

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ADAMS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

Administrative Order

Number 10 of 2026

In Re: Rule of Judicial Administration 1910

ORDER OF COURT

AND NOW, this 27th day of August, 2026, pursuant to the authority granted by Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration 1910 and 1952, and Pennsylvania Rule of Criminal Procedure 112, it is hereby Ordered that Adams County Rule of Judicial Administration 1910 is vacated in its entirety and replaced by the enactment of the following rule:

1910. Photography, Recording, Broadcasting, and Electronic Equipment in Judicial Facilities.

- A. The activation, operation, or use of any device capable of capturing, recording, transmitting, or broadcasting a photograph, video, motion picture, or audio is prohibited within a judicial facility and the environs of a judicial facility unless otherwise permitted by this rule.**
- B. Smart/Meta/AI glasses, prescription or non-prescription, with recording capability are prohibited inside the Adams County Courthouse, the Historic Adams County Courthouse, the Human Services Building, and in the offices and courtrooms of the Magisterial District Courts of the 51st Judicial District without prior written permission of the President Judge.**
- C. Definitions.**

Activate, Operate, or Use – The terms activate, operate, or use include but are not limited to any electronic device which is being powered or is in the “on” position regardless of whether the device is in silent mode or otherwise disabled unless the device is completely turned off.

Environs – The environs of a judicial facility include the entire floor on which is located a courtroom, hearing room, jury room, prisoner holding room, Security

Department station, or any court filing office including the Prothonotary's Office, the Clerk of Courts Office, the Domestic Relations Office, and the Department of Probation Services Office. The term also includes any elevator and/or stairwell accessing a judicial facility.

Judicial Facilities – The term includes any courtroom, hearing room, judicial chambers, or Court related offices used by the Court, including Magisterial District Courts, to conduct trials, hearings, or any other court related business including rooms made available to interview witnesses including the environs of such a room.

Recording, Broadcasting, or Electronic Equipment – The terms recording, broadcasting, or electronic equipment include but are not limited to cell phones, laptops, electronic tablets, cameras, tape recorders, video recorders, and electronic devices of any type capable of photographing, recording, broadcasting, or digitally preserving information.

D. Exceptions. The prohibitions set forth in this rule shall not apply to the following:

1. Attorney Exception – Licensed attorneys and their professional assistants conducting business related to the representation of a client provided the device is in the “silent” or “vibrate only” mode when the attorney is in a courtroom or hearing room unless the device is being actively utilized in a proceeding which the attorney is appearing. The exceptions set forth in this section do not authorize the use or operation of an electronic device to capture, record, transmit, or broadcast a photograph, video, motion picture, or audio of a proceeding or person within a judicial facility or its environs.
2. Court Administration Exception – The use of advanced communication technology by Court Administration, an official court reporter, or designee for purposes of recording/transcribing the official court record or conducting

proceedings with offsite counsel, parties, or witnesses in furtherance of directives from the presiding Judge.

3. Emergency Responder Exception – Emergency medical, fire, law enforcement, or other personnel responding to an emergency call within a judicial facility.
4. Employee/Independent Contractor Exception – Employees or independent contractors of the Adams County Court of Common Pleas or Adams County who clearly display an identification badge issued by the County of Adams or is otherwise pre-approved by the Security Director while the employee is acting as an employee/contractor on court/county business provided the device shall have the power switch “off” when the employee enters a courtroom or hearing room unless the courtroom is closed for repairs.
5. Evidence/Equipment Exception – Devices used for the purpose of presenting evidence, or a device which is actual evidence, in any court proceeding actually being conducted at the time of use of the device with the permission of the presiding Judge.
6. Law Enforcement Exception – Law enforcement officers providing proper identification and are on business related to a matter pending before the court and/or meeting with the Office of District Attorney provided the device shall have the power switch “off” while the law enforcement officer is in a courtroom or hearing room. This rule is also inapplicable to County Security Officers acting within the scope of their authority.
7. Magisterial District Court Exception – In a criminal judicial proceeding before a Magisterial District Judge, the Magisterial District Judge, upon request, shall permit the attorney for the Commonwealth, the affiant, or the defendant to record oral communications made during a judicial proceeding as an aid to the preparation of the written record for subsequent use in a case.

