


**VICINAGE 13 -  
Somerset, Hunterdon & Warren Counties**

**Municipal Courts – Order Restricting Use of Electronic Devices**

It is hereby ORDERED that:

1. Unless authorized in writing by the Assignment Judge, all electronic devices shall be powered off or maintained in silent mode prior to entering any Municipal Court courtroom; and
2. Use of cell phones to conduct phone calls, stream videos, or for other activities that disrupt or interfere with court proceedings is prohibited. However, attorneys, parties, and members of the public may use a cell phone in a courtroom to retrieve or to store information (including notetaking), and to send and receive text and email messages or information, subject to the authority of a judge to terminate activity that is disruptive to a court proceeding, or that otherwise interferes with or is contrary to the administration of justice; and
3. In exceptional circumstances that involve security concerns, the court may further restrict access to and/or use of electronic devices with the approval of the Assignment Judge. That may include requiring that cell phones and other devices are kept out of sight while court is in session, or that devices are powered off; and
4. A person who uses an electronic device while in the Municipal Court courtroom without court approval and in willful violation of this policy may be held in contempt of court, in violation of R. 1:10-1, and may be charged by law enforcement with Criminal Contempt under N.J.S.A. 2C:29-9, which, upon conviction, carries penalties of up to six months in jail and a fine not to exceed \$1,000. Further, any electronic device used in willful violation of this order may be confiscated; and
5. While court business is being conducted at the Municipal Court customer service window, and for the orderly and secure completion of such business, photographing, video and audio recording, and livestreaming of interior court office space is prohibited and the

Municipal Court Administrator shall establish a starting location of the customer service waiting line at a distance of around six (6) feet (to the extent practicable) from the window through appropriate floor markings, line stanchions, and/or signage. All electronic devices shall be powered off or maintained in silent mode prior to entering the service area while court business is being conducted at the window. Nothing in this order shall preclude a Municipal Court official at the Municipal Court customer service window from directing in a particular circumstance that a person refrain from using an electronic device outside of the approximately 6-foot service area while court business is being conducted where the official determines that the use of the device by such person is interfering with the orderly completion of Municipal Court business. Any person who uses an electronic device in violation of this paragraph, and in willful violation of this policy, may be removed from the premises and be subject to sanctions, including but not limited to Criminal Contempt under N.J.S.A. 2C:29-9, which, upon conviction, carries penalties of up to six months in jail and a fine not to exceed \$1,000. Further, any electronic device used in willful violation of this order may be confiscated pending the completion of the Municipal Court business at the window.

  
Kevin M. Shanahan, A.J.S.C.  
Vicinage 13

Dated: August 7, 2024