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Melissa Hurst
Circuit Clerk COLES COUNTY, ILLINOIS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
COLES COUNTY, ILLINOIS

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2026 – 1
GOVERNING EXTENDED MEDIA COVERAGE
IN THE COLES COUNTY COURTHOUSE

26-CA-3

The Circuit Court for Coles County in the Fifth Judicial Circuit of Illinois adopts the following Administrative Order regarding extended media coverage in the courtrooms of the Coles County Courthouse:

WHEREAS, the Illinois Supreme Court adopted a policy, effective January 1, 2026, allowing and governing media coverage of public court proceedings in all Illinois trial courts with audio and/or visual broadcasting and recording equipment [extended media coverage], noting that while public access to court proceedings is guaranteed by the United States and State of Illinois Constitutions and integral in ensuring the trust, confidence, and transparency of our judicial system, there is no corresponding right to record, broadcast, photograph, or livestream court proceedings;

WHEREAS, the Illinois Supreme Court, in its Policy on Extended Media Coverage in the Circuit Courts of Illinois, provided that extended media coverage shall always be subject to the discretion of the judge presiding over the proceeding and not disrupt, distract, or interfere with the solemnity, decorum, and dignity of the court making decisions that affect the life, liberty, and property of the citizens of Coles County; and

WHEREAS, this Administrative Order is adopted to provide extended media coverage guidance to those judges conducting trials in the Circuit Court for Coles County, specifically with respect to their power, authority, and responsibility over the proceeding to: **(a)** control the conduct of any proceeding; **(b)** maintain decorum and prevent distractions; **(c)** guarantee the safety of the courtroom, including parties, witnesses, and jurors; and **(d)** ensure the fair and impartial administration of justice, all in conformity with the Illinois Supreme Court Policy for Extended Media Coverage in the Circuit Courts.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:

1. The provisions of Administrative Order 2022-CA-1 pertaining to the use of portable electronic devices in the Coles County Courthouse [the Courthouse] are hereby amended and supplemented, and to the extent inconsistent herewith superseded.

2. **Interpretation.** The provisions of this Administrative Order shall be construed to supplement and not conflict with the Illinois Supreme Court Policy on Extended Media Coverage in the Circuit Courts of Illinois, and with the Local Rules of the Fifth Judicial Circuit. All Media Coordinators and Extended Media Coverage participants shall be deemed to have knowledge of the provisions of said Supreme Court Policy, this Administrative Order, and the general rules which govern the Courthouse. By the submission of a Request for and participation in

Extended Media Coverage, the Media Coordinator and all agents of the News Media covering a court proceeding acknowledge and agree to abide by all applicable provisions of this Administrative Order and any Extended Media Coverage Order entered pursuant thereto. The Trial Judge or the Presiding Judge may limit or terminate Extended Media Coverage on the finding of any violation of the provisions of this Administrative Order or the Extended Media Coverage Order.

3. **Authority of Trial Judge.** Extended Media Coverage shall be subject, at all times, to the authority of the Trial Judge in the covered court proceeding.

4. **Conduct of Court Proceedings.** Nothing in this Administrative Order shall limit or restrict the power, authority, or responsibility of the Presiding Judge and Trial Judge presiding over the case to: **(a)** control the conduct of the proceedings; **(b)** maintain decorum and prevent distractions in the courtroom; **(c)** provide for the safety of the courtroom and all its participants; and **(d)** ensure the fair and impartial administration of justice in the case.

5. **Definitions.**

   A. **"Court Media Liaison"** is the Court Administrator for Coles County or a designee of the Court Administrator approved by the Presiding Judge, and who facilitates Extended Media Coverage requests.

   B. **"Court Proceeding(s)"** include all public trials, hearings or other proceedings conducted in the circuit court whether in person or by videoconference, except those specifically excluded by the provisions of this Administrative Order.

   C. **"Extended Media Coverage"** means any media electronic recording or broadcasting of court proceedings by the use of audio/video recording, television, radio, photographic, or livestreaming equipment for the purpose of gathering and disseminating news to the public.

