy or Tim, please contact Amanda Marshall at 770-528-8101 or by email at amanda.marshall@cobbcounty.org.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Two Veterans Become First To Graduate Cobb County Veterans Treatment Court:
 Veterans win battle to regain their lives after suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Marietta, GA, May 13, 2016 --- The Cobb County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) will hold its first ever graduation ceremony on Friday, May 13, 2016, at the Cobb County Superior Court, Jury Assembly Room-1st floor, at 9:00 AM. Two veterans are expected to graduate at the ceremony, which signifies their completion of a minimum 18-month long program focusing on rehabilitating veterans by diverting them from the traditional criminal justice system and providing them with the tools they need to lead a productive, law-abiding lifestyle.

Research suggests many veterans suffer from adjustment issues when they come back into civilian life, such as PTSD and traumatic brain injuries. "The VTC offers veterans who have sacrificed so much for our nation, an opportunity to address the issues brought on by their military service, that have ultimately lead to their involvement with the criminal justice system," states Flynn Broady, VTC Program Coordinator. Broady continues, "Now, with all of their hard work and dedication, these graduates have a chance to fulfill the potential they demonstrated when initially joining the military."

Former Marine and presiding judge of the VTC, Reuben Green states that oftentimes veterans will treat these mental health issues with different substances to cope. "Once they are stable, the VTC assists them in identifying stable housing and then requires them to find a job or enroll in a higher-education program," Judge Green continued, which is exactly how VTC participant Brandon Musser claims he was able to regain the structure he needed coming out of the military.

"Both of our graduates entered the military at a young age, and entered into an environment where someone told them when to eat, bathe, and sleep. When they began adjusting into a normal lifestyle again without the structure the military afforded to them, they discovered they were lacking essential life skills, and turned to drugs and alcohol as a way to cope" says Kristie Garrett - VTC Treatment Coordinator. She adds, "Treatment and therapy, provided by the VTC in conjunction with the Atlanta VA Medical Center, help to provide these participants with the tools they need to live a successful life on their own."

Another unique facet of the VTC is the Mentor Program. "Each VTC participant is paired up with an honorably discharged veteran from the community who serves as a mentor to the participant," states Judge Green. Some of these mentors have suffered from PTSD and are able to help guide and advise the participants throughout their recovery. Musser claims the mentors are "essential to the success of the program."

One graduate, Willis Hatfield-Reavis, credits the mentors, and his ability to network within them, for his newfound passion in healthcare. "I've found my passion through Veterans Court. I believe the best blessing you can do for your country, outside of serving in the military, is serving our veterans," says Hatfield-Reavis. And that is exactly what he plans to do by opening *Will2Win*, a wellness center that will aid veterans in need of guidance and support by offering life coaches, personal trainers, and a place to house homeless veterans.

Both graduates also credit Judge Green and his military experience, as a huge benefit to the program. "I've been in the justice system a long time, and I've been before a lot of judges that once they start laying down the hammer, it sets the tone for every case to follow, but not with Judge Green. He treats every person as an individual and never lets a prior case set the precedent for his next ruling," states Musser. Hatfield-Reavis also praises Judge Green saying, "He gives us hope. We come to him homeless and addicted, after doing a great thing for our country, and he gives us the hope we need to keep pushing forward to be model veterans."

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For more information, or to schedule an interview with Brandon or Willis, please contact Amanda Marshall at 678-522-9261 or email Amanda at amanda.marshall@cobbcounty.org.



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If Model is under 18: I, _____, am the parent/legal guardian of the individual named above, I have read this release and approve of its terms.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois**

Social Media and Social Networking Policy

1.1 Authority

This Social Media and Social Networking Policy applies to all judiciary employees of the Northern District of Illinois, including interns, externs, and other volunteer court employees. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees and the Information Technology Policy.

This policy governs the use of all social media. The absence of an explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy.

2.1 Use of Social Media

Social media and networking Internet sites (“social media”) allow people to connect and interact with others over the Internet. Examples include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, WeChat, WhatsApp, Tumblr, YouTube, blogs, Snapchat, Instagram, and personal websites.

People may use social media to maintain relationships with others or to pursue professional opportunities such as networking, marketing, or soliciting business ideas. The danger of social media, however, is that a large number of people, including litigants and potentially harmful individuals, may have access to, or be able to obtain access to, information displayed on such sites, or make available that information later for public consumption. Certain social media enable the user to limit who will have access to displayed information. The user does not necessarily have the ability, however, to prevent those with access to the displayed information from posting that information on their own sites. Facebook users may, for example, give a friend access to their Facebook page, and that friend may then make the displayed information available to others who may not have direct access to the initial users’ pages. Social media users should therefore assume that others will have access to information displayed however briefly via social media.

3.1 Principles

Please keep the following general policies and procedures in mind as you participate on social media sites:

3.1.1 Think Before you Post.

Internet postings—whether they are text, photos, videos, or audio—remain accessible long after

the user forgets about them. Nothing is “private” on the Internet despite people’s best efforts to keep things private. Do not post anything on the Internet that you would not want to read on the front page of the newspaper.

3.1.2 Speak for yourself, not the Court.

On social networking sites, many individuals list their occupations and/or places of employment. Considering the sensitive nature of our work, Court employees are prohibited from identifying themselves with the Court or their judge on social networking sites, except that judicial employees, with the permission of the Court or judge, may state their association with the Court or judge on professional networking sites like LinkedIn. An indication that you work for the Court may bring unwanted attention or even harassment to you, the Court, or your judge. Anything posted on our site can also be attributed to your judicial employer. You are a representative of the Court and should conduct yourself in a way to avoid bringing embarrassment upon yourself and the Court. Court employees should abide by a simple rule: if you are not speaking to someone directly or over a secure land line, you must assume that anything you say or write is available for public consumption.

3.1.2.1 Confidentiality

Make sure to abide by all of the Court’s confidentiality and disclosure provisions. Court employees handle confidential and sensitive information, and the restrictions that Court employees normally observe in the performance of their day-to-day duties also apply to their use of social media. Just as Court employees are prohibited from disclosing sensitive, non-public information to the media and general public in person or over the phone, the same applies to social media. Furthermore, Court employees should refrain from discussing any of the Court’s internal processes and procedures, whether they are of a non-confidential or confidential nature. Former employees should also observe the same restrictions on disclosure of confidential information that apply to current judicial employees.

3.1.2.2 Remember the Code.

Any public postings are governed by the Judiciary’s Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees. Be respectful to the Court, its employees, and the parties before it. Court employees are expected to avoid impropriety and conduct themselves in a manner that does not detract from the dignity and independence of the judicial system. As such, Court employees are restricted from engaging in partisan political activity and fund-raising activities via social media that could compromise judicial independence and integrity. Court employees who work within Judicial Chambers must refrain from all political activity. Information on blogs or other social media should comply with the Court’s confidentiality and any other relevant Court policies. This restriction also applies to comments posted on blogs or other social media sites. An employee who maintains a blog should remove all references to his or her employment. Please keep these policies and procedures in mind as you participate on social media sites. If there is something you would not

communicate via e-mail or in person because it would be a violation of Court policy, you should not communicate it to anyone via a social media outlet such as Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter, etc.

Remember that you are a representative of the Court and should conduct yourself in a way to avoid bringing embarrassment upon yourself and the Court.

The general restriction on use or disclosure of confidential information does not prevent, nor should it discourage, an employee or former employee from reporting or disclosing misconduct, including sexual or other forms of harassment, by a judge, supervisor, or other person.

3.1.2.3 Observe Security Protocol.

Court employees must also take care to avoid doing things that would compromise the security of the courthouse and employees. To maintain security, do not post pictures of the courthouse, inside or outside; do not post pictures of Court events, and do not post pictures of the Court’s judicial officers. Be careful when disclosing your place of employment: Social media sites are notoriously unsecure environments. Knowledge of your place of employment could place employees in situations where pressure could be applied on them to corrupt the integrity of the judicial process. Do not post personal information about your judicial officer including her location at any given time, her family information, or her residence.

3.1.2.4 Do Not Forget your Day Job.

You should make sure that your online activities do not interfere with your job commitments. Checking social media throughout the day can prevent you from fulfilling your job obligations.

4.1 Rules

The Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees applies to all online activities, including an employee’s use of social media. Court employees also must comply with the following rules and procedures when participating on social media sites:

4.1.1 Disclosure of Information

Court employees may not disclose any confidential, sensitive or non-public information obtained during their employment. Court employees should also refrain from discussing any of the Court’s internal processes and procedures, whether they are of a confidential or non-confidential nature.

Court employees may not disclose any information or post any content regarding pending or other court-related matters, including comments regarding parties or attorneys who appear before the Court.

4.1.2 Identification as a Federal Court Employee

Court employees may identify themselves as employees of the federal courts generally on social networking sites, but, subject to the following exception for professional networking sites, may not specify the court or judge for which they work. When identifying their employer on professional networking website, such as LinkedIn, Court employees may include a job title (e.g., “federal law clerk”) and the specific court (e.g., “District Court for the Northern District of Illinois”). Court employees, however, may not identify the specific judicial officer for whom they directly work for or court. Court employees must not discuss their job responsibilities for the Court on the Internet without the express permission of their supervisor.

4.1.3 Restriction on Internet Use

Court employees must abide by the restrictions on personal use of the public Internet set forth in the Information Technology Policy. For Court employees who are permitted to access social networking sites, these activities should not interfere with their work commitments.

Use of a court email address for social networking (e.g., blogs, Facebook, Twitter) is not permitted.

4.1.4 Copyright, Fair Use and Financial Disclosure Laws

Court employees must comply with all copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws. Many social networking sites require that users, when they sign up, agree to abide by a terms-of-service document. Court employees are responsible for reading, knowing, and complying with the terms of service of the sites they use.

4.1.5 Photographs

Court employees may not post any photographs that may compromise court security or the security of individual officers or employees or that may compromise the integrity of the court or that of judicial officers. Court employees are strictly prohibited from displaying graphics, scanned documents or data, diagrams, videos, photographs, or other types of content depicting: chambers of judicial officers, courtrooms, courthouses or federal buildings (interior and exterior), or judicial officers without those individuals’ prior express permission.

4.1.6 Disclosure of Confidential Information

Court employees are prohibited from posting confidential information about a judge or a court, including the judge’s location at a certain time. For example, court employees should not disclose where a judicial officer is on vacation or if they are traveling to a particular city for a work engagement.

4.1.7 Use of Court Seal or Logo

Court employees may not use the United States District Court seal or logos in any manner. Similarly, employees may not reference their position with the Court where that reference would suggest that the employee is seeking special attention

4.1.7 Partisan Political Activity

In accordance with the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees, Court employees must refrain from partisan political activity. Court employees should not indicate a political allegiance on social networking sites and should not express views for or against a policy that is of current political debate.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees, Court employees who are judges’ personal staff and court executives must refrain from all political activities. These Court employees may not participate in any social media that relates to any political issue, political activity or politician, whether partisan or nonpartisan.

5.1 Violations of Policy

Court employees should inform their supervisors if they become aware of any violations of the Social Media and Social Networking Policy.

6.1 Enforcement

The Court reserves the right to monitor its employees’ use of social media by monitoring its employees’ Internet activities as set forth in the Information Technology Policy. The Court further reserves the right to visit and monitor social media sites to ensure that employees are not violating the Court’s Social Media and Social Networking Policy via Court or any other computers, including employees’ own personal computers. These policies and procedures do not supersede other existing policies. Failure to adhere to these policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action, which may include termination.

Approved by the Court December 19, 2019



2. Use of Social Media *

(* Note: See explanation under Other Related Policies.)

The purpose of this policy is not to restrict the flow of useful and appropriate information, but to minimize the risk to the Nebraska Supreme Court and its employees. The Nebraska Supreme Court recognizes the growing importance of online social media networks as a communication tool and respects the right of employees to use these mediums during their personal time. Use of these mediums during working hours or on work equipment, however, should be kept to a minimum and shall not interfere with the conduct of state business.

The Nebraska Supreme Court takes no position on employees' decision to participate in the use of social media networks. However, employees who participate in social media may include information about their work with the Nebraska Supreme Court as part of their personal profile, as it would relate to a typical social conversation. This may include:

- Work information such as work location, job title, and job duties.
- Status updates regarding an employee's own job promotion.
- Personal participation in court activities and sponsored events, including volunteer activities.

In general, employees who participate in social media are free to publish their own personal information without censorship by the Nebraska Supreme Court.

All employees are responsible for maintaining the Nebraska Supreme Court's positive reputation and presenting the Court in a manner that safeguards the positive reputation of themselves, as well as other employees and judges.

If an employee chooses to identify himself or herself as a court/probation employee on any social media network, he or she must state in clear terms that the views expressed are the employee's alone and that they do **not** reflect the views of the Nebraska Supreme Court. Employees are prohibited from acting as a spokesperson for the Nebraska Supreme Court or posting comments as a representative of the Court.

There are some types of information employees are not permitted to discuss or display online, including:

- Information that is confidential or proprietary to the Nebraska Supreme Court, or to a third party that has disclosed information to the Court. For example: information about or identifying coworkers, judges, court cases, or parties in a case.
- Statements disparaging the Nebraska Supreme Court, judges, attorneys, or coworkers.
- Nebraska Supreme Court's seal on any social media network. Also, images of coworkers, judges, and court or office premises and property.

· Statements, comments, or images referencing illegal drugs or that include profanity or could be considered obscene.

· Statements, comments, or images that disparage any race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin. Also, any communication that engages in personal or sexual harassment, unfounded accusations, or remarks that would contribute to a hostile work environment (racial, sexual, religious, etc.), as well as any behavior not in agreement with any Nebraska Supreme Court codes of conduct or personnel policies.

The nature of any social media posting and degree of harm to the Nebraska Supreme Court will be factors in determining whether discipline will be imposed and the severity of any such discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Adopted 05-23-12

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media

Produced by the
Michigan Supreme Court
State Court Administrative Office
in conjunction with the Technology Implementation Committee

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Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20) Preface and Introduction

Preface

These standards and guidelines presume that a trial court is knowledgeable about websites and the types of social media and the typical uses of this technology and understands the terms and conditions of service in using this technology. If a trial court is considering launching a website or social media site and is not knowledgeable about this technology, it is highly recommended that the court familiarize itself with the details before proceeding. References are provided in this document to assist with this. In establishing website and social media policies and procedures, a trial court shall also collaborate with its information technology (IT) department or relevant staff. Equipment and technology standards and guidelines are not included; thus, a court should consult with its respective IT department about these details before launching a site.

These standards and guidelines also presume that a trial court has adopted a code of conduct for its employees. If a trial court does not have a code of conduct, it must adopt one before it launches a social media website. A model code of conduct for trial courts is available at http://courts.michigan.gov/Administration/SCAO/Resources/Documents/standards/je_guidelines.pdf.

This document contains three sections. Section 1 sets forth statewide policy and minimum standards and guidelines a trial court must observe in designing and maintaining a trial court website. Section 2 sets forth statewide policy and minimum standards and guidelines a trial court must observe in designing, maintaining, and using a social media site. Section 3 is a guide intended to assist a trial court to develop its own social media use policy and procedures for its trial court employees, and for contractual employees who have signed a computer acceptable use agreement. Section 3 does not necessarily apply to judges, but in the absence of specific statewide standards and guidelines, a trial court may choose to adapt them for that purpose through collaboration with the entire bench.

Introduction

The judiciary should seek to meet the public's growing expectation of the trial court communicating directly with the public, while preserving fairness and judicial impartiality. To that end, trial courts should be proactive in effectively informing the public about the justice system and must develop constructive strategies to communicate with the community through approved types of social media. These standards and guidelines are established to guide trial courts that are considering launching trial court websites and social media sites in response to this growing expectation.

Norman Meyer, in his article "*Social Media and the Courts: Innovative Tools or Dangerous Fad? A Practical Guide for Court Administrators*,"¹ indicates that "[t]he widespread use of, and expectations regarding, mobile computing and social media by the public make it increasingly

¹ Norman H. Meyer, Jr., Clerk of Court, United State Bankruptcy Court for the District of New Mexico since 2001 (<http://nmb.uscourts.gov/>), 500 Gold Avenue SW, Albuquerque, NM, 87102, USA, Telephone: 1-505-348-2450, Fax: 1-505-348-2445, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2894158.

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20) Preface and Introduction

imperative that courts not only pay attention to these phenomena, but also take advantage of social media opportunities to better meet the needs of the consumers of court services (litigants, attorneys, witnesses, jurors, news media, other government agencies, etc.)..."

Meyer further urges the judiciary to understand "how social media fit into the traditional nature of how courts function." He contrasts three characteristics of social media with the basic characteristics of the judiciary. Social media are: 1) decentralized and multidirectional, 2) personal and intimate, and 3) multimedia. The judiciary, on the other hand, is institutional and unidirectional, 2) separate and distant, and 3) highly textual. Meyer suggests that these contrasting characteristics present a challenge to the courts to respond to the reality of new media by resolving this "inherent incompatibility between the two cultures." He further suggests that "it is imperative that courts proactively step into the new technological world to effectively inform the public about the justice system . . . 'When controversies erupt around a court decision it offers opportunities to engage in, or inform that discussion.'²"

"Social media and the immediate access to and transmission of information have changed virtually every aspect of our lives," says Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. "For the judiciary to maximize the positive impact of this transformation, courts must be in the forefront, taking advantage of new ways to communicate, increasing public access, and improving service to the public by providing timely and accurate information."

