

POLICY ON THE POSSESSION AND USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC,
VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDING EQUIPMENT IN THE HATO REY
FEDERAL COMPLEX, INCLUDING THE FEDERICO DEGETAU
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING

(Amended on May 26, 2026)

This policy sets forth the Facilities Security Committee's policy concerning the possession and use of photographic, audio and video recording equipment in the Hato Rey Federal Complex ("Complex"), including the Federico Degetau Federal Office Building ("FOB") in Hato Rey. Photographic, audio and video recording equipment include, but are not limited to, photographic, broadcasting and video cameras of any kind or model, audio recorders of any kind or model, smart watches, smart glasses, and any wearable electronic devices capable of recording audio, capturing photographs or video, livestreaming, transmitting data, accessing wireless networks, or otherwise functioning as communication or surveillance devices.

The policy for possession and use of photographic, audio and video recording equipment in the Clemente Ruiz Nazario United States Courthouse or any other District Court of Puerto Rico space within the FOB will continue to be governed by the Guide for Judiciary Policy, Vol. 10, Ch. 5, Local Rule 83F(b), and any applicable Standing Orders issued by the Court.

1. General Policy

No one may bring photographic, audio and video recording equipment beyond the Complex's visitor pedestrian security checkpoint, located at the Carlos Chardón Avenue. This prohibition includes smart watches, smart glasses, and similar wearable electronic devices with recording, photographic, video, audio, transmission, artificial intelligence, wireless communication, or internet connectivity capabilities, unless the individual qualifies under an exception set forth in this policy.

If an individual carrying a prohibited device insists on entering the Complex, he or she shall be informed that the device must be returned to his or her vehicle before he or she can be allowed past the security checkpoint.

The Complex, the United States Marshals Service (“USMS”), the Federal Protective Service (“FPS”), Court Security Officers (“CSOs”), and tenant agencies shall not accept custody of, store, or otherwise secure prohibited devices at the security checkpoint or elsewhere within the Complex or FOB.

2. Smart Glasses Prohibited

Smart glasses or any wearable eyewear device with recording, photographic, video, audio recording, transmission, artificial intelligence, wireless communication, or internet connectivity capabilities shall be strictly prohibited within the Hato Rey Federal Complex and the Federico Degetau Federal Office Building.

The prohibition on smart glasses shall apply to all individuals, including federal employees, contractors, attorneys, law enforcement personnel, members of the media, visitors, and members of the public.

2.1. Prescription Eyewear Exception

If the Court Security Officer or security personnel at the screening checkpoint encounter an individual seeking access to the Complex or FOB with prescription eyewear that appears to contain electronic, recording, transmission, artificial intelligence, wireless communication, or smart-device capabilities, the screening officer shall encourage the individual to change and use substitute eyeglasses prior to entry. When not feasible, the security officer will contact a designated tenant agency official for the agency or office the individual intends to visit to facilitate access and discuss if any limitations or restrictions on entry into the Complex or FOB are necessary.

3. Exceptions

No photographic, audio and video recording equipment are to be carried into the Complex or the FOB, unless the owner is specifically authorized or qualifies under any of the exceptions listed in Subsections 3.1 through 3.3 of this policy.

Further, any person who brings photographic, audio and video recording equipment into the Complex or FOB under an exception:

(a) must avoid making unnecessary noise with the photographic, audio and video recording equipment,

(b) cannot lend or share it to an unauthorized person,

(c) may not use it in a manner that disrupts the operation of any tenants within the FOB,

(d) may only take photographs, broadcast, livestream, video record, audio record, or transmit material for which authorization has been granted,

(e) may not bring it into any courtroom of the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico, unless otherwise authorized by the presiding judicial officer or applicable Court policy.

Any photographic, audio and video recording equipment carried beyond the Complex and FOB security checkpoint(s) based on an exception remains subject to inspection at any time by law enforcement officials.

3.1. Federal Protective Service or Tenant Agency Permission

A tenant agency official may request access for photographic, audio and video recording equipment beyond the Complex and FOB security checkpoints by submitting a request document to both FPS and USMS. The request document must specify the nature of the event to be recorded or photographed, purpose of the recording, timeframe during which such permit or authorization would be valid, a general description of the equipment to be used, and the identity of those who will operate the equipment.

If authorization is granted, the requesting tenant agency is responsible for escorting the authorized individuals with the photographic, audio and video recording equipment while they are within the Hato Rey Complex.

Should USMS and/or FPS officials express concerns over granting the tenant agency's request for access of photographic, audio and video recording equipment, the matter must be brought to the attention of the Designated Official of the Facilities Security Committee, who shall have final authority over the matter.

3.2. Employees

Any federal agency employee who works in the FOB or the Clemente Ruiz Nazario Courthouse, any attorney of the United States Attorney's Office or the Federal Defender's Office, or any federal law enforcement officer on official business may bring authorized smart watches or other authorized electronic devices beyond the Complex and FOB security checkpoints by presenting valid agency identification.

3.3. Media and Press Members

Any member of a recognized press or media outlet or organization with a valid District Court of Puerto Rico press identification who wishes to access beyond the Complex and FOB security checkpoints with photographic, audio and video recording equipment must follow the procedure set forth in Section 3.1 of this policy.

Press and media coverage of matters related to cases before the District Court of Puerto Rico must also abide by the terms of the Court's May 21, 2013, Amended Standing Order, In Re: Major, Widely Known or Publicized Cases, Misc. No. 08-214.

4. Suspension of Privileges

By designation of the Facilities Security Committee, FPS and/or USMS may suspend at any time and for just cause, any person's privileges granted under this policy.