   D. **"Judge"** or **"Trial Judge"** means the circuit or associate judge presiding over the court proceeding.

   E. **"Media Coordinator"** means a member of the News Media who has requested Extended Media Coverage, or in the case of more than one (1) media person/organization requesting Extended Media Coverage of a particular court proceeding, a representative chosen by all of the News Media requesting Extended Media Coverage of that proceeding. The Media Coordinator shall be approved by the Presiding Judge or the Trial Judge. The Media Coordinator shall report to and work with the Court Media Liaison, Presiding Judge, and Trial Judge, or with their designees, in any court proceeding with Extended Media

Coverage. The Media Coordinator shall make arrangements with the participating News Media organizations to schedule the Extended Media Coverage, including setup; organize the content sharing (pooling) obligations; and review with participating News Media members the provisions of this Administrative Order and other local rules and policies, as well as any specific rules or restrictions imposed by the Trial Judge or Presiding Judge in the Extended Media Coverage Order, including site-specific equipment requirements; and ensure the provisions of this Administrative Order and other local rules, policies, and orders, including the Extended Media Coverage Order are followed by all participating News Media members. In the event a Media Coordinator is not available for a particular session of a court proceeding, the Trial Judge may limit or deny Extended Media Coverage at that proceeding, or may appoint an individual from among the present participating News Media members to serve as a temporary Media Coordinator for the session.

F. "**Media Requestor**" means someone who has submitted an Extended Media Coverage Request and meets the definition of News Media as defined in Section 5(G) *infra*.

G. "**News Media**" in general means established news gathering and reporting persons, agencies, and organizations and their representatives whose function is to inform the public, including newspapers or other periodicals issued at regular intervals whether in print or electronic format; news services whether in print or electronic format; radio stations; television stations; television networks; community antenna television services; or persons or organizations that, in a professional capacity, otherwise produce news content aimed at informing the public. The Trial Judge or Presiding Judge, in determining whether a Requestor of Extended Media Coverage fits the definition of News Media for a particular proceeding, should consider whether:

(a) the Requestor has a personal connection to the court proceeding;
(b) the Requester regularly publishes news or reports to the public;
(c) the Requester's dissemination of news or reports is broad and public;
(d) the Requester regularly covers court proceedings;
(e) the Requester's content is neutral and fact-based reporting of information rather than commentary, advocacy, political or opinion oriented and driven;
(f) the Requester, in presenting content, acts in an informational rather than participatory role;
(g) the Requester follows journalistic oversight, standards, and practices, *e.g.*, editing, fact-checking, attribution;
(h) the Requester is subject to, or its content has a demonstrated history of adherence to institutional safeguards common to established news organizations;
(i) the Requestor is a member of a news/media trade or industry organization;

(j) the Requestor's content and editorial processes have a demonstrated history promoting accountability and adherence to extended media coverage policies, rules, and content-sharing (pooling) obligations;

(k) the Requestor's content has a demonstrated history that is mindful of protecting rights to a fair trial, rather than posing security concerns and fairness risks, including juror exposure to extrajudicial commentary or mischaracterization or selective presentation of testimony; and

(l) the Requester's content has a demonstrated history consisting principally of opinion, advocacy, or real-time commentary posing a risk of transforming the courtroom into a platform for partisan or ideological messaging, undermining the dignity and neutrality of the court proceeding.

H. **"Portable Electronic Device"** means a mobile device capable of electronically storing, accessing, or transmitting information. The term encompasses, among other things, a transportable computer of any size, including a tablet, notebook, and laptop; a cellular telephone, a smartphone (*e.g.*, iPhones, Android devices, and other mobile telephones that perform many of the functions of a computer with camera and audio and video recording and transmission capabilities), or other wireless telephone; a personal digital assistant; electronic calendars; e-book readers; devices that wirelessly connect to and pair with computers and smartphones to transmit data (including smartwatches, earpieces, headphones, and fitness trackers); electronic monitoring devices; and any other similar devices that provide camera and audio and video recording and transmission capabilities and internet access.

I. **"Presiding Judge"** means the Presiding Circuit Judge for Coles County.

6. General Provisions.

A. The privileges of Extended Media Coverage as authorized by the Illinois Supreme Court Policy on Extended Media Coverage in the Circuit Courts of Illinois, the Local Rules of the Fifth Judicial Circuit, and this Administrative Order may be exercised only by members of the News Media, as defined in Section 5(G) *supra* and as recognized by the Presiding Judge or Trial Judge.

B. Extended Media Coverage is prohibited in any court proceeding required by law to be conducted in private. Additionally, no Extended Media Coverage shall be allowed in any matter involving juveniles, probate, guardianship, dissolution of marriage, family law, parentage, adoption, child custody, visitation, orders of protection, mental health, criminal or civil pretrial hearings regarding suppression or admission of evidence, specialty criminal courts, or trade secret issues.