Even with this recognition that social media is the customary mode by which the public communicates, these standards should not be viewed as promoting two-way communication through court social media sites.

In light of these expectations and because the potential audience can be anyone, trial courts must exercise care in selecting which social media platforms to use, what content will be published, and who will represent official court policy with regard to each social media platform. In developing policies and procedures, the following concerns should be addressed even though most of them pertain to use of social media by individuals outside the trial court's direct control:

1. Issues and Concerns Regarding Control and Use

- increased risk for invasion of privacy
- marginalizing those who don't use social media
- proliferating defamatory statements
- public expectations
- central control of court communications and existing policies for communication

² "Trial by Tweet? Findings on Facebook? Social Media Innovation or Degradation? The Future and Challenge of Change for Courts." By Dr. Pamela D Schulz and Dr. Andrew J Cannon, *International Journal for Court Administration*, February 2013, pages 1-2 . . . 5; http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2894402.

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20)
Preface and Introduction

2. **Issues and Concerns Regarding Information Sources**
 - difficulty in ascertaining ownership or locating origin of users and contributors
 - lack of verification, authenticity, and credibility
3. **Issues and Concerns Regarding Court Process and Outcomes**
 - using social media to communicate court decisions
 - using social media in the court process

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20)
Section 1: Standards and Guidelines for Trial Court Websites

Section 1: Standards and Guidelines for Trial Court Websites

These standards and guidelines are established to assist trial courts in designing, maintaining, and/or evaluating trial court websites with respect to administration, maintenance, and content. Because of the diversity of the trial courts (i.e., services provided, staffing, available resources), changing demands, and constantly evolving technology, some standards may have limited application. In addition, as with all standards or guidelines, periodic updates will be necessary.

A. Policy

1. Trial court websites shall be designed with several goals in mind:
 - a. To provide public information and services to the general public, legal community, and litigants in an efficient, timely, and easily accessible manner.
 - b. To maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of public information and services provided to the general public, legal community, and litigants.
 - c. To enhance customer service, accessibility, and public trust and confidence in the judiciary.
2. If a trial court establishes a website, it shall be used only for direct, noneditorial information and services. It shall not be used for:
 - a. Editorial opinions unrelated to the administration of justice.
 - b. As a political forum.
 - c. Legal advice.
 - d. Obscene, profane, defamatory, or offensive material.
 - e. Material that violates local, state, or federal laws; Michigan Court Rules; Michigan Code of Judicial Conduct; or Model Code of Conduct for Michigan Court Employees.

B. Administration

Mandated Standards: The trial court shall have a written policy that clearly identifies and defines the roles and responsibilities of the various personnel involved in oversight of a trial court website. For purposes of these standards and guidelines, personnel refers to all individuals associated with handling a court's website (including, but not limited to, employees, contract workers, funding unit employees, volunteers, and interns).

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20)
Section 1: Standards and Guidelines for Trial Court Websites

The policy shall adhere to the trial court's local computer acceptable use policy. If it does not have a computer acceptable use policy it can use the policy issued by the State Court Administrative Office, which is available from Judicial Information Systems by contacting jis@courts.mi.gov.

At a minimum, the court shall designate individual(s) who have primary responsibility for:

- Oversight of website design and legitimacy of content.
- Content management.

Recommendations: The trial court should hold meetings at least annually with these personnel to review and update their roles, responsibilities, and oversight processes.

C. Maintenance

Mandated Standards: The trial court shall establish policies and procedures with regard to security, accessibility, and content management.

1. **Security:** Security controls shall be in place to ensure confidential information is not disclosed, information is resistant to tampering to preserve accuracy of content, and information/service is available as intended by the court and expected by the users.
2. **Access:** Web pages shall comply with ADA requirements (Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act [29 U.S.C. 794d]).³ In attempting to meet these requirements, courts should review guidelines developed by the Web Accessibility Initiative at <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG22/>. Trial court websites shall conform to the state of Michigan requirement that all website content and applications meet Conformance Level "A" Priority 1 checkpoints. See the Checklist of Checkpoints for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 at <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/full-checklist.html>.

3. Content Management:

- a. The court shall designate an individual, or individuals, who will have primary responsibility for:
 - Reviewing the accuracy and currency of static content.
 - Reviewing links to outside websites to ensure links remain active and continue to provide the information intended by the court and expected by the users.

³ The state of Michigan conforms with federal laws and policies relating to the Rehabilitation Act, Section 508 Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards. Section 508 addresses various means of disseminating information, including computers, software, and electronic office equipment. It also applies to the Internet, Intranet, and World Wide Web. In addition, the state conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) regarding ADA accessibility and compliance. See <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/> for details.

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20)
Section 1: Standards and Guidelines for Trial Court Websites

- b. Transmission, distribution, or storage of any material that is not solely owned by the trial court, or in the public domain, shall not be published without proper authorization.
- c. Content providers shall provide information to the content manager as to ownership of the content, the date content was created, when content should be taken down, etc.
- d. Material that is obscene, profane, defamatory, or offensive shall be immediately removed from the website without prior authorization of the content owner.

Recommendations:

Content Management

1. Content should be provided and posted in the following manner: a) a single point of contact that prepares and posts all content, b) various providers who prepare and post content based on areas of expertise, or c) a single point of contact who posts all content as prepared by providers based on areas of expertise.
2. Stakeholders (internal and external) should meet at least annually to discuss larger issues such as new content development and long-term planning.

D. Web Content

Mandated Standards: A trial court website shall contain the following minimum elements:

- Court name and/or court seal on every page that is linked to the home page.
- Contact information (i.e., name, e-mail address, phone number).
- Search function.
- Location, hours, and contact information.
- Sitemap.
- Privacy statement/disclaimer/policies/security. See SCAO Model in Appendix A.
- Method for website feedback.
- Link to Language Access at: <http://courts.mi.gov/self-help/interpreter/pages/default.aspx>.
- Link to Michigan Legal Help at: <http://www.michiganlegalhelp.org/>.
- Name and contact information of ADA coordinator.
- Grievance procedure for complaints under the ADA.
- Local language access plan (LAP) and name and contact information of LAP coordinator.
- Local administrative orders.
- List of persons authorized to seize property and conduct evictions.

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20)
Section 1: Standards and Guidelines for Trial Court Websites

- List of approved bondsmen.
- If established pursuant to MCL 257.907, the schedule of civil fines, costs, and assessments to be imposed for civil infractions.
- Local court rules.
- External policies concerning the processing of cases.

Recommendations: A trial court website may contain the following elements:

- Individual directives and policies of the court's judges governing motion and trial practice, scheduling, courtroom etiquette, check-in, etc.
- Access to public information in a register of actions, except, all other public information in its case records may be provided through electronic means other than the website and only upon request. MCR 8.119(H)
- Case-related information, only as permitted by MCR 8.119(H).
- Links to outside websites. Any links shall be related to the court's functions or shall be necessary for the proper performance of a court function (i.e. other court sites, legislature, local and state bar associations, and state and local agencies).
- Listing of online services.
- Special services such as specialty courts.
- Forms. If SCAO forms are to be made available, the trial court shall link to the *One Court of Justice* website.
- Jury instructions and other information.
- Frequently asked questions.
- Employment opportunities.

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20)
Section 2: Standards and Guidelines for Trial Court Use of Social Media

Section 2: Standards and Guidelines for Trial Court Use of Social Media

These standards and guidelines are established to prescribe statewide policy with regard to use of social media within the context of judicial business and to guide trial courts who are considering establishing one or more trial court social media sites. They comprise: 1) governance and controls, and 2) types of social media and their permitted uses.

A. Policy

The judiciary may establish one or more trial court social media sites, in compliance with standards and guidelines prescribed by the State Court Administrative Office, to communicate through social media platforms, while preserving fairness and judicial impartiality. Social media platforms shall not replace traditional means of communication or court rule or statutory requirements. For example, if a court tweets an adjournment, it must still issue an order of adjournment as required by Michigan Court Rules.

B. Administration

Standards: If a trial court employs social media for professional use within the judiciary, the court shall have a code of conduct for its employees and a written policy that clearly identifies and defines: 1) the goals of its trial court social media sites, 2) the roles and responsibilities of the various personnel involved in oversight and editorial control of each trial court social media site, and 3) the roles and responsibilities of other judicial employees who are using social media in the course of their work activity (see Section 3 on developing local policies and guidelines for judicial employees). For purposes of these standards and guidelines, personnel refers to all individuals associated with handling a court's social media (including, but not limited to, employees, contract workers, funding unit employees, volunteers, and interns).

The policy shall adhere to the court's local computer acceptable use policy. If it does not have a computer acceptable use policy it can use the policy issued by the State Court Administrative Office, which is available from Judicial Information Systems by contacting jis@courts.mi.gov. After implemented, a court's policy shall be reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary.

A trial court shall comply with the following minimum requirements in establishing a policy and creating and maintaining a social media site:

1. Trial court judges and personnel using the trial court's social media site must adhere to the court's policy on acceptable use of computers, the Michigan Code of Judicial Conduct, and the court's code of conduct for its employees.
2. All proposals to create an official trial court social media site must be approved by the chief judge.

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20)
Section 2: Standards and Guidelines for Trial Court Use of Social Media

3. All proposals must follow style and content standards prescribed in Section 2, E.
4. Each social media site must have at least two account administrators, as designated by the chief judge, to provide backup in the event one of the administrators leaves employment with the court or is otherwise unavailable.
5. The chief judge shall have administrative access to each social media platform, including the account passwords.
6. The account administrator(s) shall have primary responsibility for oversight of design and legitimacy of social media content and for content management, including use of plain language and frequency of updates.

C. Maintenance

Mandated Standards: If a trial court employs social media for professional use within the judiciary, it shall establish local policies and procedures that contain, at a minimum, the following elements:

1. **Social Media Platforms:** The court's policy shall state what social media platform is being used, for what purpose each platform is to be used by the court and its personnel, and the target audience of each platform. The policy shall be updated in this regard whenever the court changes any of its social media platforms. Within the restrictions prescribed in Section 2. D. Social Media Platforms, the policy must also state whether or not public comments and participation will be allowed, and if so, the parameters of that participation. This policy shall be stated in the terms of service of each social media platform. See Section 2, E.2. Style and Content.
2. **Security:** Security controls and provisions shall be in place to ensure confidential information is not disclosed, information is resistant to tampering to preserve accuracy and information/service is available as intended by the court and expected by the users.
3. **Content Management:**

The social media site administrator(s) designated by the trial court shall:

- a. Be responsible for creating, maintaining, and monitoring content on the respective social media site, engaging with users, and removing content that violates trial court website and social media standards. Care should be taken with regard to removing content that is posted by the public, because it can result in a violation of user rights.
- b. Avoid replicating content. Content that is posted outside the trial court portal sites should refer to or identify and link back to the original content.

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- c. Refrain from posting content that violates city, state, or federal laws, and regulations.
- d. Use the official trial court-approved account when responding to constituent inquiries and postings. The administrator shall not use noncourt (personal) accounts to respond to inquiries or postings.
- e. Take care of inquiries or comments and post within a reasonable time frame, using professional conversational language.
- f. Do not comment on or post anything related to legal matters or litigation without appropriate approval.
- g. Do not use the trial court's name or graphical representation to endorse any view, product, private business, cause, or political candidate.
- h. Do not represent personal opinions as trial court-endorsed views or policies.
- i. Adhere to existing policy when the trial court's emergency management and notification system is activated. All content related to the emergency will be disseminated through accounts maintained by the emergency system.

D. Social Media Platforms

Mandated Standards: Trial courts are authorized, but not limited, to use Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube for the purposes set forth in subsections 1 through 3, below. However, trial courts are restricted to using these types of platforms for the purposes prescribed in these standards. For each of these three types of platforms, trial courts shall ensure that posting of comments is either disabled or set up for review and approval before the comments can appear on the social media site page.

1. **Facebook:** This platform is used for publishing information to and interacting with court participants, other governmental agencies, news media, and the public at large. It can be used:
 - a. As a portal to guide users to the court's regular website.
 - b. To make available short- and long-term information about the court.
 - c. For community outreach, education, and interaction. This may include improving access to court services, soliciting input (surveys), and publicizing special events and volunteer opportunities.

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- d. As a tool for court staff to facilitate enforcement of court orders in areas such as collections; probation supervision; and child support, parenting-time, and custody investigations.
2. **Twitter:** This micro-blogging platform is used for real-time communication with appropriate target audiences, such as news media, jurors, and the emergency management and notification system. Comments from users shall not appear on the court's Twitter page. It can be used to supplement traditional communication channels and:
- To post court/case updates in place of adding content to websites or sending e-mails.
 - To issue press releases.
 - To replace phone calls to and from the news media.
 - To tweet direct inquiries to the court's website for more extensive information.
 - To reduce the need for the physical presence of news media in high-profile hearings.
 - To notify jurors about the need to come to court for each day's jury service.
 - To communicate with jurors in the areas of qualifying and summoning.
 - To notify court staff, litigants, attorneys, other governmental agencies, etc. during emergency situations such as fire or flood and other circumstances that make the court unable to operate.
3. **YouTube:** This platform is used for publishing information to and interacting with court participants, other governmental agencies, news media, and the public at large. It can be used:
- To enhance the ability of outsiders to access digital court information.
 - As a portal to guide users to the court's regular website.
 - To supplement training of and information to court staff and users of court services, including self-help.

E. Style and Content

Mandated Standards: A trial court social media site shall comply with the following minimum requirements:

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1. Appearance

- The court name and/or court seal must be displayed at the page profile image.
- The username must clearly identify the court (i.e., www.facebook.com/court, [Twitter@court](https://twitter.com/court), and www.youtube.com/court).
- Contact information must be included (e-mail address or phone number).
- Official websites must be listed as part of the contact information.

2. Content

- Each social media platform being used shall include a disclaimer and a terms-of-service statement. The terms-of-service statement shall state the policy regarding comments and the parameters for any participation that will be allowed. See the restrictions in Section 2, D.2. See also Section 2, C.1.
- Content must be relevant to the court, work, and activities within the court (news articles, video, photos).
- Content must contain links back to the court's corresponding website when possible.
- Images and videos should be stored on the court's website or other court-owned storage accounts, not on personal media storage accounts.
- A method for feedback shall be made available, when appropriate.

Recommendations: The following tips should be observed when posting content.

1. Facebook

- Post a variety of content (information graphics, quotes, events, statistics, program highlights) rather than only links.
- List relevant state or county pages in your favorites section.
- When referencing programs or agencies on Facebook, use the @ symbol first to "tag" them in the update.
- Post regularly. Stagnant and dead accounts create a perception that the judiciary is unresponsive to the public.
- Post strategically to maximize potential readers. Multiple posts at one time increase the chance that your content will be unread by followers.

2. Twitter

- Use relevant keywords to make your account easy to find.
- Use hashtags (#) where applicable to draw attention to events or resources.
- Retweet relevant information when appropriate. While comments from users are not to appear, court can retweet them after reviewing them first. See item D.2.
- When responding to inquiries, tweet the resolution for other customers.
- Tweet regularly. Stagnant and dead accounts reflect negatively on the court.

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- Tweet strategically. Multiple posts at one time increase the chance that your content will be unread by followers. Consider using third-party applications that allow you to schedule posts in advance.
- Follow the Michigan Supreme Court’s list and create individual lists for partners and topics to share.

3. YouTube

- Dimensions: Background 1920 x 1500 banner up to 150 pixels.
- Videos must obey all copyright and licensing laws.
- Always provide a video description with official content link.
- Double-check thumbnail images for appropriateness.
- Add the Michigan Supreme Court’s and other state of Michigan accounts to your list of favorites or featured accounts.

4. Generally

Consider using third-party applications that allow you to schedule posts in advance. Third-party social media management applications are useful particularly in a busy court where the designated social media staff might find it useful to pre-schedule tweets or posts using a single application. Three popular applications are:

- **HootSuite** - A social media management system that helps brands streamline campaigns across social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Google+ Pages. Teams can collaboratively monitor, engage, and measure the results of social campaigns from one secure, web-based dashboard.
- **TweetDeck** - A social media dashboard application for management of Twitter and Facebook accounts that enables users to send and receive tweets and view profiles. Unlike HootSuite, which operates within your Internet browser, TweetDeck can be installed as a separate program on your hard drive as a desktop application. For those who want the flexibility, apps for the iPhone, Android, and Chrome browser are also available. With TweetDeck, you can watch your updates stream in real-time
- **TwitterFeed** - A social media management utility that allows you to feed your content (for example, blog posts or any other content that supports RSS feeds) to Twitter, Facebook, and many other social networking platforms. It enables publishers to bring content to a wider audience and track the performance through real-time stats. Webmasters and bloggers can effortlessly update their social media accounts with new RSS feed posts by integrating TwitterFeed into their social accounts.

