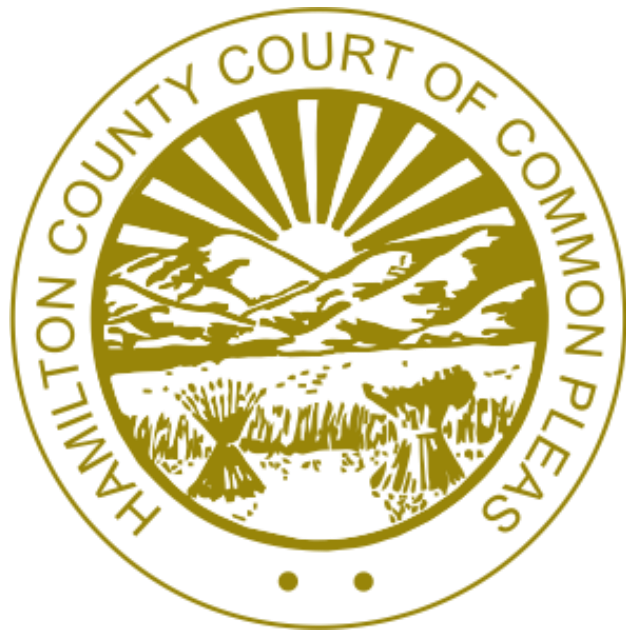


**HAMILTON COUNTY
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
GENERAL DIVISION**



MEDIA GUIDE

JUDGE: CHRISTOPHER A. WAGNER

COURTROOM: 330

PURPOSE

Both the Supreme Court of Ohio and the Hamilton County Court of Common pleas have established rules governing media coverage of courtroom proceedings. The media and the public have a right of access to the justice system.

The purpose of this media guide is to provide a structure for working media representatives and court personnel to facilitate an atmosphere of open communication and reasonable accommodation while maintaining appropriate courtroom decorum and protecting the rights of the parties involved in each case.

RULES

This Guide follows Rule 12 of the Ohio Rules of Superintendence established by the Supreme Court of Ohio as well as Local Rule 30 and Local Rule 33 established by the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas.

OHIO RULES OF SUPERINTENDENCE RULE 12:

CONDITIONS FOR BROADCASTING AND PHOTOGRAPHING COURT PROCEEDINGS

HAMILTON COUNTY LOCAL RULE 30:

MEDIA COVERAGE OF COURTROOM PROCEEDINGS

HAMILTON COUNTY LOCAL RULE 33 (E)(5):

HAMILTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE SECURITY AND USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

CELL PHONES

There will be no cell phone use permitted in the courtroom. No phone calls, pictures, video, or audio will be permitted. Violations of this rule will result in confiscation of the device, removal from the Courtroom and possible contempt of court.

TRIAL JUDGE

As outlined and restricted below, this Court will permit the broadcasting or recording by electronic means and the taking of photographs in court proceedings open to the public, upon request, if the Judge determines that to do so would not distract the parties, impair the dignity of the proceedings or otherwise materially interfere with the achievement of a fair trial. Both the request for permission and the ruling on the request must be in writing and made a part of the record of the proceedings. Please see the attached application and entry.

The filming, videotaping, recording, or taking of photographs of victims or witnesses who object shall not be permitted. This is consistent with the authority of the Judge to control the conduct of the proceedings before the Court, the First Amendment rights of the media and the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendment rights of the accused.

MEDIA DEFINED

Traditional media such as newspaper, television and radio are relatively easy to identify and define (see Local Rule 30 for complete definition). However, with the advent of the internet, a new type of media has developed. This “new media,” is majority internet based and not generally associated with television, radio or newspaper. “New media” shall be defined as:

An online organization which was a previously established, independent site that contains regularly updated original news content above and beyond links, forums, troubleshooting tips and reader contributions; said content is: (1) thoroughly reviewed by an independent editor before publication; (2) has

readership of more than 1,000 hits per month; and (3) has previously covered the judicial branch. Fan sites, web logs and personal web sites do not qualify as “new media.”