C. Extended Media Coverage, *e.g.*, broadcasting, through radio, television, internet streaming, audio/visual recording, and photographing of court proceedings may be permitted in the courtroom during sessions of a court proceeding by an approved Extended Media Coverage Order, under the following conditions:

(a) Extended Media Coverage shall not disturb, be distracting, or interfere with the solemnity, decorum, or work of the trial court or the covered court proceedings.

(b) Permission first shall have been granted by the Trial Judge, who may prescribe the conditions of any Extended Media Coverage. The Presiding Judge shall also have the discretion to limit or deny any requests for Extended Media Coverage.

(c) In granting, limiting, or denying a request for Extended Media Coverage, the Trial Judge or Presiding Judge shall balance the interests of justice and public and media access to trials with the rights of all participants, and consider whether Extended Media Coverage would pose a substantial likelihood of material prejudice to the parties or disrupt the orderly administration of justice, including, but not limited to:

i. prejudicing a criminal defendant's right to a fair trial and an impartial jury in light of pretrial publicity and the size of the jury pool in this jurisdiction;
ii. influencing trial participants;
iii. affecting jurors' impartiality (consciously or unconsciously); encouraging jurors to seek extrajudicial information; or exposing jurors to public pressure or notoriety concerns;
iv. intimidating, deterring, or chilling witnesses from testifying fully and candidly; endangering the safety of witnesses; risking the privacy of witnesses, especially vulnerable witnesses;
v. invading victim privacy or dignity; or
vi. disrupting proceedings; distracting participants; interfering with courtroom security; unduly burdening court staff; or otherwise negatively impacting the order and dignity of the court and the orderly presentation of evidence.

Extended Media Coverage may be denied if the Trial Judge finds a substantial likelihood of material prejudice that cannot be mitigated by lesser measures, such as pooling cameras, fixed or locked camera tripods, restricted angles, delayed broadcasting, or partial coverage.

(d) In prosecutions for sexual abuse, or when sexual abuse is an essential element of a proceeding, there shall be no Extended Media Coverage of the testimony of a victim unless the testifying victim consents. Further, an objection to Extended Media Coverage

by a testifying victim in any other forcible felony prosecution and in all cases by police informants, undercover agents, and relocated witnesses shall be presumed to be with good cause and shall be allowed absent clear and convincing evidence overcoming said presumption. The Trial Judge shall exercise broad discretion in deciding whether there is cause for the prohibition of Extended Media Coverage of all other witness testimony.

D. The Trial Judge may appoint a *Guardian ad Litem* to secure the protection of the interests of a minor or a disabled adult in court proceedings where there is Extended Media Coverage.

E. Extended Media Coverage of jury selection, or of the actual or potential trial jurors or any grand jurors, is prohibited until such time as the jurors are no longer subject to service in any pending proceeding, and they consent to their questioning, recording, or photographs.

E. Equipment authorized by the provisions of this Administrative Order and the Extended Media Coverage Order shall be operated only during court proceedings taking place inside the courtroom, in the presence of the Trial Judge, when court is in session, and not during court recesses, when court is not in session, or during "off the record" conversations meant to be private, including any conferences in a court proceeding or in the Courthouse between attorneys and their clients, between co-counsel, between attorneys and opposing counsel, or among attorneys and the Trial Judge, such as sidebars.

F. The quantity and types of equipment permitted in the courtroom shall be subject to the provisions of this Administrative Order and the discretion of the Trial Judge. The Presiding Judge or Trial Judge may order the News Media to install temporary courtroom alterations including, but not limited to, screens or dividers to conceal the jury from the view of the recording equipment. Any and all expenses for such alterations shall be borne by the News Media.

G. Upon application of the Media Coordinator, the Trial Judge or the Presiding Judge may permit the use of equipment or techniques at variance with the provisions of this Administrative Order, provided the variance request is included in the original Request for Extended Media Coverage. Ruling upon a variance application shall be at the sole discretion of the Trial Judge or Presiding Judge. A variance may be allowed at the sole discretion of the Trial Judge without advance application or notice, but only if all counsel and parties consent to its terms.

H. The Trial Judge may deny, limit, amend, or terminate Extended Media Coverage at any time during the proceedings if the Trial Judge finds that any provision of this Administrative Order or the Extended Media Coverage Order has been violated, or that substantial rights of individual participants or their rights to a fair trial would be materially prejudiced by

continued Extended Media Coverage, or that the safety of the courtroom or of court participants require such action.