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20)
Section 3: Developing Local Policies and Guidelines for Judicial Employees

Section 3: Developing Local Policies and Guidelines for Judicial Employees

A. Introduction

Social media can be a valuable tool for recruiting and developing employees; posting benefits information and other announcements; and for collecting, sharing, and disseminating information and data. However, even for court-related activity, the use of social media by judicial employees raises ethical, security, and privacy concerns for trial courts and trial court employees because of the ability to communicate immediately with large numbers of people with whom trial courts have limited ability to effectively control as to the use of that communication. Some concerns regarding trial court employee communications through the use of social media are:

- Participation in social media offers every trial court employee the opportunity to publish their thoughts even though those individuals may not be cautious about what they publish.
- User entries on blogs, wikis, or any other form of user-generated media can never truly be erased or deleted. The ability to preserve and replicate an Internet message or image for many years exacerbates the potential risks.
- Due to perceived anonymity, a trial court employee may engage in conduct online that the employee might refrain from in person, without understanding that online communications may be traced to a particular user.
- A trial court employee may not be fully aware of the ethical implications of social media given the relative newness of these online activities.

This guide is intended to help trial courts and judges develop trial court policies and guidelines for the court-related use of social media by their judicial employees (including contractual employees as appropriate) that comply with the court’s local computer acceptable use policy, the Michigan Code of Judicial Conduct, and a court’s code of conduct for its employees. If the court does not have a computer acceptable use policy, it can use the policy issued by the State Court Administrative Office, which is available from Judicial Information Systems by contacting jis@courts.mi.gov.

CAUTION: The court should consult with a labor attorney or its local human resources department when developing policies and guidelines for use of social media by its judicial employees.

B. Elements of Policies and Guidelines

There are six elements that must be included in a trial court policy governing the work-related use of social media by judicial employees.

Required Elements and Criteria: The required elements and criteria to be included in a trial court’s social media policies and guidelines for its employees are:

Michigan Trial Court Standards and Guidelines for Websites and Social Media (9/20)
Section 3: Developing Local Policies and Guidelines for Judicial Employees

- Definition of Social Media
- Scope of Restrictions on Work-Related Use of Social Media
- Code of Conduct as it Relates to Work-Related Use of Social Media
- Identification With the Court
- Security of Personal and Confidential Information
- Use of Court Facilities and Equipment

1. Definition of Social Media

Required Criteria: The guidelines must indicate which social media platforms are covered by the policy and guidelines.

Considerations: The kinds of social media platforms that might be used are potentially limitless. Therefore, the definition of social media needs to accommodate new modes of online media as well as existing media. A court may want to consider whether to exclude activities that are functionally equivalent to other forms of private communication, such as e-mail. Therefore, the court should incorporate, by reference, how the social media policy relates to the court's computer acceptable use policy, and any other court use policies. If it does not have a computer acceptable use policy it can use the policy issued by the State Court Administrative Office, which is available from Judicial Information Systems by contacting jis@courts.mi.gov.

2. Scope of Restrictions on Work-Related Use of Social Media

Required Criteria: The guidelines must indicate the restrictions to use of social media for work-related activity by an employee. Make sure this does not conflict with the trial court's computer acceptable use policy.

3. Code of Conduct as it Relates to Work-Related Use of Social Media

Required Criteria: The policy must address the primary ethics concerns implicated under the trial court's code of conduct for its employees.

Considerations: Guidelines must be established so that ethics and security standards are maintained without restricting private employee conduct that does not impinge on the mission of the trial courts. Ethical constraints to consider are:

- Confidentiality.
- Avoiding impropriety in all conduct.
- Not lending the prestige of the office.
- Not detracting from the dignity of the court or reflecting adversely on the court.
- Not demonstrating special access to the court or favoritism.
- Not commenting on pending matters.

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- Remaining within restrictions on fundraising.
- Not engaging in prohibited political activity.
- Avoiding association with issues that may be litigated or with organizations that frequently litigate.

4. Identification with the Trial Court

Required Criteria: The policy must indicate how judicial employees are to be identified with the trial court system.

5. Security Concerns

Required Criteria: The policy must indicate how it relates and conforms to the trial court's practices regarding personal security, such as the posting of photos that compromise trial court security or security of individual judicial officers or employees, or the posting of information through social networking that reveals confidential information about a judge or the court, such as a judge's location at a certain time.

6. Use of Court Facilities and Equipment

Required Criteria: The policy must indicate how it relates to the trial court's policy regarding proper use of court computer equipment and services, such as whether the policy will distinguish between activities that the employee performs using court computers or services and activities the employee performs not using court computers or services. The policy must also indicate whether use of court computer equipment and services to participate in the activity reveals an identification or association with the court, such as through a court's e-mail address.

Model Privacy Statement and Disclaimer for Trial Court Website

Terms of Use

The purpose of this website is to provide accurate and helpful information about [insert court name's] services and related activities. If you visit this site, you agree to these terms and policies. You may not use this site or any of its contents for any unlawful purpose. We may amend these terms and policies as needed.

Users may freely print any information that they obtain from this site. Permission to use documents from this site is granted provided that:

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- Use of documents from this server is for informational or personal use only.
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- **Information collected automatically.** When you view pages on this site, some of your information is automatically collected. This may include information about how you linked to the website, when you accessed our website, the searches you initiated, things you clicked on, your IP address, the type of browser and operating system you used, and the pages you requested and visited. This information may be used to improve the website.
- **Information voluntarily submitted.** The [name of court] (or our third-party vendors) may collect additional information if you voluntarily provide it (e.g., in connection with an online transaction). The type of information varies by transaction and may include: your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, social security or federal identification number, credit card number, driver license number, username, and password.

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A cookie is a small piece of information that is saved on your computer when you visit a website. If your browser accepts cookies, we may use a cookie to determine if you are a repeat or new visitor, or to understand how you are using the website and how we can improve it. You can prevent your browser from accepting new cookies or disable cookies altogether.

Model Privacy Statement and Disclaimer for Trial Court Website (continued)

Links Policy

We provide links to other organizations and agencies on this site. These links are for informational purposes only. In providing these links, we do not endorse the content, products, services, or viewpoints of these external websites. Once you leave this site and link to an external website, [name of court] terms and policies no longer apply.

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In order to ensure that this service remains available to all users, the [name of court] employs software programs to monitor network traffic to identify unauthorized attempts to upload or change information or otherwise cause damage. Unauthorized attempts to upload information or change information on this service are strictly prohibited and may be subject to legal action.

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Choice of Law

Construction of the policies and disclaimer above and any resolution of disputes are governed by the laws of the state of Michigan.

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Checklist of the Roles and Responsibilities for Presiding Judge, Court Administrator, Public Information Officer, Information Technology, and Court Security Before Trial in the Preplanning Phase- Proactively Develop Plan and Conduct Routine Training	Presiding Judge	Court Administrator	Public Information Officer	Information Technology	Court Security
Administrative					
Annually conduct training for judicial officers and court employees on working with the public and media, public access to court documents, handling high pro-file cases, court security, and the important contribution of every court employee in representing the Judiciary. *Public information officers are highly trained in these areas and should be utilized whenever available. Many states have public information officers in their state administrative office available to help courts without dedicated public information officers.					
Prepare and routinely review Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).					
Draft an administrative order establishing rules governing the use of cell phones and other electronic devices by staff, media, and the general public.					
Draft an administrative order establishing rules on how high profile cases will generally be conducted.					
Jury					
Ensure Jury Management System can accommodate high profile cases, which require longer jury selection processes and larger jury panels. Careful consideration should be given to JMS’ ability to merge multiple panels and produce specially numbered seating charts.					
Media					
Create ongoing educational opportunities to communicate with the media.					
Meet with the media to discuss special needs, demands of high profile cases.					
Be vigilant at all times looking for potentially high profile cases being filed in your court. High profile cases also may also come from neighboring courts as change-of-venue cases.					
A PIO typically has a good sense of what is newsworthy. Sometimes high profile cases are easy to spot because there has been an arrest of a public figure, for example. Other times an early alert might be contacts from the media from out-of-the-area news reporters or national media. When a PIO identifies what appears to be a high profile matter headed to their court, they should notify the chief judge, court administrator, and clerk of court early on so preparations can begin. It is helpful if the court already has a plan for high profile matters that it can turn to for guidance (COOP).					
Establish a definition for “media” and “new media.”					
Establish a policy governing how interviews are conducted at the courthouse.					
Research ability of social media, particularly Twitter, to provide updates to the media on cases of interest.					
Determine whether the issuance of media credential/authorization badges is an acceptable, viable option in your jurisdiction.					

Maintain updated media distribution lists.					
Security/Facility					
Develop a close working relationship with agencies handling court security, including the sheriff's office and court house security. High profile cases require increased security, including more intense screening of larger crowds.					
Technology					
High profile cases tax computer networks and infrastructure. Data delivery means are becoming increasingly complex, consuming more bandwidth and resources. Update network, AV equipment whenever possible.					

Checklist of the Roles and Responsibilities for Presiding Judge, Court Administrator, Public Information Officer, Information Technology, and Court Security for Venue Selection- Process of confirming the case is proceeding at this location.	Presiding Judge	Court Administrator	Public Information Officer	Information Technology	Court Security
Administrative					
Identify where the case is in the court process.					
Identify members of the Leadership Team (presiding judge, court administrator, public information officer at a minimum) taking into consideration needs, authority, and skillsets.					
Convene a Leadership Team meeting to evaluate the potential scope of public and media interest as early in the course of the case as possible. Identify what role each member of the Leadership Team is to fulfill and exchange emergency contact information among the team members.					
Set a Leadership Team meeting to assess skillset of staff, available resources and expertise, security, and facility assets and limitations to begin drafting a plan.					
Presiding judge to determine personal communication protocols: Does he/she want to be advised of media concerns that might arise during a trial, how does s/he like to communicate (email, in person, by phone), etc. The judge in particular will have many pressures and little free time during a high profile case, so these are important discussions to have. The preferred practice will vary from judge to judge and court to court, so it is important to have this discussion every time there is a new high profile case assignment.					
Assemble and review documentation on relevant state/local rules and orders, statutes, case law, and expertise available.					
Determine if the court has the ability to address fair trial issues in the court location.					
Discussions between chief judge, court administrator, public information officer and potential presiding judge(s) to determine case assignment.					
Consider appointing one judicial officer to handle all the court proceedings and a second to handle logistical issues.					
Jury					
Coordinate with the jury department to ensure adequate summoning of jurors, whether in venue or change of venue location.					
Media					
Establish a local media committee that will hash out issues, such as determination of pool camera, specific logistical needs for media, i.e. staging, cabling, etc.					
Determine if additional space is needed for the media, i.e. "media village." There are two approaches: the court meets with appropriate owners to facilitate contract negotiations between them and the media or the media is solely responsible for making all arrangements.					
Security/Facility					

Court security to conduct a full security assessment of facilities, logistical resources, and manpower, then report to Leadership Team (Link to Ct Security page).					
Assess impact to judicial or staff parking due to increased traffic flow at the courthouse. Create special signage, if necessary.					
If case is controversial, establish protest zones for pro and con groups.					
Technology/Website					
IT team to perform assessment of available technology identifying additional infrastructure and equipment needed to facilitate a high profile trial. (Link to IT page)					

Checklist of the Roles and Responsibilities for Presiding Judge, Court Administrator, Public Information Officer, Information Technology, and Court Security in the Pretrial Phase- Marked by episodic events, short in duration usually lasting less than an hour up to three days.	Presiding Judge	Court Administrator	Public Information Officer	Information Technology	Court Security
Administrative					
Leadership Team to become familiar with roles and responsibilities of presiding judge, court administrator, public information officer, IT, and court security.					
Leadership Team to identify members of the High Profile Team, then convene a meeting of the team.					
Leadership Team to identify one person to coordinate between the presiding judge and the multitude of others individuals and organizations, optimally a trained public information officer if available.					
Leadership Team to develop and put into action a comprehensive written high profile case business and logistical plan to minimize impact on court personnel, public, and the court facility; meet case processing, records management, and public access needs; incorporate a plan for back-up staff; outline communication expectations and responsibilities; and minimize the impact on those conducting routine business with the court.					
Leadership Team needs to develop a comprehensive work schedule to outline primary and secondary persons responsible for issuing credentials and seating passes, and ensures security checkpoints are adequate.					
Draft and issue decorum and pretrial publicity orders. These should immediately be made available to the media and the public. Subsequent versions can be issued, but it is important to get the basics outlined and communicated to the media. (Link to PJ page)					
Logistical responsibilities turned over to court administrator, public information officer, information technology, and court security to allow presiding judge to turn full attention to the case.					
Identify and strategize funding and budgetary considerations. Investigate availability of state and local resources to supplement court resources.					
When scheduling allows, prepare and distribute logistical memos via e-mail and post on the website 7-10 days prior to each proceeding. Distribute a draft to each external partner for their input as this will be their link to the media as well.					
Conduct logistics meetings prior to each initial proceeding as needed by the court and as requested by the media. Coordinate with other public information officers involved in the case from the county, law enforcement, and town as appropriate.					
Determine signage that needs to be posted in and outside of the courtroom, parking lot, staging area, etc.					
The public information officer also plays an important role in conveying the presiding judge's customs and practices in addition to information that appears in a decorum order. Examples include the presiding judge's practices regarding what time the court convenes in the morning, when breaks typically are taken and the general evening recess time. Another is informing the media of the presiding judge's expectation that when the media exits the courtroom they only may re-					

enter during one of the court's natural breaks. The media is very appreciative of this type of information ahead of time.					
Monitoring the stress levels of the presiding judge and staff throughout the course of the case is important.					
Identify and strategize funding and budgetary considerations. Investigate availability of state and local resources to supplement court resources.					
Leadership Team to debrief with staff after each pre-trial proceeding in preparation for the next.					
Meet with High Profile Team to develop plan for delivery of verdict.					
Jury					
Communicate and coordinate with the jury manager/commissioner if a jury trial is to take place. Considerations: exposure to pre-trial publicity, juror return rates, size of jury, issues in the case, and when jury panels need to be ordered. It is important to develop an information sheet for the media on the procedures for summoning jurors in the court system.					
If juror names are to be made available, develop a plan on how the list will be made public.					
Coordinate with court security for jurors entering and exiting the courtroom/house as well as during breaks.					
Meet with presiding judge to determine if jury will be sequestered. If so, staff will need to develop a juror packet to obtain vital juror information, such as medical needs, dietary restrictions, activity preferences, emergency contact information, etc. Packet should also include information for jurors, such as a checklist of the things they need to do before being sequestered (need to forward mail, find pet sitters, get additional medicine, etc.); a list of things they need to bring with them (prescriptions, insurance information, doctor's contact information, etc.); and what jurors can expect while they are sequestered.					
If jury is sequestered, extensive planning will need to be coordinated with security personnel to ensure proper logistical needs, such as laundry, haircuts, attendance to religious services, as well as any entertainment opportunities. Sequestered juries lose an average of one juror per week, which can be lessened by providing jurors with additional comforts whenever possible.					
Coordinate with area restaurants to see if jurors can be taken out on various occasions. Make sure restaurants can offer meals at per diem rates set by the state/county.					
If trial is scheduled to last for an extended period of time, make arrangements for family to visit jurors at the sequestered location.					
Jurors cannot be transported about easily while sequestered. For this reason, it is essential to set up how jurors can purchase personal items, i.e. special toiletries, snacks, etc. It is important to develop a protocol whereby money is exchanged to ensure appropriate chain of command.					
Meet with judge to determine if jurors will have access to personal phones, electronic devices, TV viewing, internet, etc. Plan accordingly.					
Meet with the clerk's office or other entity to determine how juror payments will be disbursed.					
Media					

