



Saskatchewan Law Courts Electronic and Wireless Devices Policy

Scope

Definition: “Electronic and wireless devices” includes computers, laptops, tablets, notebooks, cellular phones, smartphones, PDAs, iPods and any other electronic devices.

Application: This policy applies to media and members of the public attending Court of Appeal, Court of Queen’s Bench and Provincial Court court houses throughout the province of Saskatchewan.

Jurors: If you are a juror, the presiding justice will provide you with specific directions which will supersede the directions contained in this policy.

Authority of Judge: Notwithstanding any clause in this policy, the use of electronic and wireless devices in courtrooms is subject to the direction or order of the presiding judge, who retains the discretion to allow or prohibit their possession and use.

Policy

While electronic and wireless devices are permitted in the court house and in courtrooms, **all devices must be turned off in courtrooms.**

Exception: Legal counsel and those members of the media who have been accredited by the Court Services Division of the Ministry of Justice may keep their devices turned on in silent mode and use them to receive and transmit information, provided they are not disruptive to court proceedings. Authorized media will display card identification so that their status is apparent to court personnel, including security staff.

Penalties

Anyone who, in the opinion of the presiding judge, court staff or court security personnel, engages in unacceptable use may be:

- instructed to turn off their electronic device;
- instructed to forfeit their electronic device while in the courtroom;
- asked to leave the courtroom; and/or
- cited for contempt of court, the penalty being at the discretion of the presiding judge.

Definition and Examples of Unacceptable Use:

Unacceptable use anywhere in the court house, including courtrooms, is any use that breaches this policy, causes a disturbance, interferes with court operations or is offensive.

Examples of unacceptable use, as determined by a judge, court staff or court security personnel, are:

- causing interference with court sound systems or other technology, whether deliberate or inadvertent;
- taking photographs or movies of anyone in a courtroom, or anywhere in the court house;
- making an audio recording of proceedings in any courtroom, jury room, chambers or hearing room unless permitted by the presiding judge or by court policy (media may record for the purposes of accuracy);
- in the courtroom or hearing room, any use inconsistent with court business;
- any use that may lead to a breach of privacy or courtroom decorum, or that interferes with the administration of justice.

Note on Availability of Wireless Networking

The Courts take no responsibility for the availability, performance or security of the wireless network or of any device using the network. Troubleshooting and technical support are the sole responsibility of the owner of the electronic device.