Moreover, the Trial Judge may impose sanctions for the willful failure to comply with the provisions of this Administrative Order or the Extended Media Coverage Order, which sanctions may include, but not be limited to **(a)** removal of the offending person and/or organization from the courtroom for the duration of the court proceeding; **(b)** revocation of the consent to provide Extended Media Coverage for the court proceeding; **(c)** restrictions upon the offending person/organization's dissemination, broadcast, or publication of the Extended Media Coverage; and **(d)** penalties for contempt of court, including fines, incarceration, costs, and limits upon future participation in Extended Media Coverage.

I. Video broadcasting, recording, photographing or other transmission of materials on counsel tables, to the extent they may be read or monitored in any way, is prohibited.

J. The broadcasting, recording, photographing, or other transmission of images or any materials related to the court proceeding not yet admitted into evidence is prohibited.

K. The privileges extended and afforded to participating members of the News Media for Extended Media Coverage of a court proceeding is personal and exclusive to the Media Coordinator and those participating News Media organizations on whose behalf the Request was filed, and such privileges granted under the Extended Media Coverage Order are not transferrable or assignable without prior approval of the Presiding Judge or Trial Judge.

L. A decision by the Presiding Judge or the Trial Judge to deny, limit, amend, or terminate Extended Media Coverage is final and not reviewable or appealable.

M. Film, videotape, photography, and audio reproductions obtained by and through Extended Media Coverage shall not affect the official court record of the court proceedings for purposes of appeal or otherwise, nor shall the same be admissible as evidence in the court proceeding out of which they arose or in any proceeding subsequent or collateral thereto. However, full copies of any video or audio recordings or photographs taken during Extended Media Coverage, whether published or not, shall be submitted by the Media Coordinator to the Court Media Liaison as soon as practicable after the conclusion of each court session covered.

N. The Presiding Judge, in his or her sole discretion, may authorize Extended Media Coverage of ceremonial proceedings at variance with the provisions of this Administrative Order or other Local Rules.

O. There shall be no filing fees associated with filing a request for Extended Media Coverage or an objection to Extended Media Coverage.

P. **Decorum.** Members of the News Media in the courtroom shall: **(a)** not talk in the courtroom during the court proceedings; **(b)** not talk to or talk within the hearing of any actual or potential jury members at any time before the juror is dismissed from service; **(c)** not conduct interviews in the courtroom; and **(d)** comply with the orders and directives of the Trial Judge, Presiding Judge, Court Media Liaison, and their designees, and all court security officers.

Q. At the conclusion of the covered court proceedings, and after the Trial Judge leaves the courtroom, all News Media will leave the courtroom. They may re-assemble only to meet with parties, families, attorneys, or other court participants if those participants allow interviews or questions from the media. Interviews may be conducted only within public areas of the Courthouse as designated by the Sheriff, within personal offices of the interviewees, or outside the Courthouse, all in accordance with local rules and administrative orders.

7. **Procedures.**

A. **Requester.** Only members of the News Media, as defined in Section 5(G) *supra* and as recognized by the Presiding Judge or Trial Judge, may submit requests for Extended Media Coverage.

B. Each News Media organization interested in participating in Extended Media Coverage of a court proceeding shall, as soon as possible, nominate one or more of its employees to serve as a Media Coordinator and submit that person's name in writing on company letterhead to the Court Media Liaison for designation of the Media Coordinator. If only one (1) News Media organization has so indicated its participation in Extended Media Coverage of the court proceeding, in the absence of good cause, the Presiding Judge or the Trial Judge shall designate the nominated person as Media Coordinator. In the case of more than one (1) media entity requesting Extended Media Coverage of a particular proceeding, in the absence of good cause, a representative chosen by all of the media requesting Extended Media Coverage of that proceeding shall be so designated by the Presiding Judge or the Trial Judge.

C. Upon approval by the Presiding Judge, the Media Coordinator shall, before filing a Request for Extended Media Coverage:

(a) determine whether any other media organizations are interested in participating in Extended Media Coverage of the court proceeding;
(b) establish which members of the News Media will serve as the onsite alternate Media Coordinator(s) for the court proceeding;
(c) establish a News Media pool to cover the court proceedings;
(d) identify the scope of cameras and audio recording devices to be submitted to the Trial Judge for consideration;
(e) arrange for distribution of all video, photographs, and audio recordings obtained during the court proceeding to the participating News Media; and
(f) be responsible for communicating with the Court Media Liaison regarding Extended Media Coverage of the court proceeding, if the Request is granted.