Tap your local media association(s) to act as your 'broker' in dealing with logistical matters or if necessary, take steps to organize and facilitate a meeting for the media to form a consortium. Share with members of the media the court's expectations regarding decorum, courtroom seating, pool distributions, bull pens, workspace availability, and any other matters relating to the media's operations and conduct. A media consortium should only be used when the sheer number of reporters makes the public information officer unable to deal with the volume on an individual basis. The effectiveness of consortiums varies depending upon the individuals involved. If you have an established media committee it also can be a good resource to utilize.					
Set clear rules and expectations in writing, preferably through an administrative order, regarding the use of cell phones inside and other electronic devices and out of the courtroom, simultaneous broadcasting from the courtroom such as Twitter or tweeting from the courtroom, and cell phone cameras in the courthouse and in the courtroom. Clearly communicate the ground rules to the media. Post these on the court's website, make certain every member of the media is fully aware of the rules and reinforce the message often. Clearly spell out repercussions for violators of the rules, such as revocation of media credentials, removal from the premises, and loss of courtroom seating privileges. Enforce the rules equally and fairly with all members of the media.					
You may want to draft a media consent form members of the media sign, acknowledging receipt of media orders. If issuing credentials, the consent form easily can be incorporated into this process.					
Some courts require that cell phones be collected at the courtroom door. If this rule is in place, arrangements will need to be made for collection and storage of the devices.					
Defining 'media' and 'news organization' has become a significant issue for high profile cases. The court's definition of 'media' and 'news organization' is particularly important in regard to seat allocation and pool feed distribution. Many courts set a low threshold in defining media to include bloggers, special interest groups with websites or a social media presence, novelists, and traditional and non-traditional journalists. A territorial distinction also exists in terms of defining 'news organization' which includes the major networks, newspapers, radio, and magazine conglomerates.					
Budgetary controls for media accommodations: Expenses the media typically bears are installation of extra phone lines; all expenses related to the off-site locations and accommodations; sanitation needs; still and video pool camera distributions; auxiliary listening rooms if additional facilities (such as trailers) need to be brought in; any necessary city/county permits; and all expenses to run sound/video to auxiliary listening facilities. Taxpayer funds should not pay for these extra expenses that are incurred by private media companies					
If a media center is set up, the consortium or the media is responsible for all related expenses, such as rental of a copy machine and any other temporary equipment or services the media may need. The public information officer should be informed of the media's plans regarding the media center's use and may assist in meeting the media's connectivity and other technical needs so long as any additional expenses are paid for by the media. The public information officer,					

court administrator, or information technology will need to provide oversight to approve, reject or help find viable options for getting the center set up.					
Develop internal and external communications plans to regularly communicate with staff and the media.					
Public information officer to prepare and provide media training to all judicial officers and court staff: As the court's point of contact with the media, the public information officer will immediately take steps to ensure judges and court staff are aware of the public information officer's role by providing his/her contact information, outlining the services s/he can provide, explaining how the media operate including what the media 'really' needs vs. what they say the need, conducting employee high profile case training, and working with the judicial staff to coordinate duties as well as the release of any and all information (One Court, One Voice).					
Provide courthouse and courtroom media access for site evaluations, setup and removal of equipment.					
Designate the public information officer to act as the court's point-of-contact for county, town and law enforcement in dealing with day-to-day media-related matters. The public information officer should establish a shared communication network that typically is created for such events. This will assure that all groups that play a role in coordinating aspects of the trial and its impact on the community are receiving and communicating the same message. It is important to present a unified front when working with the media to avoid duplication and providing conflicting information.					
The public information officer and information technology to act as the primary liaisons with the media for courtroom wiring, cameras, sound, distribution points, cabling, and daily pool camera monitoring.					
The court also may facilitate a closed circuit broadcast of the trial in an overflow courtroom. If no rooms are available in the courthouse, alternative options may need to be considered in trailers or adjacent buildings. Generally, if expenses are incurred in securing an auxiliary room the media is responsible. It is important that provisions be made to ensure that all terms of the decorum order be enforced in any auxiliary room as they would be in the courtroom.					
Parking for the media and satellite trucks is a formidable challenge in nearly every court location. Work with court security and local law enforcement authorities to help secure parking in a location that will not impede normal traffic flow, is agreeable to local officials, and does not interfere with other court business. Be aware that if the pool audio/video feeds need to cross a street to reach the distribution box the decision as to whether it will go overhead on poles, in troughs placed on top of the surface or installed underground will be a significant consideration due to the height clearance implications, impediment to traffic flow, safety and expense.					
Be aware that the media may want to set up or build permanent or semi-permanent platforms for live television broadcasts. Issues to consider include: the impact on court operations, are there local ordinances prohibiting such structures, will they be semi-permanent or removed after each proceeding, do they require building permits, where will they be located and how many will be allowed, who will determine who gets a spot and what spot do they get if limited space is					

available, and are there power sources easily available or will lines need to be run either on overhead poles or through troughs in the street.					
Determine if it is necessary to credential members of the media and issue badges: The primary reasons for credentialing are to limit access to specific areas, accountability as credentials are revocable, and security. Many law enforcement agencies have the capability of producing photo credentials that can be utilized. There is technology available in some metropolitan court locations that use bar coded credentials. These allow identified persons through security and will automatically tell officers when all the seats are occupied.					
Typically, the media will want pool camera locations both inside and outside of the court. Consult with the presiding judge, local administration and security to provide the media with the rules they must follow prior to the start of the trial if this logistical issue is not addressed in a decorum order. The rules likely will be different for operation inside the courthouse and outside the courthouse.					
Work with the court security, other court staff, and the presiding judge to secure pool camera locations both inside and out of the court if allowed by the presiding judge and court rules. Outside potential cameras must be set up far enough away from the front entrance so as not to impede ingress or egress.					
If no cameras will be allowed in the courtroom, the public information officer should facilitate discussions relating to access for a courtroom artist. The media will bear the expenses and arrange for the artist. The court will be asked to provide seats in a location close to the front of the courtroom so the artist has a clear view of all participants. When determining the number of seats available in the courtroom space for the artist will need to be a consideration.					
The distribution of documents on days of proceedings can present a challenge even when the documents also are posted on the court's website. Electronic access may not be available to members of the media and public on location observing the case. The two most obvious options are: 1. The court makes copies to distribute; or 2. A copy of the document is given to the media consortium coordinator for duplication and distribution. As connectivity issues decline, more members of the media can readily access documents on their portable electronic devices.					
Work with the presiding judge, court reporter, and courtroom staff to develop a policy for providing exhibits entered into evidence to the media on the day they are entered.					
Provide the media with instructions on how to obtain court transcripts.					
If the case involves alleged victims whose names will need to be deleted, voices altered, or witness' faces obscured, all this must be worked out far in advance of the proceeding. Typically, a delayed audio/video signal will allow the pool camera technicians to do the editing. This is one of the areas where depending upon professionals experienced in court coverage who have a reputation to uphold is a good move if possible. Their livelihood depends upon covering the courts today, tomorrow and well into the future. Their engineers know what questions to ask and know what not to do. No matter who it is, however, your specific requirements should be outlined in writing and given to every technician working in and out of the courtroom. If the court is providing the feed, it will need to take the appropriate steps to ensure that all the issues are addressed internally.					

Compile a list of local attorneys, professors, or other authorities willing to assist the media.					
Security/Facility					
Court security to identify, adapt/install security modifications for high profile case and court complex including identifying and fencing restricted areas of the courthouse grounds.					
Collaborate with law enforcement to establish fenced areas to separate reporters, cameras, the public, parties to the case, and an area where demonstrations might occur.					
Assess if there is adequate space available in the courtroom to accommodate the anticipated number of members of the media, public and parties to the case. Inventory courthouse and adjacent areas for overflow options in the immediate area for auxiliary listening room(s), media center, and media workspace. Restrictions may need to be considered depending upon the size of the available area such as "one person per news organization."					
Ensure adequate crowd and traffic control resources are in place on trial days.					
Monitor and enforce all aspects of the decorum order, court rules and regulations: Oversight of media in the courthouse and courtroom to include monitoring of live streaming, overflow room, and equipment rooms. Monitoring the courthouse and courtroom will be a full-time job to ensure compliance with the rules set out for the facility and the presiding judge.					
Always remember, ultimately the Leadership Team must approve final courtroom seating areas to the parties, public, and media.					
If courtroom seating is insufficient, decide how passes will be distributed on proceeding days. This includes public, media and passes for parties to get through security. One important consideration is ensuring local media are guaranteed seats. Approaches consortiums and courts have taken are assigning the seats through consensus, random draw, or first in line each day.					
Technology/Website					
Information technology to upgrade technology and infrastructure as needed. (link to IT page)					
A case specific website is highly recommended. Publish all relevant information on the website including: case documents; frequently updated trial schedules; logistics updates; decorum orders, pretrial publicity orders and media rules; the presiding judge's biography; courthouse and courtroom access information; rules for electronic devices in the courthouse and the courtroom; contact information for all public information officers from the various agencies managing the case; contact information for counsel; and logistical and legal resource informational guides including talking points and fast facts from subject matter experts. It is critically important that the court establish a mandatory document multi-level review process to ensure no document is posted to the website containing un-redacted protected information. Triple checking all documents prior to posting is highly recommended. The goal is to proactively disseminate information to eliminate the need for court personnel to address individually. The goal is to divert as much traffic as possible away from the clerk's office, staff, and court administration. Case specific websites should not be considered to be the official case archive, but rather a public access portal for case documents.					

Utilizing social media tools also is highly recommended. It is important to establish multiple communications channels with the media through tools such as e-mail distributions and Twitter in combination with high profile case webpages.					
Assign individual responsible for monitoring cyberspace and social media as requested by presiding judge: If possible, follow all media using Twitter to monitor case information and encourage them to follow you (the Court) to receive breaking news and information.					
If documents related to the case will be posted on the court's website, establish a posting procedure that will ensure documents are promptly available a minimum of 15 minutes prior to their availability in the clerk's office to divert traffic from the clerk's counter. Some courts that create high profile press pages emphatically state that all documents will be available only electronically via the webpage and that the media is not to contact the clerk's office. Work with clerk's office staff to assure appropriate documented internal operating procedures exist to provide for review of documents prior to their being posted, so that concerns such as court document is published on the internet, you cannot recall it.					

Checklist of the Roles and Responsibilities for Presiding Judge, Court Administrator, Public Information Officer, Information Technology, and Court Security in the Trial Phase	Presiding Judge	Court Administrator	Public Information Officer	Information Technology	Court Security
Trial					
Apply the lessons learned from the pretrial events and follow the routine already established.					
It is critical to stay in regular contact with court security.					
Climactic- Word of the verdict coming in					
Notify law enforcement a verdict has been reached and allow time to get into place.					
Ensure adequate security is in place inside and out of the courthouse.					
Clearly communicate to the media how, when and where the verdict will be delivered to those outside the courtroom.					
Judge outlines expectations for courtroom occupants during delivery of the verdict.					
Coordinate post-verdict press release with jurors, if applicable.					

Checklist of the Roles and Responsibilities for Presiding Judge, Court Administrator, Public Information Officer, Information Technology, and Court Security in the Post-Trial Phase- Winding down and restoring the courts to its previous routine.	Presiding Judge	Court Administrator	Public Information Officer	Information Technology	Court Security
Winding down, restoring staff and the court to its previous routine can be emotional - don't underestimate the importance of having a support system in place especially for highly emotional or violent cases.					
Facilitate the media breaking down all equipment and restoring all areas to pre-trial condition.					
It will be important for the Leadership Team, in collaboration with information technology, to have a discussion regarding the longevity of the case specific website after the resolution of the case.					
Coordinate post-verdict press release with jurors, if applicable.					

STATE OF MARYLAND * IN THE
 *
 * CIRCUIT COURT
 v. *
 * FOR
 JOHN LEOPOLD * ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY
 *
 * Case No. K-12-415
 Defendant *
 * * * * *

MEDIA ORDER

In order to ensure a fair trial in this case and to preserve the dignity of the Court while accommodating the interests of the public and the media and in order to cause minimal disruption to the Circuit Court and its neighbors, it is this 22nd day of March, 2012, by the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County, **ORDERED** as follows:

1. The trial in the above-captioned case is scheduled to be conducted in Courtroom 4C, 7 Church Circle, Annapolis, Maryland 21401. The presiding Judge will be Judge Dennis M. Sweeney.
2. Ms. Terri Bolling, Deputy Director, Office of Communications and Public Affairs, State of Maryland Judiciary, telephone no.: office - 410-260-1486 or mobile - 443-995-9263, e-mail address: terri.bolling@mdcourts.gov, is designated as the Court's media liaison for purposes of this Order. In her absence, Ms Angelita Plemmer, Director, Office of Communications and Public Affairs, will act as the media liaison and can be reached at office - 410-260-1564 or mobile - 410-562-3620, e-mail address: angelita.plemmer@mdcourts.gov.
3. All media inquiries must be referred to the media liaison.

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 CRIMINAL DEPARTMENT
 2012 MAR 26 P 2:36

4. All persons entering the Courthouse must pass through electronic security devices and submit their equipment to search procedures at the discretion of the Sheriff's deputies. Members of the media are requested to refrain from bringing excess bags or backpacks into the Courthouse.

5. No audio or video recording equipment, press cameras or recording or transmitting equipment shall be permitted in the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County, except as provided by Paragraph 8 of this Order. No recording devices shall be permitted in any courtroom at any time.

6. After court adjourns each day, trial exhibits that have been admitted in evidence may be made available for viewing by media representatives for a maximum of 30 minutes in the courtroom, unless otherwise ordered by the Court. The exhibits shall be available for viewing only one time.

7. The courtroom clerk assigned to the Court for these proceedings shall serve as coordinator of the viewing of trial exhibits and as custodian of same.

8. At the conclusion of the day, limited video or still photography of the exhibits may be permitted in the courtroom.

9. No "live" television, telephone, radio, or other broadcasts of exhibits shall be permitted during the viewing of exhibits.

10. Certain trial exhibits shall be handled by court-approved technicians or specialists only.

11. The Sheriff's deputy shall accompany the approved still and video cameras into the Courthouse and will remain during the viewing of trial exhibits.

12. In the event that there is insufficient space in the courtroom, as determined by the Court, the Court may apportion and limit the available seating between members of the media and of the general public.

13. Members of the media shall not use electronic equipment, including pagers, PDAs, mobile phones, computers, laptops, netbooks, or electronic tablets inside any courtroom or within 100 feet of the courtroom, except as provided by Paragraph 8 of this Order. All electronic devices must be turned off completely (not in silent or sleep mode) during court proceedings.

14. Counsel for the parties or their representatives shall be allowed to be present for any activity permitted by this Order.

15. No one shall be permitted to enter into the courtroom or remain therein during these proceedings who is wearing or displaying any item on his or her person which, in the opinion of the Court, may tend to influence any juror or affect the orderly administration of these proceedings.

16. No food or drink is permitted in the courtroom. Also, smoking is not allowed anywhere in the Courthouse.

17. Under no circumstances are members of the media permitted to contact, record, film, video, photograph, or speak with any prospective jurors, jurors or witnesses during the course of these proceedings, regardless of whether such persons are in the Courthouse or elsewhere.

18. Members of the media shall not photograph, film or video vehicles transporting jurors or witnesses when entering, leaving or standing in areas of the Circuit Court.

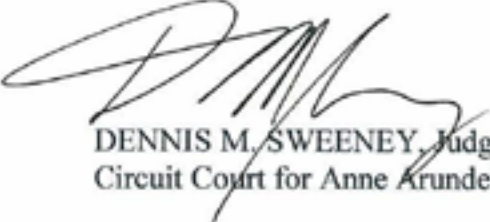
19. No court personnel or court-approved specialist shall be recorded, photographed or otherwise depicted in conjunction with the showing of the trial exhibits.

20. Members of the Circuit Court staff or Clerk's Office shall not be interviewed regarding this case.

21. If members of the media believe that any aspect of this Order is unworkable or inappropriate, they may request modification only if such request is made in sufficient time in advance of the court matter to permit the Court to review the proposed modification.

22. Violations of this Order will subject the violator to exclusion from the Courthouse and, if appropriate, to the contempt powers of the Court.

23. This Media Order is subject to modification by the Court at any time.


DENNIS M. SWEENEY, Judge
Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County

Copies to:

Bruce L. Marcus, Esq.
Robert C. Bonsib, Esq.
Emmet C. Davitt, State Prosecutor
Shelly S. Glenn, Senior Assistant State Prosecutor
The Honorable Nancy Davis-Loomis
Douglas Hofstedt, Court Administrator
Terri Bolling, Media Liaison
Capt. Stephen LaPlanche, Sheriff's Office
Laura Edmonds, Criminal Department Supervisor
Court Clerks

STATE OF MARYLAND * IN THE
 * CIRCUIT COURT
 * FOR
 v. * ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY
 JARROD WARREN RAMOS * Case No. C-02-CR-18-001515
 * * * * * *
 * * * * * *

SECURITY/MEDIA ORDER

In order to ensure a fair trial in this case and to preserve the dignity of the Court while accommodating the interests of the public and the media and in order to cause minimal disruption of and to maintain a safe and secure environment for the Circuit Court and its neighbors, it is this 23rd day of October 2019, by the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County, **ORDERED** as follows:

1. The trial in the above-captioned case is scheduled to be conducted in Courtroom 4C, 8 Church Circle, Annapolis, Maryland 21401. The presiding Judge will be Judge Laura S. Ripken.
2. Ms. Nadine Maeser, Public Information Officer, Government Relations and Public Affairs, Maryland Judiciary, is designated as the Court's media liaison for purposes of this Order and can be reached at office: 410-260-1486 or cell 413-926-1128, e-mail: nadine.maeser@mdcourts.gov. In her absence, Ms. Terri Charles, Assistant Public Information Officer, Government Relations and Public Affairs, Maryland Judiciary, will act as the media liaison and can be reached at office: 410-260-1564 or cell 410-703-3123, e-mail address: terri.charles@mdcourts.gov
3. All media inquiries must be referred to the media liaison.
4. Jim Fredericks, the Sheriff for Anne Arundel County, is responsible for maintaining security in and around the Circuit Court building. All persons must comply

with the Sheriff's instructions concerning security measures in the building. References to the Sheriff herein include his deputies and assistants.

5. All persons entering the courthouse must adhere to security procedures as directed by the Sheriff and pass through electronic security devices and submit their equipment to search procedures at the discretion of the Sheriff's deputies. To expedite entry, members of the media are requested to refrain from bringing excess bags or backpacks into the courthouse and must show a valid media credential to security personnel.

6. No audio or video recording equipment, press cameras or recording or transmitting equipment shall be permitted in the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County. Electronic devices that are permitted inside the courthouse may not be used for taking, recording or transmitting a photograph, video or other visual image unless otherwise permitted by the court.

7. Limited seating will be available in the gallery of courtroom 4C, as determined by the Court and Fire Marshal regulations. The Court may apportion the available seating. Additionally, the Court will make overflow seating arrangements in another courtroom to view the proceedings via video live feed. The video from the live feed will not be recorded and will not be available to stream outside of the courthouse. An additional and separate media workspace will also be provided for media personnel only with a valid media credential.

