

Laura G. Griffin, Clerk of Court for the Chesterfield Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court announces important changes to the Portable Electronic Device Policy of the Chesterfield J&DR District Court. **This announcement pertains only to the Chesterfield J&DR District Court Courthouse.**

In December 2018, the Access to Justice Commission issued a model cell phone policy. The introduction to the Model Policy explains the access to justice issue a policy barring cell phones in courthouses creates:

The use of portable electronic devices in our society has increased dramatically, and many users see these devices as a necessary incident to their personal and working lives. People rely on these devices for purposes ranging from organizational or data storage activities to ensuring personal security. Appropriate use at the courthouse will allow people to access information for presentation to the court, and it will allow people to transact other necessary business. Inappropriate use can be a danger, cause distractions, and demean the order and processes of the court. The purpose of this Model Policy is to recommend a policy that respects the interests and needs of the people who enter the courthouses and courtrooms of the Commonwealth.

Policies barring portable electronic devices may prevent self-represented litigants or other court users from effectively presenting evidence in their cases, successfully accessing court resources or information, or communicating with others while in the courthouse. By authorizing the possession and use of portable electronic devices in courthouses for evidentiary and other legitimate purposes, the Model Policy improves access to justice and judicial efficiency by establishing known processes and procedures.

Effective April 1, 2021, the **Chesterfield Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court** will allow portable electronic devices in the Courthouse. Portable Electronic Devices (“PED”) are defined as cell phones, personal computers, tablets, and smart watches. Court visitors may use the PED in the common areas of the Courthouse, including but not limited to the lobby and hallways. Upon entry into the Courthouse, the PED must be placed on silent mode and must remain silenced while in the Courthouse.

Court visitors are prohibited from taking any photographs, audio/video recording or live streaming.

The use of a PED is prohibited in the courtrooms, unless authorized by the presiding judge.

Any person using a PED in violation of this policy may be found in contempt of court and subject to penalties as provided by law.

I repeat, **this announcement pertains only to the Chesterfield J&DR District Court Courthouse.** Once the Standing Order re: Building Rules has been fully endorsed, it will be forwarded immediately. Signage has been posted around the courthouse today, and it is also attached.

Thank you,  
Laura Griffin

**Laura G. Griffin, Clerk of Court**

Chesterfield Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

7000 Lucy Corr Boulevard

Chesterfield, VA 23832

[lgriffin@vacourts.gov](mailto:lgriffin@vacourts.gov)

804.706.2695 *office*

804.717.6043 *fax*



ON SILENT MODE PLEASE

**Chesterfield Juvenile and Domestic  
Relations District Court Policy**

All Portable Electronic Devices must be placed on silent mode and remain silenced while in the Courthouse.

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Use of electronic devices in the courtroom unless allowed by the Judge.
- Taking photographs, audio/video recordings and/or live streaming.

**Any person using an electronic device in violation of the Court's policy may be found in contempt of court and subject to penalties as provided by the law.**



ON SILENT MODE PLEASE