D. **Requests for Extended Media Coverage.** Requests by News Media for Extended Media Coverage shall be filed only by the Media Coordinator on behalf of all interested News Media persons/organizations with the Clerk of the Circuit Court. The filing must occur at least seven (7) days before the court proceeding for which Extended Media Coverage sought to be covered is scheduled to begin, unless extended or reduced by a court order. When the court proceeding is not scheduled at least seven (7) days in advance, the filing must occur as soon as practicable after it is scheduled. Requests shall be filed using the form "Extended Media Coverage Request Form," attached hereto as Appendix A.

E. **Notice of Request.** The Media Requester shall send or serve in a manner consistent with Supreme Court Rules copies of the Request to the following case participants:

(a) All Attorneys of Record in the case sought to be covered;
(b) Any parties who have filed appearances or are representing themselves;
(c) The Court Media Liaison; and
(d) The Presiding Judge and the Trial Judge presiding over the case for which Extended Media Coverage is sought.

Service shall be made no later than 4:00 p.m. on the first business day following the filing of the Request. Failure to provide such notice may result in denial of the request for Extended Media Coverage.

F. **Notice to Witnesses.** Any counsel or self-represented party, who seeks to introduce the testimony of a witness, shall notify the witness of the Request and of the witness's right to object to Extended Media Coverage by serving upon such witnesses the Request filed by the Media Requester and a written statement indicating the witness has a right to object. Parties shall file proof of service of such notice, pursuant to Supreme Court Rules, with the Clerk of the Court.

G. Objections.

(a) Party Objections. Any party who objects to Extended Media Coverage should file a written objection, stating the reasons therefor, within three (3) days of receiving notice of the Request. Objections may be made outside the three-day window at the discretion of the Trial Judge. The Trial Judge may also allow oral objections. Party Objections shall be filed using the form "Objection of Party to Request for Extended Media Coverage" attached hereto as Appendix B.

(b) Witness Objections. Witnesses may file a written objection or make an oral objection to Extended Media Coverage prior to testifying and as soon as practicable. The right of witnesses to object, and the time for filing of objections, may be extended or reduced at the discretion of the Trial Judge. Objections made by a testifying victim in a sexual abuse case or any other forcible felony prosecution, and by police informants, undercover agents, and relocated witnesses, will not be denied absent good cause shown. Witness Objections shall be filed using the form "Objection of Witness to Request for Extended Media Coverage of Testimony" attached hereto as Appendix C.

H. Notice of Objections. At the same time a written objection is filed, the objector shall provide notice of the objection, in a manner consistent with Supreme Court Rules, to the Media Requestor, the Court Media Liaison, all counsel of record, and parties appearing without counsel, and shall file proof of service of such notice, pursuant to Supreme Court Rules, with the Clerk of the Court no later than 4:00 p.m. on the first business day following the filing of the objection.

I. Disposition of Requests and Objections. All timely Requests and Objections shall be heard and determined by the Trial Judge prior to the commencement of the court proceedings sought to be covered. The Trial Judge, in deciding whether to allow Extended Media Coverage, in whole or in part, may rule based on the Request or Objection without further evidence, or may, in the sole discretion of the Trial Judge, allow additional evidence by affidavit, proffer, testimony, or other means, and written or oral argument, all as the Trial Judge directs. The Trial Judge maintains broad discretion in deciding all matters related to Extended Media Coverage. A form for an Extended Media Coverage Order and any objections thereto is attached hereto as Appendix D.

J. The duration of any permitted Extended Media Coverage is within the Trial Judge's discretion. Every party added or additional witness disclosed after an Order for Extended Media Coverage is granted must receive a notice and have an opportunity to file an objection in the manner set forth in Section 7(G) *supra*.

8. **Technical Aspects for Electronic Equipment.**

A. **Equipment setup and operation.** The Trial Judge, Court Media Liaison, or other authorized court personnel may issue specific instructions and timeframes regarding Extended Media Coverage equipment setup and installation.

B. **Advance Approval.** It shall be the duty of Media Coordinator to demonstrate to the Court Media Liaison or Trial Judge reasonably in advance of the court proceeding that the personnel and equipment sought to be used for Extended Media Coverage meet the criteria set forth in this Administrative Order and the Extended Media Coverage Order. Failure to obtain such advance approval may result in exclusion of personnel and/or equipment from use in the court proceeding. All Extended Media Coverage equipment and personnel shall be in place at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled time of commencement of the court proceeding.

C. **Equipment specifications.** All Extended Media Coverage equipment, including television cameras and related equipment, used by News Media personnel in a courtroom during court proceedings must be unobtrusive and operate quietly and without drawing attention, so as not to disrupt or distract from the proceedings.