8. After court adjourns each day, trial exhibits that have been admitted in evidence may be made available for viewing purposes only by media representatives for a maximum of 30 minutes in the courtroom, unless otherwise ordered by the Court. The exhibits shall be available for viewing only one time. All media must exit the courthouse at the end of the 30-minute exhibit review period or by 5:00 p.m., whichever is later.

9. The courtroom clerk assigned to the Court for these proceedings shall

serve as coordinator of the viewing of trial exhibits and as custodian of same.

10. No "live" television, telephone, radio, or other broadcasts of exhibits shall be permitted during the viewing of exhibits.

11. Certain trial exhibits shall be handled by court approved technicians or specialists only.

12. Counsel for the parties or their representatives shall be allowed to be present for any activity permitted by this Order.

13. The Sheriff will establish procedures to govern orderly entry and exit to and from the courthouse and courtrooms.

14. Members of the media, and other courtroom observers, shall not use electronic equipment, including pagers, PDAs, mobile phones, computers, laptops, netbooks, or electronic tablets inside the trial courtroom, which will be 4C unless otherwise noted. All electronic devices must be turned off completely (not in silent or sleep mode) during court proceedings in Courtroom 4C. Sheriff's deputies may inspect an electronic device for misuse, and, if necessary, confiscate the device if it appears to be in use in violation of this order. Sheriff's deputies and other court personnel are not liable for any damage to or loss of electronic devices confiscated pursuant to this Order. Verified members of the media will be permitted to use such electronic equipment in the overflow seating courtroom and media workspace. Such devices cannot be used for audio or video recording or still photography in any location in the courthouse. All personal belongings and work equipment must be removed each day.

15. No one shall be permitted to enter the courtroom or remain therein during these proceedings who is wearing or displaying any item on his or her person which the Court determines may influence any juror, impact the trial or affect the orderly administration of these proceedings.

16. No food or drink is permitted in the courtroom by anyone in the observation area. No smoking is permitted in the Courthouse. Persons who leave the trial courtroom during proceedings may not be re-admitted until the next recess.

17. No members of the media are permitted to contact, record, film, video, photograph, or speak with any potential jurors, empaneled jurors or witnesses during the course of these proceedings, regardless of the location of such jurors or witnesses.

18. Members of the Circuit Court staff or Clerk's Office shall not be interviewed, recorded, photographed or otherwise depicted regarding this case.

19. If members of the media believe that any aspect of this Order is unworkable or inappropriate, they may request modification only if such request is made in sufficient time in advance of the court matter to permit the Court to review the proposed modification. Any such requests are to be directed to the media liaison.

20. Violations of this Order will subject the violator to exclusion from the Courthouse and, if appropriate, to the contempt powers of the Court.

21. This Order is subject to modification by the Court at any time.



LAUBA S. RIPKEN, Judge
Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County

State of Nevada v Orenthal James Simpson, et. al.,
Case No. 07-C-237890-C

Media Guide



The Honorable Jackie Glass
Eighth Judicial District Court

TRIAL TO BE HELD IN COURTROOM 15A
JURY SELECTION TO BE HELD IN COURTROOM 11D
MEDIA OVERFLOW 1D

Regional Justice Center
200 Lewis Avenue
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

Media Guide

State of Nevada v Orenthal James Simpson, et. al., Case No. 07C237890C
Regional Justice Center – Las Vegas, Nevada
Jackie Glass, Department 5

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2. General Policies
3. Case Description
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5. Media Representatives
6. Media Parking
7. Media Staging Area
8. Cables
9. Courthouse Security
10. Courtroom Television Cameras
11. Courtroom Still Cameras
12. Seating in Courtroom During Court Proceedings
13. Preliminary Hearing Media Passes
14. Electronic Equipment
15. Court Documents
16. Media Interviews

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
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| Attachment 2: | Trial Schedule |
| Attachment 3: | Amended Complaint |
| Attachment 4: | Trial Participants |
| Attachment 5: | Media Courtroom Seating Diagram |
| Attachment 6: | Satellite/Microwave Truck Parking Map |
| Attachment 7: | Media Setup (Standup) Location Map |
| Attachment 8: | Biography, Judge Jackie Glass (Trial Judge) |
| Attachment 9: | Biography, Judge Stewart Bell (Media Liaison Judge) |
| Attachment 10: | <i>Standards of Conduct and Technology governing Electronic Media and Still Photo Coverage of Judicial Proceedings, part IV</i> |
| Attachment 11: | <i>Media Guidelines for Conduct in the Eighth Judicial District Court</i> |
| Attachment 12: | Media Request Form |

Prepared by Clark County Courts Information Office
Michael Sommermeier, Court Information Officer
Phone: (702)671-4534, FAX: (702) 671-4535
sommermeier@clarkcountycourts.us

I. Purpose & Basic Tenets of the Media Trial Guide

The purpose of this media guide is to provide a feasible structure for working reporters and court personnel to avoid and/or resolve news coverage problems in the case of *State v. Orenthal James Simpson, et. al.*, and to facilitate an atmosphere of open communication between the court and the media, consistent with the authority of the judge to control the conduct of the proceedings before the court, the First Amendment rights of the media and the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendment rights of the accused. Therefore, this package includes guidelines for media coverage of court proceedings.

The goals of this media plan are:

- To maintain an appropriate and dignified atmosphere in the courthouse so that all litigants obtain an orderly hearing, preserving due process and equal protection.
- To ensure that the court adequately accommodates the news media and the general public during proceedings of great public interest.

Basic tenets of this plan:

- The media and the public have a right of access to the justice system
- Other court proceedings must not be adversely impacted by proceedings of great public interest.
- The Clark County Courts has established policies and procedures for all parties concerning courthouse access and any other activities associated with court proceedings of great public interest.

II. General Policies

A *Decorum Order* has been issued for this trial (see Attachment I). The *Nevada Supreme Court Rules on Standards of Conduct and Technology governing Electronic Media and Still Photo Coverage of Judicial Proceedings, part IV* (see Attachment 10) govern all media coverage of court proceedings. *Guidelines for Media Coverage in the Clark County Courts* (see Attachment 11) detail rules and procedures for media access to the Regional Justice Center.

Direct all media concerns or questions to Court Information Officer Michael Sommermeyer: (702) 671-4534, sommermeyerm@clarkcountycourts.us.

III. Case Description

Orenthal James Simpson and Clarence Stewart have been charged with 11 felonies (F) and one gross misdemeanor (GM) resulting from events that allegedly took place

September 13, 2007 at the Palace Station Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. The charges are as follows:

- Count 1: Conspiracy to commit a crime (GM)
- Count 2: Conspiracy to commit kidnapping (F)
- Count 3: Conspiracy to commit robbery (F)
- Count 4: Burglary while in possession of a deadly weapon (F)
- Count 5: First degree kidnapping with use of a deadly weapon (F)
- Count 6: First degree kidnapping with use of a deadly weapon (F)
- Count 7: Robbery with use of a deadly weapon (F)
- Count 8: Robbery with use of a deadly weapon (F)
- Count 9: Assault with a deadly weapon (F)
- Count 10: Assault with a deadly weapon (F)
- Count 11: Coercion with use of a deadly weapon (F)
- Count 12: Coercion with use of a deadly weapon (F)

IV. Media Request Forms

In accordance with the *Nevada Supreme Court Rule 230*, representatives of the media desiring permission to broadcast, televise, record or take photographs in the courtroom shall file a written request at least 72 hours before the proceeding commences. For good cause shown, however, the judge may grant such a request on shorter notice (See Attachment 12).

V. Media Representatives

Media will designate a media representative to work with the court during this preliminary hearing. Requests and/or concerns from all media should be directed to Michael Sommermeyer, Court Information Officer, at (702) 671-4534 or sommermeyerm@clarkcountycourts.us.

Media should not contact Judge Jackie Glass or her judicial staff with questions about the trial, jury selection, jury matters, media disputes, or media concerns and questions. Direct all questions to Court Information Officer Michael Sommermeyer.

VI. Media Parking

A media parking area for satellite trucks and microwave vans will be established in the parking lot located at approximately Bonneville and Casino Center Avenues. Satellite and live van trucks parking in this area will be concentrated in the center of the lot to allow for a cable pull of approximately 400' to the center of Clark Avenue, where camera set-ups will be allowed. Electrical power to Clark Avenue is the responsibility of the media. Media will be charged \$50/space/day to park in this lot. A deposit for

parking payable to "Clark County" must be delivered to the Court Information Officer upon arrival.

Parking is not available on Casino Center, Clark or Lewis Avenues. The City of Las Vegas will ticket and tow-away violators. Media parking vehicles in red or white zones around the Regional Justice Center face the prospect that their vehicles will be towed.

VII. Media Staging Area

Media camera set-ups will be allowed on the south sidewalk of Clark Ave. across from the south entrance of the Regional Justice Center. This area will be closest to the media parking lot and will reduce the length required for a cable run to the media parking lot.

A cable run of approximately 400' will be required to reach the media parking area. No parking will be allowed on Clark Avenue. Set up locations have been assigned by the Court Information Officer (see Attachment 7).

The defendants will enter the Regional Justice Center through the Lewis Street entrance. Media must provide a pool to this location. Multiple cameras will not be allowed. Pooling is the responsibility of the media and plans should be communicated to the Court Information Officer prior to the start of trial.

VIII. Cables

All cables placed in corridors, and on sidewalks or streets shall be covered in such a manner as to avoid interference with pedestrian or vehicular traffic, and must conform to City of Las Vegas and Clark County ordinances.

IX. Courthouse Security

All persons entering the courthouse must pass through electronic security devices, and submit any and all equipment for search at the discretion of security officers and/or court marshals. Media members are asked to refrain from bringing excess bags or backpacks into the courthouse. Please bring only what is essential.

X. Courtroom Television Cameras

Pooling of photographic resources is required and it will be the sole responsibility of the media representatives to make those arrangements. All media wishing to participate in the television pool must submit media requests with the Court 72-hours prior to the start of the preliminary hearing. Photography (still or video) of any member of the jury is STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

CourtTV will provide video/audio pool coverage from the courtroom to the designated media parking and the media overflow room in Courtroom 1D. CourtTV will provide continuing coverage throughout the preliminary hearing and will distribute the audio and/or video to those media organizations who have submitted a media request form.

Camera and microphone location setup will be overseen by the Court Information Officer at the direction of Judge Jackie Glass. Additional television cameras will not be permitted in the courtroom during the trial or jury selection.

XI. Courtroom Still Cameras

A still pool photographer, as selected by the media, will be allowed to occupy a designated area of the courtroom. Judge Glass requires all still photography to be applied with a minimum of distraction. Motor drives are discouraged. No flash photography will be permitted in the courtroom. Additional still cameras will not be permitted in the courtroom during the trial and images captured by cellular telephone cameras are not permitted.

XII. Seating in Courtroom During Court Proceedings

Seating in the courtroom is limited to 48 seats (see Attachment 4). Five will be reserved for court staff/security. Four seats will be reserved for prosecution and defense attorney support staff. The Court will reserve 22 seats for media representatives, two of which will be reserved for the pool representatives. Seven seats will be reserved for family and friends of the prosecution and defense. Ten seats will be reserved for the public to be released during a public lottery each day at 7:30 a.m. on the steps of the Clark Avenue entrance of the Regional Justice Center.

During the trial everyone with a seating assignment should be seated no later than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start of proceedings and must sit in their designated seating area on a first come basis. Any credentialed media representative, family member, or member of the public who does not take their seat within the time prescribed may give up their seat until a break in the hearing. Standing during the proceedings will not be allowed.

Members of the media who may need to exit the courtroom should do so in a way that limits disruption of the hearing at natural breaks. The court will discourage large groups leaving the courtroom during the proceedings and may limit exits of the courtroom to scheduled breaks.

Except for attorneys and court staff, media representatives who exit the courtroom will need to wait until the next natural break in the proceedings to re-enter the courtroom and retake their seat.

XIII. Trial Media Seating

Media organizations will be assigned seats, as opposed to assigning seats to a specific individual, in Courtroom 15A. Multiple media organizations may share one seat. An overflow room will be established in Courtroom 1D for additional media members wishing to view the trial. Media will be notified of a seating assignment prior to the start of the trial.

A total of 22 seats will be reserved for media in the courtroom during the trial, with two seats reserved for the television media pool. Seats will be assigned to participating media and it is the responsibility of the individual media organizations to determine who will represent their organization.

No more than one media seat will be issued to any specific media organization, unless that media organization is providing pool coverage as designated by the court. It will be the responsibility of media organizations to share seats assigned to a media organization.

Additional seats, beyond the 22 assigned media seats, will be released through a public lottery each day at 7:30 a.m. on the steps of the Clark Avenue entrance of the Regional Justice Center.

Media representatives must check in with the Court Information Officer at 7:15 a.m. on the steps of the Clark Avenue entrance of the Regional Justice Center to secure media seating for each day. This will ensure media can enter the courtroom prior to the start of the proceedings. Media representatives must be prepared to present for inspection credentials identifying the person as a member of a media organization outside of the courtroom prior to entering the courtroom.

XIV. Electronic Equipment

All electronic equipment, including, cell phones, radios, and pagers will not be allowed inside the courtroom. Audio recording devices will be allowed for note taking or radio broadcast. Laptop computers, cell phones and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) will not be permitted in Courtroom 15A, however, these devices will be allowed in Courtroom 1D. Cellular telephones phones and PDAs may be stored off and silent outside of Courtroom 15A.

The Court Information Officer will arrange to store electronic devices outside Courtrooms 1D and 15A. It will be the media's responsibility to secure their equipment. Cell phones are not permitted inside the courtroom and cellular camera photography also is not permitted inside the courtroom. The Judge will order her marshal to confiscate disallowed electronic equipment that has been brought into the

courtroom, the offending individual may be held in contempt and their media credential will be confiscated preventing them from attending any future hearings.

XV. Court Documents

All motions and other pleadings in the criminal case will be made available by the Court Information Officer, or his designee, in Courtroom 1D. Request for copies of filings must be made in writing and all requests are granted in a reasonable time frame based upon availability of the filings.

For documents requiring research, the court will provide 10 free printed pages to the media, thereafter, copies will cost \$1 per page pursuant to NRS §19.013(1). Requests for electronic copies of documents will be processed at the rate of \$50 per hour.

A disk containing all the filings in the case will be made available for the media to share in Courtroom 1D.

XVI. Media Interviews

Media interviews must be conducted outside of the Regional Justice Center in the designated area marked for this purpose located on the south steps (Clark Avenue Entrance) of the Regional Justice Center. Consult with the Court Information Officer for additional information. At no time will camera set-ups be allowed to impede the flow of pedestrian traffic inside or outside the building. Marshals will be instructed to escort media away from pedestrian traffic areas.

Absolutely no photography (video or still) will be allowed outside of any courtroom or any court floor inside the Regional Justice Center. Any violation of this rule will result in a revocation of all media privileges.

Press briefings and press conferences, as required, will be done outside on the south steps of the Regional Justice Center, or if necessary, inside Courtroom 1D.

Technical/Logistics Packet for Media

State of Georgia v. Justin Ross Harris

Warrant #14-WD-5669

Indictment #14-9-3124

September 12, 2016

BRUNSWICK

**Information contained in this packet is
developing and subject to change.**

Contact:

David Tyler – CobbTV

(770) 528-1107

David.tyler@cobbcounty.org

Pre-Trial Motions

There will be a motions hearing on **August 19th** at 9:00AM EST. This motions hearing will officially set the change of venue to Brunswick among other motions. The motions hearing will held at the Cobb County Superior Court Building at:

70 Haynes Street

Marietta, GA 30090

Media parking will be available at 121 Haynes Street.

Trial Schedule

Jury selection is scheduled to start on September 12th. It is anticipated that jury selection will take two weeks. The trial will recess during the week of the September 26th. The trial should start around October 3rd. The trial portion may start sooner or later depending on the jury selection process. The trial (hearing) is anticipated to take five to six weeks.

There is no plan to hold trial on Saturdays.

Jury Selection – September 12th

Trial Start –October 3rd (Estimated date)

Trial End – November 11th (Estimated date)

Location

The trial will be located at the Glynn County Courthouse located at:

701 H Street

Courtroom #3

Brunswick, GA 31521

Rules from the Judge

New Rule 22's will need to be submitted.

No electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets, or laptops are to be powered "on" in the courtroom.

Still photography is allowed from the designated still pool photographer. Still pool photographer is to be in the back of the courtroom, none intrusive, and minimize shutter noise (no clicking).