Such recording shall not be publicly played or disseminated in any manner unless in a subsequent court proceeding for the litigation in which the recording was made. This exception is limited to the recordation of oral testimony and does not accept or permit the use or operation of an electronic device to capture, record, transmit, or broadcast a photograph, video, motion picture, or audio of a proceeding.

8. Office Exception – The provisions of this rule may be waived by an elected official or department director within the confines of their office space provided the device shall have the power switch “off” when leaving the office and reentering other environs of the judicial facility.
9. Special Permission Exception – The President Judge may, upon request, make exception to the prohibitions contained in this rule under such circumstances and subject to such conditions as the President Judge may prescribe. The presiding Judge in an active court proceeding is authorized to grant exception to this rule to any party as the interests of justice require. The permission shall be limited to the proceeding being conducted and for the sole purpose of allowing the party access to information from an electronic device. The permission shall not authorize the capturing, recording, or broadcasting of a photograph, video, or audio of the proceeding nor shall extend beyond the confines of the courtroom in which the proceeding is being conducted unless the proceeding is a ceremonial proceeding in which the presiding Judge has expressly authorized such actions.
10. Special Proceedings Exception – At the discretion of the presiding Judge, photographing, video or audio recordings, televising, or broadcasting any special proceeding such as a marriage, naturalization, or adoption in a courtroom and subject to directives from the presiding Judge.

11. Statutory Exception – The prohibitions in this rule shall not apply in instances where Pennsylvania statutory law permits the recording of executive or legislative branch proceedings conducted in offices or conference rooms other than courtrooms. Where such exception applies, the electronic device shall only be activated upon entry into the room in which the proceeding is occurring and shall be deactivated and have the power switch “off” before reentry into the other environs of a judicial facility.

E. Penalties.

1. Any violation of this rule may result in a finding of contempt and imposition of any other sanction authorized by law. Additionally, a violation of 18 Pa. C.S.A. § 5103.1 will result in criminal prosecution. The prohibitions set forth in this rule are in addition to all federal, state, and county laws and policies and any rule adopted by the Supreme Court including procedural rules.
2. Any person who violates this rule shall immediately surrender the electronic device to the Adams County Security Department, the Adams County Sheriff's Department, or Court designee for the remainder of their visit. Additionally, the Security Department and/or the Sheriff's Department is authorized to seize from any person any electronic equipment or device used in violation of this rule as necessary for the preservation of evidence in a subsequent contempt/criminal proceeding.

F. The exceptions set forth in this section do not authorize the use or operation of an electronic device to capture, record, transmit, or broadcast a photograph, video, motion picture, or audio of a proceeding or person within a judicial facility or its environs. The exceptions set forth in this section do not shield a person from prosecution under 18 Pa. C.S.A. § 5103.1 for actions in violation of the statutory provision unless authorized by the presiding Judge.

This rule shall become effective after all the provisions of the Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration 103 are met, to include the following:

- a. Two (2) certified copies of this Order together with a computer diskette that complies with the requirement of 1 Pa. Code §13.11 (b), or other compliant format, containing the text of the local rule(s) adopted hereby shall be distributed to the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin;
- b. One copy of this Order shall be forwarded to the Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts via e-mail to adminrules@pacourts.us;
- c. A copy of the proposed local rule(s) shall be published on the 51st Judicial District website;
- d. This Order shall be filed in the Office of the Prothonotary of Adams County and a copy thereof shall be filed with the Adams County Clerk of Courts and the Adams County Law Library for inspection and copying;
- e. The effective date of the local rule(s) shall be 30 days after publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

BY THE COURT,

Thomas R. Campbell

President Judge

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Board of Judges

Executive Assistants to the Board of Judges

All Court and County of Adams Employees/Elected Judicial and Executive Officials

Adams County Bar Association