D. **Audio equipment.** Microphones, wiring, and audio recording equipment shall be unobtrusive and of adequate technical quality to prevent interference with courtroom amplification systems or electronic recording systems. Any changes in existing audio systems must be approved by the Presiding Judge. Microphones for use of counsel and judges shall be equipped with a means of immediately disabling the system (a/k/a "a kill switch") available to the Trial Judge and counsel. The use of parabolic or other highly sensitive long-range microphones is prohibited.

E. **Lighting.** No auxiliary lighting of any kind shall be used in the courtroom. Nor shall any light or other display be detectable to participants to indicate when any equipment is in operation. With the approval of the Trial Judge, however, modifications may be made in light sources existing in the courtroom, provided modifications are installed and maintained without public expense.

F. **Pooling.** News Media persons/organizations are encouraged to pool equipment and personnel in all court proceedings and must do so, when necessary, due to space limitations in the courtroom or limits on equipment, as set forth *infra*. Arrangement, supervision, and monitoring of pooling in compliance with the Trial Judge's orders, shall be the sole responsibility of the Media Coordinator. Priority consideration shall be extended to television cameras to televise an entire proceeding from beginning to end. In the absence

of agreement or in the event of unresolved disputes relating to pooling arrangements, Extended Media Coverage may be limited or prohibited by the Trial Judge, who shall otherwise have no involvement in pooling decisions, including disputes.

G. **Equipment Limitations** The following limitations shall apply to the number of News Media personnel and equipment allowed in the courtroom for purposes of Extended Media Coverage:

(a) **Photography.** No more than two (2) News Media personnel may take photographs during a court proceeding, each using not more than two (2) camera bodies and two (2) lenses. Still cameras and lenses must be unobtrusive without distracting light or sound; no flash lighting is permitted.

(b) **Audio/visual recording.** No more than two (2) News Media personnel may perform audio/video recording or television broadcasting during a court proceeding. Television cameras or other video devices together with any related equipment located in the courtroom must be unobtrusive in both size and appearance, without distracting sound or light. Other than audio/video and television cameras, recording and broadcasting equipment shall be located outside of the courtroom. Sufficient recording capacities should be provided to obviate the need to make changes except during court recesses.

(c) **Digital media.** Any number of News Media personnel may be designated to perform online journalism (live-tweeting, blogging, posting case developments) during a court proceeding.

(d) **Sound recording.** No more than one (1) audio system, with one (1) designated News Media person to operate it, shall be permitted in a court proceeding. Where possible, audio for all News Media shall be from any existing audio system present in the courtroom. However, if no technically suitable audio system exists, microphones, wiring, and recording equipment may be furnished and temporarily installed and removed by News Media at their own expense. News Media audio or visual systems shall not interfere with the sound quality of any existing courtroom audio system or with the ability of the Official Court Reporter to make a record. Any News Media audio system shall have a means of immediately disabling the system (a/k/a "a kill switch") available to the Trial Judge and shall be located in places designated in advance by the Trial Judge or the Court Media Liaison. Sufficient recording capacities should be provided to obviate the need to make changes except during court recesses.

(e) **Livestreaming.** No more than one (1) livestream of court proceedings, with designated News Media personnel to operate the related equipment, shall be permitted.

(f) **Use of Electronic Devices for Other Activities.** In accordance with the Illinois Supreme Court Policy on Electronic Devices and this court's Administrative Order No. 2022-1, members of the News Media may use portable electronic devices during a court proceeding for notetaking or for purposes other than recording, broadcasting, or photography.

H. **Location of equipment and personnel.** Extended Media Coverage equipment and operating personnel shall be located in, and coverage of the court proceedings shall take place from an area or areas designated by the Trial Judge or the Court Media Liaison. The area or areas designated shall provide reasonable access to the court proceeding to be covered, but should be set up in the area reserved for spectators, and may be limited to the back row of the courtroom gallery. Equipment and operators shall not impede the view of other persons seated in the public areas of the courtroom. Whenever practicable, recording equipment and its operating personnel should be located outside the courtroom. No equipment or personnel involved in Extended Media Coverage shall impede pedestrian traffic movement into or from the courtroom or Courthouse, including but not limited to Courthouse corridors and courtroom entrances and exits.

I. **Movement During the Proceedings.** Television cameras and audio equipment may only be installed before court proceedings begin and removed from the courtroom only when the court is not in session. Such equipment shall at all times be operated from a fixed position. Changing film or lenses is only allowed during recesses. Still photographers and broadcast media personnel shall not move about the courtroom while court proceedings are in session, nor shall they engage in any movement attracting undue attention. Still photographers shall not assume body positions inappropriate for the courtroom. If handheld still or video cameras are used, the operator must remain in his assigned position.

