

COURTROOM DEMENOR AND CONDUCT



GENERAL

Turn cell phones off. Follow guidelines regarding children. Attorneys may have beverages in courtroom but be cautious about electronic equipment.

Visitors should dress appropriately. No shorts, short skirts, low-cut blouses, sleeveless shirts, hats, hoodies with hood up, bandanas on the head, clothing with profanity or other inappropriate attire are allowed in the courtroom. Visitors should not engage in any distracting activities while sitting in the gallery of the courtroom.

Visitors (non-attorney) and parties should abide by the following:

- A. No magazines, newspapers or other such reading material may be read in the courtroom while court is in session.

- B. There will be no eating, drinking or chewing gum in the courtroom unless the Court has expressly stated otherwise.
- C. There will be no outbursts, disturbances, threats, obscene language, or gestures. Violation of this rule shall result in immediate expulsion and/or direct contempt.
- D. No cameras, video or audio recording equipment, and all other electronic, audio and video devices are not allowed in the courtroom without permission of the Court. Cell phones are allowed but may not be used to record proceedings. Equipment or devices that are used in contravention of these guidelines are subject to search and seizure by the Bailiff;
- E. No filming or videotaping of proceedings in hallways and stairways adjacent to the courtroom without the Court's permission;
- F. All telephones and electronic devices must be turned off before entering the courtroom and must remain off at all times in the courtroom;
- G. No sound recordings of the proceedings shall be permitted except by the official court reporter for the court and no broadcasting of the proceedings shall be permitted;
- H. Visitors are encouraged to not enter or to leave the courtroom while proceedings are in progress. If a visitor's coming and going becomes a distraction, they may be ask to leave the courtroom;
- I. Persons outside the courtroom shall not disrupt or cause any disruption and shall not restrict or impair the movement of persons and attorneys through the halls and/or doors to the courtroom;
- J. No interviews of any persons connected with or participating in the hearings or trial of this case shall be conducted in the courtroom or adjacent hallways.

SECURITY

All courtroom participants must pass through the security station and metal detectors located at the entrance of the courthouse. The carrying of guns and weapons into the courthouse is expressly forbidden under Sec 46.03 paragraph (3) of the Texas

Penal Code. During the security screening process, the security personnel will require all visitors to empty their pockets and place the items in a tray for examination. All items carried into the courthouse will be thoroughly screened before the items are allowed into the courtroom. Visitors should consider this process when deciding what to wear or carry into the courthouse with them.

Participants may be required to provide additional identifying and contact information as necessary. The bailiff will be in charge of courtroom security and may ask individuals who fail to comply with courtroom decorum or rules to leave the courthouse.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Attorneys While in trial or hearings, parties and attorneys may have water or beverages at the counsel table. Attorneys may bring drinks into the courtroom in containers with lids. No food should be brought into the courtroom except by permission of the Court (breaks in trial etc.).

Parties & visitors: Except as noted above, no food or beverages are allowed in the courtroom except water in a spill proof container. Chewing gum and or candy is not allowed in the courtroom. Jurors may bring drinks in spill proof containers.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Visitors and Parties:

All cell phones, pagers and other electronic devices need to be off or in silent mode (not low volume, but silent) while you are in the courtroom. Do not accept cell phone calls while you are in the courtroom. Do not text or engage in any other type of electronic communication from the courtroom without explicit permission to do so by the judge. Do not take photographs or any audio or

visual recordings of the courtroom proceedings without express permission of the judge. Cell phones used in violation of this rule may be confiscated by the court.

Attorney(s):

Attorneys should have all electronic devices turned to the silent mode during hearings and turned off if such use becomes distracting. Do not answer cell phone calls while in the courtroom. Quietly step outside if you must take the call.

RECORDING/MEDIA

No audio, video or photography is allowed in the courtroom or the hallways directly outside the Courtroom without the express approval of the Judge. Recording devices will be confiscated by the court.

CHILDREN IN COURT:

Children should not be brought to the courthouse. Children may not be brought into the courtroom without the consent of the court, except for children being adopted, who may be brought to the courtroom. If the court approves a request for a judge to interview a child in chambers, the child may be brought to the courthouse at the time announced for the interview.

**COURTROOM DEMENOR AND CONDUCT
(CON'T)**



DRESS/ATTIRE:

NO ONE will enter the court room wearing cutoffs, shorts, tank tops, swim wear, obscenity on clothing, house slippers, halter tops, dirty clothing, micro mini-skirts, workout garments, mid-riff shirts, hats, sunglasses (unless prescription), inappropriate jeans, shorts, or other inappropriate clothing are permitted in the courtroom. Appropriate shoes must be worn. No slippers, Crocs etc. will be permitted. Shirts shall be appropriately buttoned. Attorneys are responsible for informing their clients of the Court's dress code.

ASSISTANCE ANIMAL/SERVICE ANIMAL:

Only Assistance Animals or Service Animals as defined in both the Texas Disability Laws and the American Disabilities Act are permitted in the Courtroom. "Assistance Animal" and "Service Animals" means an animal that is specially trained or equipped to help a person with a disability.