It is the responsibility of the requesting online organization to show proof that it meets the definition of “new media.” In order for members of the “new media” to obtain media access to the Courtroom, links to two bylined articles clearly displaying publication titles and publication dates within the past six months must be submitted. Additionally, the requesting applicant must submit: (1) a copy of the media outlet’s current masthead with the media representative’s name and title appearing in it; (2) a business card with the applicant’s name, title and media outlet’s logo; **or** (3) an official letter of assignment from the “new media” outlet. Finally, proof that the media outlet has, within the past six months, previously covered either the judicial branch or the case before the Court must also be provided.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES FOR MEDIA

Media members are allowed to use their cell phones and laptops in the Courtroom for sending and receiving written, electronic information only. They are not to be used for voice or video calls. Any devices not being used for permitted purposes must be turned off or switched to silent or vibrate mode. The privilege of cell phones use may be revoked at any time if such use becomes disruptive in any way. **Use of cell phone cameras is absolutely prohibited.** Other than cameras operated by the media pool photographers as outlined below, no devices capable of taking pictures or capturing sound may be used inside the courtroom. Such devices include, but are not limited to: cell phones, cameras, digital voice recorder or similar technical devices.

All permitted devices must have virtual or silent keyboards. Power for these devices will not be provided in the courtroom.

COURTROOM CAMERAS

Photography (still or video) of any member of the jury is STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

Pooling of photographic resources is required and it will be sole responsibility of the media representative to make those arrangements. All media wishing to participate in

the television pool must submit media requests with the Court 72-hours prior to the start of the proceedings they wish to attend.

A single video pool photographer, as selected by participating media, will be allowed to occupy a designated area of the Courtroom. Pooled footage will provide video/audio pool coverage from the Courtroom to the designated media room. Only authorized media will be permitted to utilize the media room. All electronic devices are permitted in the media room where the trial proceedings can be live-streamed, enabling the media to tweet, blog or use social media for reporting.

Camera and microphone location setup will be overseen by Courtroom staff at the direction of the Judge. Additional television cameras will not be permitted in the Courtroom during the trial or jury selections.

A still pool photographer, as selected by the media, will also be allowed to occupy a designated area of the Courtroom. All still photography must be applied with a minimum level of distraction. No flash photography will be permitted. Additional still cameras will not be permitted

SEATING IN COURTROOM DURING COURT PROCEEDINGS

Seating in the courtroom is limited to 54 seats. Five will be reserved for Court staff/security. Four seats will be reserved for prosecution and defense attorney support staff. Seven seats will be reserved for family and friends of the prosecution and defense.

The Court may reserve seats for media representatives, two of which will be reserved for the pool representatives. Remaining seating is for the public only on a first come basis. Standing during the proceeding will not be allowed.

Members of the media who may need to exit the Courtroom should do so in a way that limits disruption of the hearing. The Court will discourage large groups from leaving the Courtroom during the proceedings and may limit exits of the Courtroom to scheduled breaks. This may be modified on a case by case basis.

Media representatives who exit the Courtroom will need to wait until the next natural break in the proceedings to re-enter the Courtroom and take their seats.

OUTSIDE THE COURTROOM

Absolutely no photography (video or still) will be allowed outside the Courtroom or within the Courthouse. No interviews shall be held inside or outside the Courtroom.

Anyone violating this or any restriction will be subject to the discipline by the Court, including but not limited to the Court's contempt authority, immediate removal from the Courthouse, prohibition from returning to the courtroom and loss of any media privileges for the duration of the trial or proceedings.

COURTROOM DECORUM

The court has set forth rules of conduct and guidelines designed to govern the expectations of the people involved in the trial and those observing the trial so that the decorum of an open court will be maintained throughout the proceedings.

The court schedules are tentative and can be modified daily. Specific dates for Jury Selection and Trial Schedule will be discussed on the record. All sessions are scheduled to begin at 9:00 am and conclude between 4:00 – 4:30 pm with a lunch recess at approximately noon.

COURTHOUSE SECURITY

All persons entering the courthouse must pass through electronic security devices and submit any and all equipment for search at the discretion of security officers and or court deputies. Media members are asked to refrain from bringing excess bags or backpacks into the courthouse. You are asked to familiarize yourself with Local Rule 33 Hamilton County Courthouse Security.