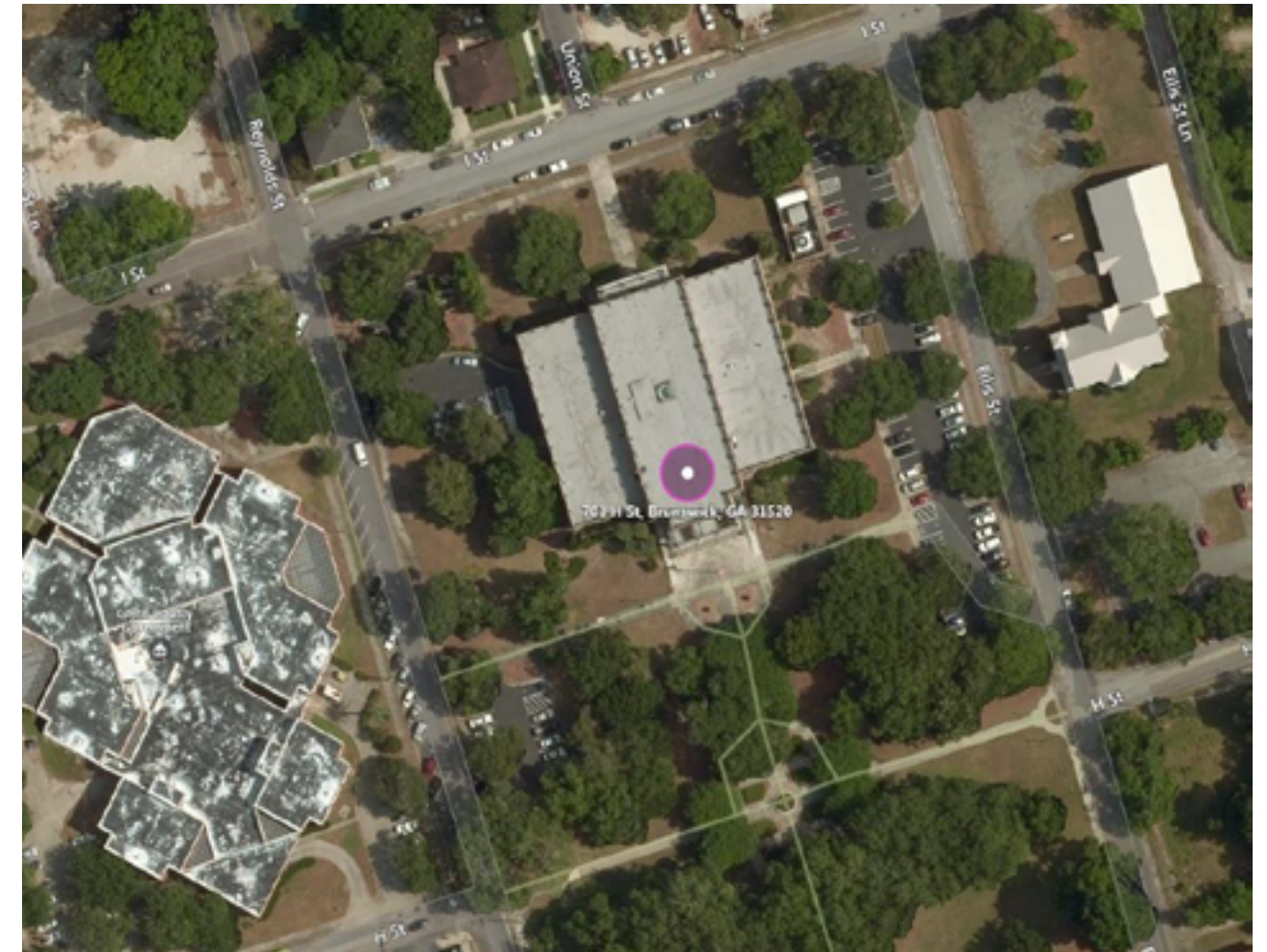
Rules from the Sheriff

No use of electronic devices in the courthouse with the exception of the media room* (A media room has not been established yet)**

Shots of morning intake will have to be acquired from the sidewalk.

Media credentials will need to be worn and visible.

No portable tents on the courthouse campus.

SUPERIOR COURT AERIAL (701 H Street)

**701 H Street
Brunswick, GA 31521**

PUBLIC ENTRANCES/EXITS

There is only one public entrance/exit.

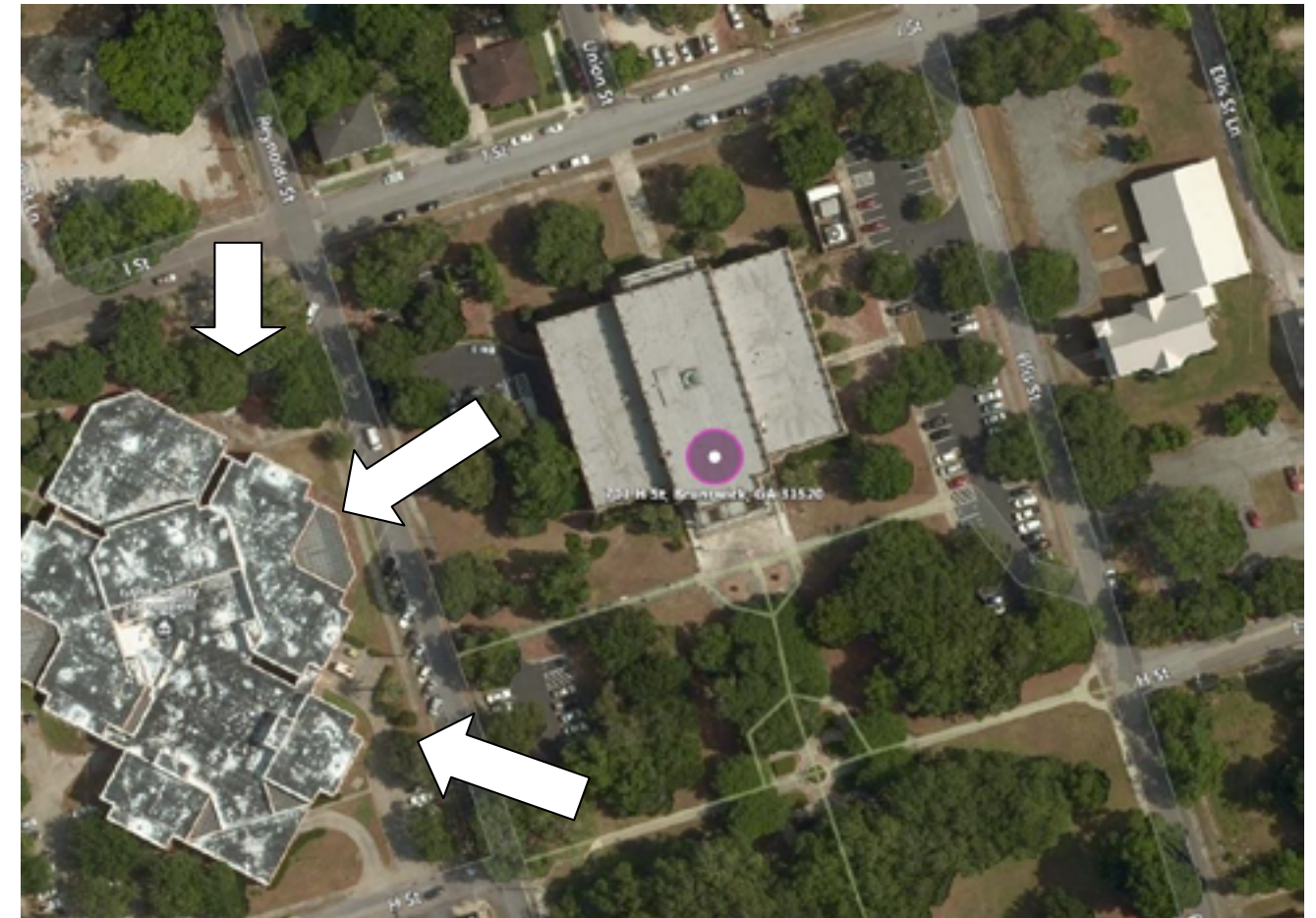


Press Credentials will need to be worn in clear view during the duration of the trial for media personnel.

MEDIA PARKING

(Portable Tents are allowed in parking lot)

1812 Newcastle, Brunswick – Empty lot



This lot has potential fiber optic access from the courthouse for audio and video.

This lot has good southern sky exposure for satellite uplink.



Potential Standup Locations

(Portable tents are not allowed on the campus)





Courtroom #3 (Roughly 36ft wide & 55ft long)





Courtroom #3 Logistics

The courtroom will hold roughly 60 specators.



Intake (Photographers may get shots from the sidewalk only. No shooting in intake parking lot)



Mobile Fuel Delivery

Ocean Petroleum – (912) 265-2275

Colonel Fuels (Deke Dover) - (912) 547-1645

Internet

The courthouse has open access WiFi.

NCH_Public

Pictures and Video of Brunswick Courthouse

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/de84ghqlkcg1mm/AAoqDG268f--To8vOPGU_Hka?dl=0

Brunswick Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce

**1505 Richmond St, Brunswick, GA 31520
(912) 265-0620**

The Brunswick Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce has been informed about the trial and the media. The chamber is available to make recommendations on business services.

Dates to look out for:

Wings of the Golden Isles (Air Show) – Oct 8th – 9th

RMS PGA Classic (Golf Tournament) – Oct 14th – 20th

Georgia v. Florida Football Game – Oct 27th – 30th

Restaurants

Historic Brunswick		Phone	Address	RESTAURANTS	BREAKFAST / LUNCH / DINNER	FAMILY FRIENDLY	BAR / PUB	TAKE OUT	OUTDOOR SEATING	WATERFRONT / VIEW
	The Farmer and the Larder	912-342-7700	1523 Newcastle Street farmerandthelarder.com	L,D				*		
	Tipsey McSway's Neighborhood Bar & Grill	912-267-9991	1414 Newcastle Street tipseymcsways.com	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Arre Piza	912-574-3911	1518 Newcastle Street	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Basil Thai & Sushi	912-342-7625	1401 Newcastle Street	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Daddy Can's	912-264-9363	302 Gloucester Street	B,L	*	*	*	*	*	
	Fox's Piza	912-265-4490	1429 Newcastle Street	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Hungry Hannah's	912-265-8108	606 Gloucester Street	B,L	*	*	*	*	*	
	Indigo Coastal Shanty	912-265-2007	1402 Reynolds Street	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Island Jerk	912-267-4742	1519 Newcastle Street	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Maggie Mae's	912-264-1543	205 Gloucester Street	B,L	*	*	*	*	*	
	Marshside Grill	912-342-7981	Highway 17 1200 Glynns Avenue	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Southern Table and Bar	912-342-8409	1423 Newcastle Street	D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Subway	912-342-1092	1600 Newcastle Street	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
COFFEE SHOPS										
	Daddy Can's	912-264-9363	302 Gloucester Street	B,L	*	*	*	*	*	
	Dunkin' Donuts	912-267-1070	41 Tonnas Avenue	B,L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
BAKERIES & SWEETSHOPS										
	Pan Pan Cupcakes	912-342-7653	1514 Newcastle Street		*	*	*	*	*	
I-95 / Brunswick		Phone	Address	RESTAURANTS	BREAKFAST / LUNCH / DINNER	FAMILY FRIENDLY	BAR / PUB	TAKE OUT	OUTDOOR SEATING	WATERFRONT / VIEW
	Broomelli Boys Pizzeria	912-267-7075	Exit 38/Mall, 760 Scranton Road, Suite 101 broomelliboys.com	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	5 de Mayo	912-289-9288	2809 Glynns Avenue	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Angel's Cafe	912-280-0206	3305 Cypress Mill Road	L	*	*	*	*	*	
	Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar	912-262-0065	Exit 38/Mall, 177 Altama Connection	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Asian Lee	912-261-9433	Exit 36, 5429 New Jasp Highway	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Asian Taste	912-261-9433	Exit 36, 5429 New Jasp Highway	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Bamboo Garden	912-261-8040	3421 Cypress Mill Road	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Barberio's	912-261-2840	Golden Isles Plaza, 250 Golden Isles Plaza	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Buffalo Wild Wings	912-554-1203	Glynns Isles, 718 Glynns Isles	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	*
	China One	912-262-6911	Exit 29, 593 Palmetto Drive	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	China One	912-267-7388	Exit 38/Mall, 98 Altama Connection	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Chinatown Restaurant	912-262-6505	363 Sulfur Drive	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Ciarama Grill & Cantina	912-262-5878	282 Harrison Lane	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Copper Pig	912-289-9879	704 Mall Boulevard	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Cracker Barrel Old Country Store	912-267-7905	Exit 36, 211 Warren Mason Boulevard	B,L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Denny's	912-554-2004	Exit 29, 2990 Highway 17 S	B,L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Denny's	912-279-0903	Exit 38/Mall, 370 Milerium Boulevard	B,L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Eastern Noodle	912-267-6889	3378 Cypress Mill Road	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	El Puro Mexican Restaurant	912-264-1619	3460 Cypress Mill Road	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Fancy Q Sushi Bar and Grill	912-264-8989	3350 Cypress Mill Road	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Fonhouse Subs	912-262-2120	Glynns Isles, 919 Glynns Isles	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Five Guys Burgers & Fries	912-265-8008	Glynns Isles, 905 Glynns Isles	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Golden Corral	912-262-1945	Golden Isles Plaza, 114 Golden Isles Plaza	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Grandy's	912-264-3700	3451 Cypress Mill Road	B,L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Heritage Oaks Bar & Grill	912-280-9525	Exit 36, 126 Clipper Bay Road	L	*	*	*	*	*	
	Honeybaked Hams Co. & Cafe	912-264-1823	Exit 38/Mall, 106-A Scranton Connection	L	*	*	*	*	*	
	Huddle House	912-554-4030	Exit 29, 2729 Highway 17 S	B,L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Huddle House	912-261-0571	Exit 36, 5408 New Jasp Highway	B,L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Huddle House	912-262-1508	Exit 38/Mall, 252 Milerium Boulevard	B,L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Hot 55 Burgers, Shakes and Fries	912-289-9673	500 Glynns Isle	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	JHOP	912-263-8787	Exit 36, 5031 New Jasp Highway	B,L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Jamaican Jerk Shack	912-289-2984	6719 Altama Avenue	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Jungle's Seafood House	912-267-1590	2815 Glynns Avenue	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Kyros Pizzeria Express	912-264-4972	Village at Glynns Place, 211 Village At Glynns Place	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Larry's Giant Subs	912-265-9955	Exit 36 5295, New Jasp Highway	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	
	Larry's Giant Subs	912-265-1233	Exit 38/Mall, 118 Altama Connection	L,D	*	*	*	*	*	



FOOD & DRINKS

I-95 / Brunswick	Phone	Address	BREAKFAST / LUNCH / DINNER	FAMILY FRIENDLY	BAR / PUB	TAKE OUT	OUTDOOR SEATING	WATERFRONT / VIEW
RESTAURANTS								
Larry's Giant Subs	912-265-0396	2009 Glynn Avenue	L,D	*	*	*		
Lopin's Roadhouse	912-267-1413	101 Capital Square Drive	L,D	*	*	*		
Longhorn Steakhouse	912-261-4702	Glynn Isles, 1000 Glynn Isles	L,D	*	*	*		
Mario's Italian Restaurant	912-267-0248	137 Village at Glynn Place	L,D	*	*	*		
Mi Casa	912-265-9555	120 Trade Street	L,D	*	*	*		
Michael's Deli	912-262-1628	4601 Altama Avenue	L,D	*	*	*		
Millhouse Steakhouse	912-264-3424	Exit 38/Mall, 124 Glynn Parkway	D	*	*	*		
Mish Sun	912-267-9398	Exit 36, 5299 New Jexp Highway	L,D	*	*	*		
Moensdog's Pizza and Pub	912-264-4888	36 Canal Road	L,D	*	*	*		
Muscat Charlie's	912-261-0955	290 Ricefield Way	L,D	*	*	*	*	*
Narikon Thai Restaurant	912-267-7230	Exit 36, 5448 New Jexp Highway	L,D	*	*	*		
New Hong Kong Chinese	912-264-9333	4500 Altama Avenue	L,D	*	*	*		
Nick's Buffet	912-265-1172	3779 Darien Highway	L,D	*	*	*		
Ole Time Country Buffet	912-264-1693	Exit 38/Mall, 665 Scanzano Road	L,D	*	*	*		
Olive Garden	912-267-9856	Glynn Isles, 600 Glynn Isles	L,D	*	*	*		
Pam's No.1	912-264-4594	4344 Highway 17 N.	D	*	*	*		
Pho's #1 Vietnamese	912-262-1457	5437 Altama Avenue	L,D	*	*	*		
Pizza Hut	912-267-6688	Exit 36, 4950 New Jexp Highway	L,D	*	*	*		
Pizza Hut	912-265-4056	1248 Chapel Crossing Road	L,D	*	*	*		
Pizza Inn	912-265-2899	3461 Cypress Mill Road	L,D	*	*	*		
Rotating Jack Rotisserie	912-289-2329	5010 New Jexp Highway	L,D	*	*	*		
Seasons of Japan	912-264-5280	Glynn Isles, 701 Glynn Isles	L,D	*	*	*		
Shiro's Rib Shack	912-264-4227	Village at Glynn Place, 345 Village At Glynn Place	L,D	*	*	*		
Shirley Peter's	912-262-9988	911 Glynn Isle	L,D	*	*	*		
Sonny's Real Pit BBQ	912-264-9184	5328 New Jexp Highway	L,D	*	*	*		
The Blue Marlin Bar and Grill	912-342-8064	360 Mall Boulevard	L,D	*	*	*		
Toscan's Ale House	912-554-1937	Exit 38/Mall, 2450 Perry Lane Road	L,D	*	*	*	*	*
Waffle House	912-267-9395	Exit 29, 125 Palisade Drive	B,L,D	*	*	*		
Waffle House	912-262-5917	Exit 36, 5535 New Jexp Highway	B,L,D	*	*	*		
Waffle House	912-466-9513	Exit 38/Mall, 119 Venture Drive	B,L,D	*	*	*		
Willie's Wine-Nee Wagon	912-264-1146	3599 Altama Avenue	L,D	*	*	*		
Wok 'N Roll	912-765-2727	5701 Altama Avenue	L,D	*	*	*		
Zachry's Seafood & Steakhouse	912-265-9080	Exit 29, 415 Palisade Drive	L,D	*	*	*		
Zeig's Cafe	912-265-1180	Exit 38/Mall, 2066 Perry Lane Road	B,L	*	*	*		
BAKERIES & SWEETSHOPS								
Holloway's Bakery	912-265-7920	4410 Canal Park Drive		*	*	*		
Joe Mugg's	912-264-3233	Golden Isles Plaza, 163 Golden Isles Plaza	L,D	*	*	*		
Merckles	912-275-8793	712 Glynn Isle		*	*	*		
Sugarbakers	912-554-1880	5036 Bythe Island Highway		*	*	*		
Wake Up Coffee	912-268-2429	3349 Cypress Mill Road		*	*	*		
COFFEE SHOPS								
Daxini's Donuts	912-289-8010	4435 Altama Avenue	B,L	*	*	*		
Joe Mugg's	912-264-3233	Golden Isles Plaza, 163 Golden Isles Plaza	L,D	*	*	*		
Starbucks Coffee	912-264-8284	Exit 36, 5043 New Jexp Highway	B,L,D	*	*	*		
Starbucks Coffee	912-264-3970	Glynn Isles, 650 Glynn Isles	B,L,D	*	*	*		