J. **Equipment Storage.** Extended Media Coverage equipment shall not be stored at the Courthouse overnight, over a holiday, or over a weekend without prior permission from the Trial Judge. Electrical equipment, including wiring, is the sole responsibility of the News Media. Neither Coles County, nor the Fifth Judicial Circuit assumes any liability for the protection of such equipment.

K. **Expense.** The cost of any equipment, extra equipment, or partitions required under the provisions of this Administrative Order or the Order Permitting Extended Media Coverage shall be paid by the News Media.

L. **Clothing and Equipment.** All News Media personnel shall be properly attired and maintain proper courtroom decorum at all times when covering a court proceeding. The

Trial Judge maintains discretion to determine proper attire and decorum in the courtroom. No equipment or clothing of any Extended Media Coverage personnel shall bear any advertisements, insignia, or identification of the individual medium or network involved in the Extended Media Coverage.

9. Jury Admonishment and Instruction.

A. Jury Admonishment. The Trial Judge shall give the following admonishment to the jury at the commencement of any criminal or civil trial with an approved request for Extended Media Coverage:

> In this case, I have approved a request to allow the news media to [video] [record] [photograph] [livestream] [blog] the proceedings. This is permitted by the Illinois Supreme Court and is subject to numerous restrictions contained in the Policy for Extended Media Coverage in the Circuit Courts of Illinois.
>
> The policy regarding cameras in the courtroom is very strict and the court closely monitors every policy provision. In general, the policy permits the news media to film, record, and photograph the courtroom setting, the participants in the trial, and any persons who might be in the audience. The policy does not permit the news media to film or photograph any of you as jurors or the jury panel in the courtroom or outside the courtroom.
>
> The presence of cameras does not make this case more important than any other. All trials are equally important to the court and the involved parties. You should not draw any inferences or conclusions from the fact that cameras are present at this particular trial.
>
> The news media is generally able to choose which portion or portion(s) of the trial they wish to attend. Therefore, their attendance may be periodic from day to day. Also, the news media may not film or photograph certain witnesses. You are not to concern yourself with why certain witnesses are filmed or photographed and others are not.
>
> Whether a particular witness is filmed or photographed is not any indication as to the value of, or weight to be given to, that witness's testimony.
>
> You should ignore the presence of any cameras. If you find at any time that you are distracted or unable to concentrate because of the cameras, please notify me immediately.

B. Jury Instruction. The Trial Judge shall give the following instruction to the jury when News Media is present at any portion of a criminal or civil trial with an approved request for Extended Media Coverage:

In this case, the news media was permitted to [video] [record] [photograph] [livestream] [blog] the proceedings pursuant to the Illinois Supreme Court Policy for Extended Media Coverage in the Circuit Courts of Illinois.

In your deliberations, you should not draw any inferences or conclusions from the fact there was extended media coverage at this trial or proceeding. Nor should you concern yourself with why certain witnesses were filmed or photographed and others were not. Whether a particular witness was filmed or photographed is not any indication as to the value of, or weight to be given to, that witness's testimony.

10. **Media Rules Inapplicable to Individuals; Advertising Use Prohibited.** The Extended Media Coverage privileges granted by this Administrative Order to photograph, televise, and record court proceedings may be exercised only by persons or organizations that are part of established News Media as defined in Section 5(G) *supra*. Film, videotapes, photography, and audio reproduction of any court proceedings shall not be used for any advertising purpose.

11. **Access to the Courthouse.** Court security policies require all persons and equipment entering the Courthouse to pass through security checkpoints and screening. News Media personnel will not be permitted to bypass security screening and should allow sufficient time to pass through the security screening in advance of the commencement of court proceedings.

12. **Media Disputes.** It shall be the responsibility of the Media Coordinator, prior to coverage and without disrupting proceedings, to settle disputes among News Media personnel/organizations, facilitate pooling where necessary, and implement procedures which meet the approval of the Court Media Liaison and Trial Judge.

13. **Non-Exclusivity.** The provisions of this Administrative Order shall not be construed as precluding coverage of any court proceeding by members of the News Media or other persons employing only the means of taking notes or drawing pictures if permitted by the Trial Judge.

14. **Professional Conduct.** Nothing herein shall alter the obligation of any attorney to adhere to the provisions of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct governing trial publicity.

