



Washtenaw County Trial Court

101 E. Huron St., P.O. Box 8645 Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645

Carol Kuhnke
Circuit Court Judge

(734) 222-3386
Fax (734) 222-3037

Washtenaw County Trial Court
Comments Related to Proposed Changes to MCR 8.115

August 29, 2019

Washtenaw County Trial Court policy allows attorneys to carry portable electronic devices into the courthouse, but members of the public are precluded from doing so. We have this policy because members of the public are not aware of the restriction noted in AO 1989-1. Our policy also addresses the proliferation of social media in our society and the inevitable use of in-court video to attack others or post video clips out of context of an entire court proceeding. In addition, and most importantly, it is our belief that a judge's attention should be focused on the important matters before them and not on "policing" the courtroom to see who is taking unauthorized electronic recording of those events.

We do, however, support a statewide standard regarding this topic so that attorneys and members of the public are not faced with conflicting sets of rules from court to court. For that reason, we support a statewide standard that allows attorneys to enter a courthouse with electronic recording devices, but excludes members of the public from doing so unless written permission has been granted in compliance with AO 1989-1, or as ordered/permitted by a judge.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carol Kuhnke".

Chief Judge Carol Kuhnke
For the Court