



VIGO CIRCUIT AND SUPERIOR COURTS **NEWS MEDIA POLICY**

1) Scope

- a. Consistent with Rule 2.17 of the Indiana Code of Judicial Conduct, and subject to the approval of the presiding judge, all civil and criminal proceedings may be eligible for broadcast by the news media with the exception of proceedings closed to the public, either by state statute or Indiana Supreme Court rules.

2) Definitions

- a. Broadcast - Broadcast means any broadcasting or recording of in-person court proceedings by the news media using still photographic, video, or audio equipment by members of the news media. Broadcast also includes re-broadcast of live streamed proceedings.
- b. News Media - News media is defined as persons employed or representing a newspaper, periodical, press association, radio station, television station, or wire service and covered by Ind. Code § 34-46-4-1
- c. Proceeding - Proceeding means any trial, hearing, motion, argument, or other matter held in open court which the public is entitled to attend.
- d. Presiding Judge – Presiding Judge means the judge, magistrate, commissioner, referee, or any other judicial officer who is scheduled to preside or is presiding over the proceeding in the Vigo County Circuit and Superior Courts.

3) Procedure

- a. The "BROADCAST REQUEST FORM" shall be used as the means for requesting and must be emailed to request.courts@vigocounty.in.gov. The request will be forwarded to the presiding judge and shared with counsel of record and parties who appear without counsel.

- b. All requests shall be made in writing on the form provided by the Court and filed with the presiding judge at least seven (7) business days prior to the court proceeding.
- c. Members of the news media who are given permission to broadcast any portion of court proceedings may be required to check in at the court office on the day of the proceeding and may be required to wear media identification provided by the court.
- d. If the presiding judge permits members of the news media to broadcast a court proceeding, the presiding judge shall post notice in the courtroom as required by Rule 2.17.

4) Judicial Discretion

- a. The presiding judge has discretion to approve or deny a request for broadcast of a court proceeding. If the judge allows broadcast, the judge has discretion to interrupt or stop the coverage if he or she deems the interruption or stoppage appropriate. The judge also has discretion to limit or terminate the broadcast at any time during the proceedings if the judge determines that these rules have been violated by the news media.

5) Decorum

- a. The presiding judge has discretion to determine courtroom decorum. All news media personnel shall be properly attired, wear identification, and maintain proper decorum while in the courtroom.
- b. News media personnel are to be unobtrusive to the judicial process and may enter and leave the courtroom only prior to the commencement of proceedings, during recess, or after adjournment, and may not move about the courtroom during court proceedings.
- c. News media personnel may not conduct interviews in the courtroom.

6) Permissible Equipment and Operators

- a. The presiding judge has discretion to determine the quantity, type(s), and location(s) of broadcast equipment permitted in the courtroom. Video cameras, still cameras, and audio recording equipment must be unobtrusive and not produce distracting light or sound.
- b. Media equipment must not be placed within or removed from the courtroom except prior to the commencement or after adjournment of proceedings each day, or during a designated break period.
- c. Members of the media seeking to use any special equipment, including but not limited to cameras on tripods, audio equipment, etc. shall contact court staff in advance to gain entry to the courtroom and set up equipment.

- d. The judge has the discretion to require pool coverage in the event that more than 1 request has been made for the day.

7) Limitations

- a. Audio or video recording of a conference between an attorney and client, or among co-counsel, counsel and opposing counsel, or among attorneys and the judge during bench conferences is prohibited.
- b. There shall be no filming, videotaping, recording, or photographing of jurors or potential jurors.
- c. There shall be no filming, videotaping, recording, or photographing of counsel's table or any materials on counsel's table including, but not limited to, computers/computer screens, notes, files, or other trial materials.
- d. Prior to the rendition of the verdict, a criminal defendant may not be photographed or otherwise recorded in restraints while in the courtroom.
- e. Members of the general public are **PROHIBITED** from broadcasting court proceedings.

8) Revocation of Permission

- a. Upon failure of any media representative to comply with the conditions prescribed by this policy or the judge, the judge may revoke the permission for broadcast or photograph the court proceedings.