Accommodations



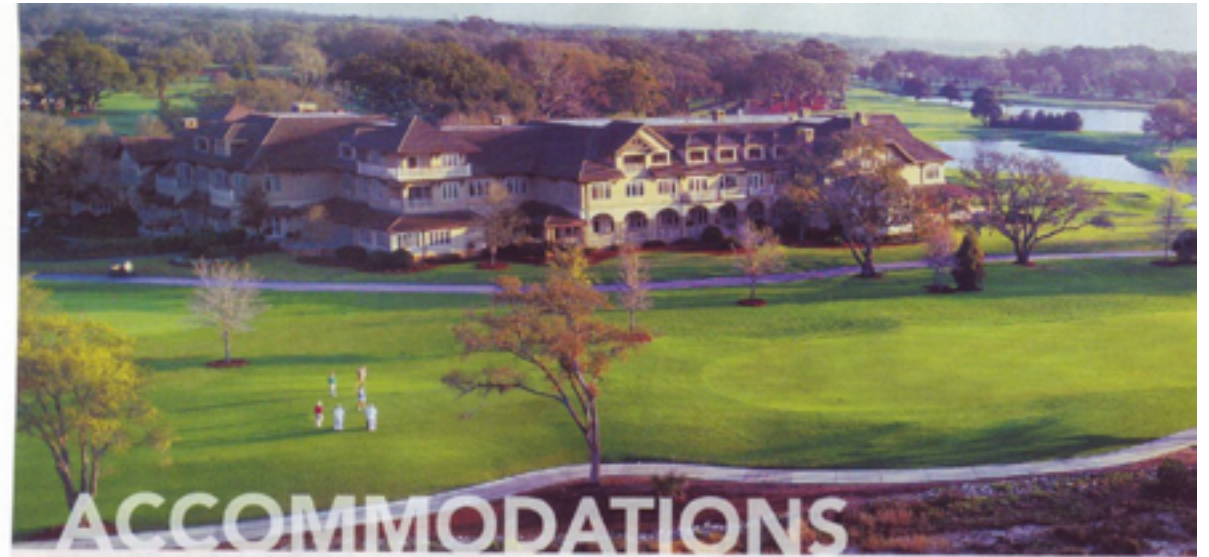
Brunswick	Phone	Address	Website	POOL	ON-SITE DINING	ROOM SERVICE	ON-SITE BAR	KITCHEN	SUITES	BEACH FRONT	BEACH VIEW	PET FRIENDLY	FITNESS CENTER	MEETING SPACE
HOTELS & MOTELS														
Embassy Suites	912-264-6100	500 Mall Boulevard	embassysuites.hilton.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott	912-264-2060	107 Gateway Center Circle	marriott.com/hgci	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hampton Inn & Suites	912-261-0939	128 Venture Drive	brunswick.hamptoninn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Holiday Inn & Suites	912-264-3300	138 Glynn Parkway	holidayinn.com/hotels	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jameson Inn	912-261-0002	230 Warren Mason Boulevard	jamesoninn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Baymont Inn & Suites	912-267-0800	150 Center Drive	baymontinn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Best Western Plus Brunswick Inn & Suites	912-265-1114	126 Stellar Drive	bestwestern.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Clarion Inn	912-264-4033	5252 New Jexp Highway	clarionhotel.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Comfort Inn	912-264-6540	3300 New Jexp Highway	choicehotels.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Comfort Suites	912-267-4440	25 Ashton Drive	choicehotels.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Comfort Suites Golden Isles Gateway	912-580-4400	220 Gateway Center Boulevard	choicehotels.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Concorde Suites	912-267-7772	110 Center Drive		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Country Inn & Suites	912-265-3016	211 Gateway Center Boulevard	countryinn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Courtyard by Marriott	912-265-2644	580 Millennium Boulevard	marriott.com/hgwy	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Days Inn	912-264-4330	5033 New Jexp Highway	daysinn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Econo Lodge - South	912-554-0455	171 Palisade Drive	econolodge.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Econo Lodge	912-264-8666	2800 Perry Lane Road	econolodge.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Knights Inn	912-264-6767	490 Warren Mason Boulevard	knightsinn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
La Quinta Inn & Suites	912-265-7725	105 Warren Mason Boulevard	lq.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Micotel Inn & Suites-South	912-261-0118	325 Palisade Drive	micotelinn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Micotel By Wyndham North	912-554-1430	146 Gateway Center Boulevard	micotelinn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Quality Inn	912-265-4500	125 Venture Drive	qualityinn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ramada Inn	912-264-2099	15 Wamswick Street	ramada.com/brunswick	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Red Roof Inn	912-264-4720	25 Tourist Drive	redroof-brunswick.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Roadway Inn	912-261-0670	5272 New Jexp Highway	economyinn.com/brunswick	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sleep Inn & Suites	912-262-2792	200 Stellar Drive	sleepinn.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Super 8 Motel	912-265-0008	211 Palisade Drive	super8.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Super 8 Motel	912-264-8800	5280 New Jexp Highway	super8.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
VACATION RENTALS (Please contact Parker-Kaufman Realtors for information on specific properties)														
Parker-Kaufman Realtors	912-265-7711	Down, Brunswick, 509 Gloucester St.	parker-kaufman.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
BED & BREAKFAST INNS-HISTORIC BRUNSWICK														
Brunswick Manor	912-265-6889	825 Egmont Street	brunswickmanor.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
McKinnon House Bed & Breakfast	912-261-9100	1001 Egmont Street	ackinhousebrunswick.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Warren Hill Bed & Breakfast	912-264-4262	728 Union Street	warrenhill.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
CAMPING & RV														
Altamaha Regional Park	912-270-6368	1605 Altamaha Park Road		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bythe Island Park & Campground	912-279-2812	6635 Bythe Island Highway	glynncounty.org	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Central GA RV Resort	912-264-3869	287 South Port Parkway	centralgarevresort.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Golden Isles Vacation Park	912-261-1025	7445 Bythe Island Highway	goldenislesvacationpark.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*



St. Simons Island Phone Address Website

	POOL	ONSITE DINING	ROOM SERVICE	ONSITE BAR	KITCHEN	SUITES	BEACH FRONT	BEACH VIEW	WI-FI	PET FRIENDLY	FITNESS CENTER	MEETING SPACE*
HOTELS & MOTELS												
Hampton Inn												
Holiday Inn Express												
Island Inn												
King & Prince Beach & Golf Resort												
Ocean Inn & Suites												
Sea Palms Golf & Tennis Resort												
St. Simons Inn by the Lighthouse												
The Inn at Sea Island												
Village Inn & Pub												
Epworth by the Sea												
Ocean Lodge												
Sea Gate Inn												
The Lodge at Sea Island Golf Club												
VACATION RENTALS (Please contact Vacation Rental Companies for information on specific properties)												
DeLoach Seelye's International Realty												
Georgia Coast Realty												
Hodnett Cooper												
Real Escapes Properties												
Roland David Properties												
The Swachan Carriage House												
American Dream Realty												
Beach Club at St. Simons by Hodnett Cooper												
Belinda Thomas Realty												
Coastal Real Estate												
Georgia Beach Rentals, LLC												
Golden Isles Realty Company												
Island Cottage Company												
North Beachers Condominiums by Hodnett Cooper												
Purple Dog Vacation Rentals												
Salt Air Villas by Hodnett Cooper												
Sea Palms Realty												
Shipwreck Condominiums by Hodnett Cooper												
St. Simons Grand by Hodnett Cooper												

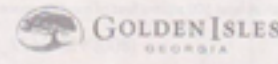
*Venues with at least 500 square feet of meeting space



Sea Island Phone Address Website

	POOL	ONSITE DINING	ROOM SERVICE	ONSITE BAR	KITCHEN	SUITES	BEACH FRONT	BEACH VIEW	WI-FI	PET FRIENDLY	FITNESS CENTER	MEETING SPACE*
RESORTS												
The Choice												
VACATION RENTALS (Please contact Sea Island Real Estate for information on specific properties)												
Sea Island Cottage Rentals												
HOTELS & MOTELS												
The Inn at Sea Island												
The Lodge at Sea Island Golf Club												
Jekyll Island Phone Address Website												
HOTELS & MOTELS												
Beachview Club Hotel												
Days Inn and Suites												
Holiday Inn Resort												
Villas by the Sea												
Westin Jekyll Island												
Hampton Inn & Suites												
Quality Inn & Suites												
VACATION RENTALS (Please contact Vacation Rental Companies for information on specific properties)												
Jekyll Realty												
Parker Kaufman												
CAMPING & RV												
Jekyll Island Campground												
RESORTS												
Jekyll Island Club Hotel												
Little St. Simons Island Phone Address Website												
HOTELS & MOTELS												
The Lodge on Little St. Simons Island												

*Venues with at least 500 square feet of meeting space



Rule 22

Media outlets will need to submit a Rule 22 in order to cover trial.

Samples:

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

STATE OF GEORGIA)	
)	
V.)	CRIMINAL ACTION
)	15-9-2765-28
)	
JIMMY WINFREY)	
Defendant(s).)	

REQUEST TO INSTALL RECORDING AND/OR PHOTOGRAPHING EQUIPMENT PURSUANT TO RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR ELECTRONIC AND PHOTOGRAPHIC NEWS COVERAGE OF JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS.


Pursuant to Rule 22 of the Electronic and Photographic News Coverage of Judicial Proceedings in the Uniform Superior Court Rules, the undersigned hereby requests permission to install equipment in order to record, photograph or televise all or portions of the proceedings in the above-captioned case.

Consistent with the provisions of the rules and guidelines, the undersigned desires to install a video camera, tripod, and microphone(s). The proceedings that the undersigned desires to record, photograph or televise commence on Monday, August 31, 2015.

Subject to direction from the court regarding possible pooled coverage, the undersigned wishes to install this equipment in the courtroom on Monday, August 31, 2015. The personnel who will be responsible for the installation and operation of this equipment during its use are employed by WSB Television, Inc.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the equipment to be installed and the locations and operation of such equipment will be in conformity with the rules and guidelines issued by the court.

This 31st day of August 2015.


 Ross Cavitt
 WSB-TV

Approved:

 Presiding Judge

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

V. INDICTMENT.: 14-9-3124

(JUDGE STALEY)

JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS
Defendant


REQUEST TO INSTALL RECORDING AND/OR PHOTOGRAPHING EQUIPMENT PURSUANT TO RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR ELECTRONIC AND PHOTOGRAPHIC NEWS COVERAGE OF JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS.

Pursuant to Rule 22 of the Electronic and Photographic News Coverage of Judicial Proceedings in the Uniform Superior Court Rules, the undersigned hereby requests permission to install equipment in Judge Mary Staley's courtroom in order to record, photograph or televise all or portions of the proceedings in the above captioned case.

Consistent with the provisions of the rules and guidelines, the undersigned desires to install the following described equipment: video camera, tripod, microphone(s) and liveu unit. The proceedings that the undersigned desires to record, photograph or televise commence on September 14 through 18, 2015 and October 12 through October 13, 2015.

Subject to direction from the court regarding possible pooled coverage, the undersigned wishes to install this equipment in the courtroom on September 14, 2015. The personnel who will be responsible for the installation and operation of this equipment during its use are employed by Cable News Network (CNN).

The undersigned hereby certifies that the equipment to be installed and the locations and operation of such equipment will be in conformity with the rules and guidelines issued by the court. This 1st day of September, 2015.


 One CNN Center
 Atlanta, GA 30303
 APPROVED:

 Presiding Judge

PTZ Cameras

The Panasonic AW-HE130 series camera(s) are planned to be used for the trial. This camera is a broadcast grade unit with HD-SDI and down-converted SD Composite. The unit can be control through a web interface and/or a camera control panel.



Panasonic AW-HE130 Specifications

Specifications

GENERAL	Power requirements	DC 12V (AC adaptor supplied) DC 42-57V (PoE+ power supply)	FUNCTIONS AND PERFORMANCE	Gain selection	Auto, 0 dB to 36 dB		
	Current consumption	1.9 A (AC adaptor supplied) 0.5 A (PoE+ power supply)		Frame mix ²	0 dB, 6 dB, 12 dB, 18 dB, 24 dB		
	Ambient operating temperature	0 °C to 40 °C (32 °F to 104 °F)		58.94p/58.94i	1/100, 1/120, 1/250, 1/500, 1/1000, 1/2000, 1/4000, 1/10000		
	Storage temperature	-20 °C to 50 °C (-4 °F to 122 °F)			29.97p	1/30, 1/60, 1/120, 1/250, 1/500, 1/1000, 1/2000, 1/4000, 1/10000	
	Allowable humidity ranges	20 % to 90 % (no condensation)		Electronic shutter speed	23.98p	1/24, 1/60, 1/120, 1/250, 1/500, 1/1000, 1/2000, 1/4000, 1/10000	
	Mass	Approx. 3.1 kg (6.83 lb) (including mount bracket)			50p/50i	1/60, 1/120, 1/250, 1/500, 1/1000, 1/2000, 1/4000, 1/10000	
	Dimensions (W x H x D)	180 mm x 228 mm x 224 mm (7.132 inches x 9 inches x 8.816 inches) (excluding protrusions, cable cover, daisy chain mount bracket)		25p	1/25, 1/60, 1/120, 1/250, 1/500, 1/1000, 1/2000, 1/4000, 1/10000		
	Finish	AW-HE130W/PAN-HE130ME: Pearl white AW-HE130K/PAN-HE130KE: Metallic black			Synchro scan	58.94 Hz/60.15 Hz to 642.21 Hz 50 Hz/50.15 Hz to 535.71 Hz	
Controller supported ¹	AW-RC120, AW-RC50, AW-RC200	Gamma	HD, SD, FILM, KE1, FILM, KE2, FILM, KE3 0.30 to 0.75 (Manual setting)				
INPUT	Input connector	DC 12V IN, G/L IN (BNC)	FUNCTIONS AND PERFORMANCE	White balance	AW9 A, AW9 B, ATW, 3200K, 5600K, VAR (2000K to 15000K)		
		• BBS (Black Burst Sync), tri-level sync supported • Locking to a color subcarrier is not possible with BBS. PoE+ (IEEE802.3at standard)		HDMI connector	• HDCP is not supported. • Mers Link is not supported.	Chroma amount variability	OFF, -99 % to 40 %
OUTPUT	Video output	HDMI	FUNCTIONS AND PERFORMANCE	Some file	Scene1, Scene2, Scene3, Scene4		
		HD/SD SDI OUT SMPTE424/SMPTE292/SMPTE259 standard 75 Ω (BNC+0)		MDIO-OUT	NTSC/PAL 1.0V (p-p)/75 Ω (BNC+0)	Output format	1080/58.94p, 1080/29.97p ¹ , 1080/23.98p, 1080/58.94i, 1080/29.97pF, 1080/23.98pF, 720/58.94p, 480/58.94p ¹ , 1080/50p, 1080/25p ¹ , 1080/50i, 60/25pF, 720/50p, 576/50p ¹
INPUT/OUTPUT	Input/Output connector	LAN	FUNCTIONS AND PERFORMANCE	Synchronization system	Internal/External synchronization (BBS/Tri-level sync) (Pan-tilt head unit)		
		RS-422		CONTROL IN RS-422A (RJ-45)	Installation method	Stand-alone (Desktop) or suspended (Hanging) ⁴	
FUNCTIONS AND PERFORMANCE	Input/Output connector	φ3.5 mm stereo mini jack	FUNCTIONS AND PERFORMANCE	Camera/pan-tilt head control	IP connecting cable		
		Input impedance: High impedance			• When connecting through a hub: LAN cable ⁵ (category 5e or above, straight cable), max. 100 m (328 ft)		
	MIC/LINE input	• During MIC input	FUNCTIONS AND PERFORMANCE	Camera/pan-tilt head control	• When a hub is not used: LAN cable ⁵ (category 5 or above, crossover cable) max. 100 m (328 ft)		
		Supported mic: Stereo mic (plug-in power, auto off switching via send)			RP connecting Cable		
	[Camera unit]	Imaging sensors	• Supply voltage: 2.5 V ± 0.5 V	FUNCTIONS AND PERFORMANCE	Camera/pan-tilt head control	LAN cable ⁵ (category 5 or above, straight cable), max. 100 m (328 ft)	
			• During LINE input			RS-422A, AW series protocol	
			Input level: Approx. -10 dBV ±3 dBV			Pan-tilt operation speed	0.08°/s to 60°/s
			Imaging sensors			1/2.86-type Full-HD 3MOS	Panning range
Lens			Motorized 20 zoom, F1.6 to F3.4 (φ=4.5 mm to 90 mm; 35 mm equivalent: 32.13 mm to 642.5 mm)			Tilting range ⁷	-30° to 210°
Focus			Switching between auto and manual			Quietness	NC35 or less
Focus distance	Entire zooming range: 800 mm (2.62 ft) Wide end: 400 mm (1.31 ft)						
Color separation optical system	3MOS						
Minimum illumination	2 lx (50 %, F1.6, 36 dB)						
Horizontal resolution	1000 TV lines Typ (Center area)						

*1: It may be necessary to upgrade the version of the controller in order to support the unit. For details on upgrading, visit the support page on the following website: <http://pro.panasonic.net/> *2: This cannot be configured when the format is 1080/29.97p, 1080/23.98p, 1080/29.97pF, 1080/23.98pF, 1080/25p, or 1080/25pF. *3: Native output. *4: A Y signal is output as HDMI output, an Y signal is output as SDI and an analog output for output formats of 480/58.94p(i) and 576/50p(i). *5: To ensure safety, the unit must be secured using the mount bracket supplied. *6: Use of an STP (shielded twisted pair) cable is recommended. *7: Depending on the pan or tilt position, the camera may be reflected in the image.

