

**AMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER GOVERNING PROCEEDINGS OF
GENERAL MEDIA INTEREST AND PROCEDURES FOR
SPECIAL INTEREST/HIGH PROFILE PROCEEDINGS**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article V, Section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution and section 43.26, Florida Statutes, the chief judge of each judicial circuit is charged with the authority and the power to do everything necessary to promote the prompt and efficient administration of justice; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court has promulgated rules entitled “Technological Coverage of Judicial Proceedings”; and

WHEREAS, media coverage of public judicial proceedings is subject at all times to the authority of the presiding judge to: (i) control the conduct of proceedings before the court; (ii) ensure decorum and prevent distractions; and (iii) ensure the fair administration of justice in the pending cause; and

WHEREAS, special interest/high visibility proceedings require procedures and special accommodations to ensure full access without compromising the right of any litigant to a fair and orderly trial; and

WHEREAS, the presiding judge has the authority to determine whether the case he or she is presiding over is a special interest/high profile case and to determine whether to invoke the procedures established by this Order;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Belvin Perry, Jr., pursuant to the authority vested in me as Chief Judge of the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida under Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215 and 2.450, hereby order that, effective **immediately**:

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL MEDIA INCLUDING COVERAGE OF SPECIAL INTEREST/HIGH PROFILE PROCEEDINGS:

(a) All representatives of the media must exhibit media credentials at all times.

(b) All representatives of the media must read this Administrative Order and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.450 governing technological coverage of judicial proceedings.

(c) All representatives of the media must exhibit proper courtroom decorum, dress appropriately, no eating or gum chewing, and place pagers and cell phones in silent mode.

(d) As outlined in Rule 2.450, only one video camera and operator, one still camera and operator, and one audio recording device and operator are permitted to cover a court proceeding. Additional cameras and recording devices, including those not turned on or recording, must remain outside the courtroom. Use of laptop computers in the courtroom is permitted provided that they operate silently on the lap of the user and do not take up additional seating space. Laptops must operate on battery power. Cabling of extension cords and power supplies is prohibited in the courtroom. All reporters and media personnel may witness open proceedings provided there is available seating in the courtroom. Unless otherwise specified by the presiding judge, seating for members of the media is on a first-come, first-served basis.

(e) Media access to a courtroom is granted at the time the deputy opens the courtroom to the general public. All media equipment is subject to search by court deputies at anytime. All set-up and breakdown of cameras and recording devices must be done when court is not in session or during breaks. Courtroom video cameras must be operated from a tripod. Cameras and recording devices must operate silently and not produce distracting light. Photographers must position themselves near the courtroom media panel unless otherwise designated by the judge. Media representatives shall not engage in any movement or discussions during proceedings that attracts undue attention.

(f) For court proceedings held outside of the courthouse, such as jury viewings of the scene of

the crime, the media shall comply with the instructions of the presiding judge and the Orange or Osceola County Sheriff's Offices.

(g) Assignment of a video and/or still pool camera is the sole responsibility of the media. The video pool camera operator must provide a BNC cable to feed signal into the courtroom media panel to serve as a pool camera. All pool audio is provided by the courtroom microphones. Placement or use of additional microphones is prohibited without prior approval of the presiding judge. Additional camera lighting is also prohibited in the courtroom.

(h) In the event that only one media entity is present in the courtroom to capture video images of any proceeding, regardless of whether any other media entity is present at the courthouse facilities, that entity must provide a BNC cable and connect to the media panel in the event that other media arrive after proceedings commence.

(i) Use of portable signal distribution systems (e.g. portable microwave systems) is prohibited within the courthouse facility.

(j) Media personnel may not cover "side bar" or "bench" conferences. There shall be no recording or broadcast of conferences that occur in court between attorneys and their clients, between co-counsel of a client, or between counsel and the presiding judge held at the bench. Interviews of jurors after their release from service is at the discretion of the individual juror.