15. **Publication of this Administrative Order.**

A. This Administrative Order shall be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court and made available to the public.

B. The Clerk of the Circuit Court shall post this Administrative Order on her website.

C. This Administrative Order shall be posted upon the court's website.

16. Effective Date: This Administrative Order is effective *instanter.*

ENTERED this 27th day of January, 2026.

Brien J. O'Brien, Presiding Judge

EXTENDED MEDIA COVERAGE REQUEST FORM

STATE OF ILLINOIS

_____ **COUNTY**

CIRCUIT COURT

_____

PETITIONER / PLAINTIFF

v.

_____ _____

DEFENDANT / RESPONDENT **CASE NUMBER**

Now comes, _____, who is a representative of the _____ news media affiliate states as follows:

1. Request to use: (Mark all that apply) ☐ Video Camera ☐ Photographic Equipment ☐ Sound Recording Equipment ☐ Other: _____

2. The proceeding to be covered is scheduled for _____ 20____ at _____ a.m./p.m. at the following courthouse location _____ in courtroom _____

3. This request is for this proceeding and all subsequent proceedings.

4. Proper notice has been given to the court media liaison, all counsel of record, and parties appearing without counsel.

5. I request the court grant this request for extended media coverage.

The above information is true and accurate, and I understand that I am not a party in this case and the request for media coverage cannot be appealed.

Requestor's Name (please print): _____ _____

Media Outlet: _____ Signature of Requester

Address: _____

_____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: (____) _____

Email: _____

OBJECTION OF PARTY TO REQUEST FOR EXTENDED MEDIA COVERAGE

STATE OF ILLINOIS

_____ **COUNTY**

CIRCUIT COURT

_____

PETITIONER / PLAINTIFF

v.

_____ _____

DEFENDANT / RESPONDENT **CASE NUMBER**

Now comes, _____, who is a party or an attorney of record in the above cause states as follows:

1. Extended media coverage has been requested for the above matter.
2. There is good cause to believe that the presence of extended media coverage, under the circumstances of the proceeding, would materially interfere with the right of the parties to a fair trial.

The specific facts and circumstances in support of the allegation are described as follows:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. This objection is filed within three (3) days of receiving notice of the request for extended media coverage.

4. Proper notice has been given to the requestor, the court media liaison, all counsel of record, and parties appearing without counsel.

WHEREFORE, I object to the request for extended media coverage of the trial and/or proceeding for the reasons set forth above.

Objector's Name (please print): _____ _____

Atty No.: _____ Signature of Objector

Address: _____

_____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

OBJECTION OF WITNESS TO REQUEST FOR EXTENDED MEDIA COVERAGE OF TESTIMONY

STATE OF ILLINOIS

_____ **COUNTY**

CIRCUIT COURT

_____

PETITIONER / PLAINTIFF

v.

_____ _____

DEFENDANT / RESPONDENT **CASE NUMBER**

_____ states as follows:

Name of Objecting Witness

1. I expect to be called as a witness in this proceeding by the:
   - ☐ plaintiff/petitioner
   - ☐ defendant/respondent.
2. Extended media coverage of the above matter has been:
   - ☐ requested
   - ☐ granted.
3. I object to extended media coverage of my testimony for the following reasons (please be specific):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. This objection is filed with the Clerk of the Court prior to the commencement of my testimony.

5. Proper notice of this objection has been given to the requestor, the court media liaison, all counsel of record, and parties appearing without counsel.

WHEREFORE, I object to extended media coverage of my testimony for the above stated reasons.

Objector's Name (please print): _____ _____

Atty No.: _____ Signature of Objector

Address: _____

_____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: (____) _____

Email: _____

EXTENDED MEDIA COVERAGE ORDER

STATE OF ILLINOIS

_____ **COUNTY**

CIRCUIT COURT

_____

PETITIONER / PLAINTIFF

v.

_____ _____

DEFENDANT / RESPONDENT **CASE NUMBER**

The Court, having considered the extended media request and any argument by the parties, their counsel (if any) and witnesses, and balancing the request for extended media coverage with the [rights of the parties to a fair trial] [concerns raised by the objecting witnesses], **hereby ORDERS:**

1. The request for extended media coverage filed on _____ by _____ a news media affiliate, is hereby:

- ☐ Denied. _____
- ☐ Granted.
- ☐ Granted with the following restrictions or provisions: _____

2. This order is:

- ☐ Limited to the requested hearing date of: _____
- ☐ Allowed for this and all further proceedings.
- ☐ Allowed for the following proceedings: _____

Dated: _____ _____

Judge