

**United States District Court
for the District of Puerto Rico**

Local Rules

- **Civil • Admiralty • Criminal**



**Effective with amendments through
February 28, 2022**

RULE 83F
SECURITY

(a) Courthouse Security.

(1) Screening and Search. All persons entering federal courthouse facilities in this district and all items carried by them are subject to appropriate screening and search by the United States marshal or any other designated law enforcement officer. Persons may be requested to provide identification and to state the nature of their business in the courthouse. Anyone refusing to cooperate with these security measures shall be denied entrance to the courthouse.

(2) Firearms and Other Weapons. Law enforcement personnel not employed by the United States marshal shall deposit any firearm or other weapon with a deputy marshal or any other law enforcement officer designated by the marshal, directly upon entering federal courthouse facilities, unless otherwise specifically authorized by the marshal.

No firearms or other weapons are permitted in any courtroom, except when carried by the United States marshal, deputy United States marshals or task force officers or court security officers under contract with the United States marshals service, or when used as exhibits. Upon entering the courthouse, the custodian of the firearm or other weapon exhibit must submit it to the United States marshal for a determination that the firearm or other weapon exhibit is inoperative.

In accordance with federal law, civilians, including attorneys practicing before the court, are not permitted to bring any kind of firearm into the Federico Degetau Federal Building, the Clemente Ruiz-Nazario United States Courthouse, or the José V. Toledo United States Courthouse, or the Luis A. Ferré United States Courtroom in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

(b) Photographing; Broadcasting; Televising; Recording.

(1) Photographic, Broadcasting and Recording Equipment. The taking of photographs and the use of radio, television or other recording or broadcasting equipment anywhere inside the courthouses or in any leased space occupied by the district court, the bankruptcy court, the U.S. Probation Office or the United States Marshal, are strictly prohibited. For the purpose of this rule, the area around the courtrooms shall include the Judges' chambers, halls, passageways and stairways on those floors of the building on which court proceedings are conducted; elevators; the clerk's office; the marshal's office, and all areas encompassed within the courthouse building which communicate with the entrances to the courthouse.

Photographing, recording (audio or video), broadcasting, transmission or televising of court proceedings is not allowed. This disposition is extensive to all attorneys and legal aides who may be using cellular telephones or any other electronic device with built-in features allowing for the taking of photographs, audio or video recording and scanning documents.

(2) Exceptions. A judge may authorize broadcasting, televising, recording or taking photographs in the courtroom or adjacent areas, however, during naturalization proceedings, admissions to the bar, or other ceremonial or special proceedings.

The use of electronic, photographic and recording equipment may be allowed in any courtroom as a means for presentation of evidence or for the perpetuation of the record of the proceedings in court, videoconferencing, electronic case filing and access, for security purposes, for purposes of judicial administration, or in accordance with any pilot program allowed by the Judicial Conference of the United States.

(c) Cellular Phones, Tablets, Tape or Digital Recorders, and Laptop Computers.

(1) Authorized Court Personnel. Only authorized court personnel may possess cellular phones, tablets, laptops or other mobile devices in court facilities. The United States attorney and his or her assistants are authorized to possess cellular phones, laptops and tablets in court facilities by virtue of their federal law enforcement status pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 115(c)(1), in the discharge of their official government duties, upon a demonstrated need to the presiding judge. Those devices shall be switched to their “silent mode” when brought into or possessed in any courtroom or judge’s chamber, however, unless specific advance authorization to the contrary is given by a judge. Those devices shall be switched to their “silent mode” when brought into or possessed in or during mediation sessions unless specific advance authorization to the contrary is given by the mediator in the proceedings.

(2) Members of the Bar. Any attorney permitted to practice law before the court may bring cellular phones, personal electronic devices, tablets and laptop computers by presenting a valid district court identification card or *pro hac vice* order.

(3) Other Persons. All other persons are prohibited from bringing any cellular phone, laptop, laptop computer, or similar device, tape or digital recorder into any federal courthouse or courtroom facilities.