(k) So as not to interfere with court proceedings or with a litigant or interested party's rights, no interviews shall be permitted in the presence of the jury or any member thereof. No interviews shall be permitted within any courthouse facility which unreasonably interferes with the safety, security, or movement of persons in any courtroom, doorway, hallway, and other areas of any courthouse facility, or which disrupts any court proceeding. Additionally, media personnel shall not station themselves or their equipment in public areas of the courthouse in any manner that unreasonably interferes with the

safety, security, or movement of persons or which is disruptive to any court proceeding.

(l) A media room (room #230 in the Orange County Courthouse and room #1905 of the Osceola County Courthouse) will be available to credentialed media personnel during regular business hours. Use of this room and its distribution feeds is on a first come basis. Media representatives are expected to utilize this room for professional business only.

(m) At the Orange County Courthouse, a media pedestal for connection to “live trucks” is available at the courtyard semicircle located adjacent to Orange Avenue. Media vehicles may only park in the outside lane of the circle (i.e. the lane closest to the courthouse). Vehicles parked in the lane farthest from the courthouse, on sidewalks, or along Orange Avenue are subject to being towed. At the Osceola County Courthouse, a media pedestal is provided off Patrick Street with parking available in the public parking spaces on Patrick Street. At the Orange County Booking and Release Center, a pedestal is located in the parking lot outside the main entrance with limited parking available. At the Thomas S. Kirk Juvenile Justice Center no media pedestal is available. Media representatives interested in covering proceedings at this facility must arrange among themselves to share pool video footage, photographs, and audio recordings following the event. Media cabling and equipment cannot cross or block vehicle lanes or walkways at any courthouse facility.

(n) Media representatives wishing to utilize the Court’s infrastructure in Orange County to send/receive audio and video signals must contact Court Administration’s Audio/Visual Department at least one (1) hour prior to the court event to ensure timely routing of signal. Requests for signal routing should be made to 407-836-0522. Media personnel should leave their name, contact number, and the requested signal path on the automated system, which will then page the on-call engineer to fill the request. In Osceola County signal routing requests may be made by calling 407-742-2488.

II. PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL INTEREST/HIGH PROFILE PROCEEDINGS:

(a) The Chief Judge, independently, or at the request of the administrative or trial judge assigned to preside over a proceeding of great public interest, may instruct Court Administration to implement the Special Interest/High Profile Procedures set forth in this Administrative Order.

(b) Upon implementation of these procedures, Court Administration will, as soon as practicable, convene a meeting of interested media representatives for the purpose of creating a media committee to establish protocols for the specific case.

(c) The committee shall consist of at least one print media representative, one television broadcast media representative, and one audio broadcast representative, as well as a member of Court Administration who will continue to act as a liaison between the Court and the media for the duration of the case. Additionally, representatives from facilities, court operations, the Clerk of Court's Office, the Court Audio/Visual Department, and local law enforcement may be asked to sit on the committee as deemed necessary.

(d) The duties of the media committee shall include: Selection of a media representative to act as a liaison between the media and the Court for the duration of the case; designation of the pool camera positions in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.450; evaluation of parking needs and availability and, if necessary, facilitate a lottery system for media parking; evaluation of available courtroom seating and, if necessary, facilitate a lottery system for media seating in the courtroom; determination of a process for dissemination of information to include timely access to examine and photograph submitted evidence; and identification of other special needs regarding media credentials, access through courthouse security, staging of equipment, laptops in the courtroom, additional power requirements, and any other issue.

(e) At all times, the procedures set forth in this Administrative Order are subject to the authority of the presiding judge, and when warranted, these procedures may be modified to control the conduct of pending proceedings, ensure the fair administration of justice, or ensure public safety.

Administrative Order No. 07-96-19 is vacated and set aside and has been incorporated and/or amended herein.

DONE AND ORDERED at Orlando, Florida, this 21st day of August, 2008.

_____/s/_____
Belvin Perry, Jr.
Chief Judge

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