Judge Mary E. Staley



Judge Staley graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the State University of West Georgia in 1975. She earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1978. After graduating from law school, Judge Staley served as an Assistant District Attorney for the Cobb Judicial Circuit from 1978-1982. She was elected Magistrate Judge of Cobb County in 1982, and then elected State Court Judge, Division I in 1984. She was elected Judge of the Superior Court of Cobb County in 1992, and served as Chief Judge from 2005-2006. She is currently the presiding judge for the Cobb County Mental Health Court.

Judge Staley is actively involved in many civic and professional organizations. She was selected to be a member of the 1996 Class of Leadership Georgia. She is co-author of Georgia Jurisprudence Family Law. She was the 2001 recipient of the Joseph T. Tuggle Professionalism Award, Family Law Section, State Bar of Georgia. She was recognized by the Cobb County Y.W.C.A as its 1994 Woman of Achievement. She was the 2014 recipient of the Cobb Schools Foundation Leaders & Legends Award. She was awarded the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Woman award in 2015. She served as president of the Kiwanis Club of Marietta 2014-2015. She served as president of the Council of Superior Court Judges 2014-2015.

Staff Attorney - Jennifer Walker (770) 528-1818

Administrative Assistant - Charlotte Rooks (770) 528-1816

Fax Number- (770) 528-1821

(Source: www.cobbcounty.org)

Vic Reynolds – Cobb County District Attorney



Vic Reynolds was born and raised in Rome, Ga., and is a graduate of Floyd County public schools. In 1979 he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Georgia Southern University, in Statesboro.

After graduating, Vic returned to Rome, where he was in law enforcement for four years. In 1986, Vic graduated from law school at Georgia State University and began prosecuting felony cases as an assistant district attorney in Fulton and Cobb counties. He was a prosecutor in Cobb when he was appointed as Chief Magistrate in 1994. Vic won election to a full term as Chief Magistrate in 1996, earning 72 percent of the vote. As Chief Magistrate, his duties included presiding over the Cobb County Drug Court. He left the bench in 1999 and began practicing criminal-defense law.

In July 2012, Vic was chosen by voters as the Republican nominee for District Attorney of the Cobb Judicial Circuit, and he won the office without opposition in the Nov. 6, 2012, general election.

He and his wife, Holly, who is also from Rome, have two daughters.

(Source: www.cobbcounty.org)

Chuck Boring – Senior Assistant District Attorney Supervisor of the Special Victims Unit



Charles “Chuck” P. Boring is an Assistant District Attorney supervising the Cobb Judicial Circuit (Cobb County, GA) D.A. Office’s Special Victims Unit. He is a graduate of Georgia State University College of Law. He has been a prosecutor since 2000 and has prosecuted a variety of crimes including murder, rape, physical and sexual abuse of children, internet facilitated crimes against children, and human trafficking cases. He has successfully tried several high-profile cases, including State v. Jade Sanders and Lamonte Thomas, a child homicide case in which the defendants starved their newborn son to death. The case garnered national attention due to the Defendants’ unsuccessful attempt to blame the child’s death on feeding the child a vegan diet.

Mr. Boring has prosecuted in several jurisdictions, including the Coweta, Atlanta, and Cobb Judicial Circuits. While working in the Fulton County District Attorney’s Office, he was awarded the 2006 Trial Attorney of the Year Award and the 2007 Attorney of the Year Award. He was also named the 2013 Cobb County District Attorney’s Office Assistant District Attorney of the Year. Mr. Boring was the recipient of the Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council of Georgia 2015 Thompson - Jones Award, presented annually to an outstanding Basic Litigation faculty member who exemplifies the dedication and devotion to the furtherance of the standards established by the prosecution community. Mr. Boring is a frequent lecturer and presenter and on child abuse and other legal issues in Georgia, nationally, and internationally.

(Source: Chuck Boring)

Jesse Evans – Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney



Jesse is a native of Cobb County. He earned his undergraduate and law degrees at Mercer University and has spent his entire career in criminal prosecution. He joined the Cobb District Attorney’s Office as an Assistant District Attorney in 2001, and in 2006 became the Major Crimes/Homicide prosecutor. In 2008, he was elevated to Deputy Chief ADA. In addition to practicing law, he is an instructor at law-enforcement training academies and regularly gives presentations for fellow prosecutors through the Prosecuting Attorney’s Council.

(Source: Jesse Evans)

H. Maddox Kilgore – Defense Attorney



Maddox began his legal career serving as a law clerk for the former Cobb County Superior Court Judge and current Georgia Supreme Court Justice P. Harris Hines. As a law clerk on the Georgia Supreme Court, Maddox honed his craft of legal writing at the highest level. As an advocate, Maddox cut his teeth as an Assistant Attorney General for five years, where he argued habeas corpus cases across the State of Georgia and represented the State in murder cases before the Supreme Court of Georgia. He then served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Cobb Judicial Circuit for six years where he successfully tried dozens of felony jury trials, including defendants charged with murder, armed robbery, child cruelty, and trafficking narcotics.

Armed with those years of prosecutorial and appellate experience, Maddox began defending juveniles and adults at every stage of the criminal justice system, from investigation, to trial, appeal, and habeas corpus. In 2011, Maddox won a rare “not guilty by reason of insanity” jury verdict in Cobb County where his client was charged with murder by stabbing his mother 120 times. Maddox has lectured on the subject of mental health defenses, being asked to address a statewide conference of defense attorneys on the subject. Much of his expertise is devoted to appellate practice before the Georgia Court of Appeals and Georgia Supreme Court, where Maddox has successfully won new trials for his clients.

(Source: <http://www.kilgorerodriguez.com/>)

Carlos J. Rodriguez – Defense Attorney



Carlos contributes his intelligence, talent, and skill defending those charged with misdemeanor and felony offenses to the Atlanta-area criminal defense firm of Kilgore & Rodriguez. He has investigated, prepared, and successfully defended those accused of murder, aggravated assault, possession & the sale drugs, DUI, and many other criminal cases.

Carlos’ interest in criminal law began as a student at Marietta High School, when he interned for Superior Court Judge Adele Grubbs of the Cobb Judicial Circuit. This gave him the opportunity to see good and bad lawyering and encouraged him to be the kind of advocate that clients would be proud to say that “Carlos is my attorney.” Prior to graduating from the University of Georgia School of Law, Carlos competed on two Mock Trial tournament teams, and was selected as a National Member of the Order of Barristers, which honors those that exhibit excellence in the art of courtroom advocacy.

Carlos has been called upon by his clients to defend at trial very serious charges such as murder, kidnapping, drug trafficking, armed robbery, and aggravated assault. But make no mistake, Carlos understands that your case - misdemeanor or felony - is the most important case in the world to you. He is humbled and honored to defend those facing criminal charges, which is a sentiment that is central to the firm’s philosophy at Kilgore & Rodriguez.

(Source: <http://www.kilgorerodriguez.com/>)

Bryan Lumpkin – Defense Attorney



Even before finishing law school, I gained valuable experience working in both a private defense attorney's office, as well as volunteering in a prosecutor's office. After graduating from the University of Georgia School of Law, I have practiced exclusively in criminal law for the last 20 years. For over a decade, I was a felony prosecutor in Cobb County and in Coastal Georgia. During that time, I worked for four years as a major case prosecutor working on cases involving complex legal, factual, procedural and jurisdictional issues, high-profile crimes, including death penalty cases and the "murder by antifreeze poisoning" case aired nationally on Court TV.

I am a seasoned trial lawyer who has taken over 80 felony jury trials to verdict. In addition, I have handled well over 100 bench trials, filed motions and represented clients at hundreds of contested hearings. I am admitted to practice before all Georgia state courts and am a member of the Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the Cobb County Bar Association. In addition to my legal practice, I am an active member of the Roswell Street Baptist Church in Marietta. Contact my office today, located directly across the street from the Marietta Police Department, two blocks from Marietta Square and the Cobb County Courthouse.

(Source: <http://www.lumpkinlaw.com/>)

JUDGE MARY STALEY	
GENERAL BILL OF INDICTMENT	
RE: Warrant(s) 14-WD-5669	NO. 143124
WITNESSES: Det. Philip M. Stoddard, Cobb County Police Department	COBB SUPERIOR COURT
JULY/AUGUST TERM 2014	
THE STATE OF GEORGIA	
V.	
JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS	
Ct. 1: Malice Murder Ct. 2: Felony Murder Ct. 3: Felony Murder Ct. 4: Cruelty to Children in the First Degree Ct. 5: Cruelty to Children in the Second Degree Ct. 6: Criminal Attempt to Commit a Felony, to wit: Sexual Exploitation of Children Ct. 7: Dissemination of Harmful Material to Minors Ct. 8: Dissemination of Harmful Material to Minors	
<hr/> <i>True</i> BILL Date <i>September 4</i> , 2014	
Delivered in open Court by:	
<i>Cynthia M. Panullo</i> Grand Jury Foreperson	<i>Lisa Riche</i> Grand Jury Bailiff
<hr/> REBECCA KEATON, Clerk, S. C.	
D. VICTOR REYNOLDS, District Attorney, Cobb Judicial Circuit	
The Defendant herein waives copy of indictment, list of witnesses, formal arraignment and pleads _____ Guilty.	The Defendant herein waives copy of indictment, list of witnesses, formal arraignment and pleads _____ Guilty.
Defendant	Defendant
Attorney for Defendant	Attorney for Defendant
Assistant District Attorney	Assistant District Attorney

Filed in Office Sep-04-2014 10:50:11
 ID# 2014-0102958-CR
 Page 1
Rebecca Keaton
 Clerk of Superior Court Cobb County
 Court Rules: www.cobbcountyga.com/courtclerk/

ID# 2014-0102958-CR
Page 3

COUNT 1

The Grand Jurors, aforesaid, in the name and behalf of the citizens of Georgia, charge and accuse **JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS** with the offense of **MALICE MURDER, O.C.G.A. § 16-5-1**, for that the said accused person, in the County of Cobb and State of Georgia, **on or about the 18th day of June, 2014**, did unlawfully, and with malice aforethought, cause the death of Cooper Harris, a human being, by placing said Cooper Harris into a child car seat and leaving him alone in a hot motor vehicle, contrary to the laws of said State, the good order, peace and dignity thereof.

COUNT 2

and the Grand Jurors, aforesaid, in the name and behalf of the citizens of Georgia, further charge and accuse **JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS** with the offense of **FELONY MURDER, O.C.G.A. § 16-5-1**, for that the said accused person, in the County of Cobb and State of Georgia, **on or about the 18th day of June, 2014**, did commit the offense of murder when the accused caused the death of Cooper Harris, a human being, while in the commission of a felony, to wit: Cruelty To Children In The First Degree, O.C.G.A. § 16-5-70, did maliciously cause said Cooper Harris, a child under the age of eighteen (18) years, cruel and excessive physical pain by leaving said child alone in a hot motor vehicle, contrary to the laws of said State, the good order, peace and dignity thereof.

COUNT 3

and the Grand Jurors, aforesaid, in the name and behalf of the citizens of Georgia, further charge and accuse **JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS** with the offense of **FELONY MURDER, O.C.G.A. § 16-5-1**, for that the said accused person, in the County of Cobb and State of Georgia, **on or about the 18th day of June, 2014**, did commit the offense of murder when the accused caused the death of Cooper Harris, a human being, while in the commission of a felony, to wit: Cruelty To Children In The Second Degree, O.C.G.A. § 16-5-70, did, with criminal negligence, cause said Cooper Harris, a child under the age of eighteen (18) years, cruel and excessive physical pain by leaving said child alone in a hot motor vehicle, contrary to the laws of said State, the good order, peace and dignity thereof.

ID# 2014-0102958-CR
Page 4

COUNT 4

and the Grand Jurors, aforesaid, in the name and behalf of the citizens of Georgia, further charge and accuse **JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS** with the offense of **CRUELTY TO CHILDREN IN THE FIRST DEGREE, O.C.G.A. § 16-5-70(b)**, for that the said accused person, in the County of Cobb and State of Georgia, **on or about the 18th day of June, 2014**, did maliciously cause Cooper Harris, a child under the age of eighteen (18) years, cruel and excessive physical pain by leaving said child alone in a hot motor vehicle, contrary to the laws of said State, the good order, peace and dignity thereof.

COUNT 5

and the Grand Jurors, aforesaid, in the name and behalf of the citizens of Georgia, further charge and accuse **JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS** with the offense of **CRUELTY TO CHILDREN IN THE SECOND DEGREE, O.C.G.A. § 16-5-70(c)**, for that the said accused person, in the County of Cobb and State of Georgia, **on or about the 18th day of June, 2014**, did, with criminal negligence, cause Cooper Harris, a child under the age of eighteen (18) years, cruel and excessive physical pain by leaving said child alone in a hot motor vehicle, contrary to the laws of said State, the good order, peace and dignity thereof.

COUNT 6

and the Grand Jurors, aforesaid, in the name and behalf of the citizens of Georgia, further charge and accuse **JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS** with the offense of **CRIMINAL ATTEMPT TO COMMIT A FELONY, O.C.G.A. § 16-4-1**, for that the said accused person, in the County of Cobb and State of Georgia, **between the 1st day of March, 2014, and the 18th day of June, 2014**, did knowingly and intentionally attempt to commit the crime of Sexual Exploitation of Children, in violation of Code Section O.C.G.A. § 16-12-100 of the Official Code of Georgia, in that the said accused did perform an act, to wit: the accused did request that [REDACTED] a minor female under the age of eighteen (18) years, provide the accused with a photograph and visual medium involving the lewd exhibition of her genital and pubic area, an act which constitutes a substantial step toward the commission of said crime, contrary to the laws of said State, the good order, peace and dignity thereof.

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Page 5

COUNT 7

and the Grand Jurors, aforesaid, in the name and behalf of the citizens of Georgia, further charge and accuse **JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS** with the offense of **DISSEMINATION OF HARMFUL MATERIAL TO MINORS, O.C.G.A. § 16-12-103**, for that the said accused person, in the County of Cobb and State of Georgia, **between the 1st day of March, 2014, and the 11th day of June, 2014**, did knowingly disseminate and furnish to [REDACTED] a minor female under the age of eighteen (18) years, printed matter containing explicit and detailed verbal descriptions and narrative accounts of sexual excitement and sexual conduct, and which, taken as a whole, is harmful to minors, contrary to the laws of said State, the good order, peace and dignity thereof.

COUNT 8

and the Grand Jurors, aforesaid, in the name and behalf of the citizens of Georgia, further charge and accuse **JUSTIN ROSS HARRIS** with the offense of **DISSEMINATION OF HARMFUL MATERIAL TO MINORS, O.C.G.A. § 16-12-103**, for that the said accused person, in the County of Cobb and State of Georgia, **between the 6th day of March, 2014, and the 15th day of June, 2014**, did knowingly disseminate and furnish to [REDACTED] a minor female under the age of eighteen (18) years, a photograph and visual image of a portion of the human body which depicted sexually explicit nudity, to wit: a photograph and visual image of a male in a state of undress so as to expose the male's genitals, and of a depiction of uncovered male genitals in a discernibly turgid state, and which, taken as a whole, is harmful to minors, contrary to the laws of said State, the good order, peace and dignity thereof.

D. VICTOR REYNOLDS, District Attorney

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