

2.17 PHOTOGRAPHING, RECORDING AND BROADCASTING IN COURT

(a) Definitions. This rule adopts the definitions contained in California Rules of Court, rule 1.150(b), except as follows:

1) The term “media coverage” means any photographing, recording or broadcasting in court by the media;

2) The term “court” means any courtroom or courthouse in the County where the court conducts business, including all entrances, exits, hallways, escalators, elevators, and adjacent or subterranean court parking areas. It does not include the offices in any courthouse occupied by independent agencies such as the County of Los Angeles, including the Offices of the District Attorney and the Public Defender;

3) The term “designated media area” means any area so designated by the Presiding Judge, supervising judge, or site judge.

(b) Court Order Required. While in court, no one may engage in photographing, recording, or broadcasting, or activate any camera, microphone, recorder or broadcasting device, except:

1) in a courtroom where the judge has issued an order allowing media coverage under California Rules of Court, rule 1.150 and Local Rule 2.17(d), or expressly granted permission, under California Rules of Court, rule 1.150(d) or otherwise, to photograph, record, and/or broadcast; or

2) outside the courtroom, if it is: i) in a designated media area, or ii) with prior written permission from the Presiding Judge, supervising judge, or site judge. No one may carry any camera, microphone, or recording equipment, or activate the image or sound capturing feature of any computer, mobile telephone, watch or other similar equipment in a courtroom without express written permission from the appropriate judicial officer.

(c) No Obstruction of Public Access. Persons engaged in photographing, recording and broadcasting must not obstruct pedestrian traffic, create traffic congestion or otherwise impede access to court proceedings, offices, services or facilities.

(d) Written Media Requests Required. Persons requesting media coverage of any type, including pool cameras, must complete and submit for judicial approval Judicial Council form MC-500, specifying: i) the time estimate for coverage; ii) the proposed placement of cameras, microphones and other equipment; and iii) whether the coverage will be disseminated live or recorded for future dissemination.

(e) Submission of Media Requests to Public Information Office. Before filing Judicial Council Forms MC-500 and MC-510 in court or submitting them to any judge, persons requesting media coverage must deliver or electronically submit originals or copies to the Public Information Office.

(f) Responsibility for Compliance with Rules. Media (as defined in California Rules of Court, rule 1.150(b)(2)), and any other person seeking to photograph, record or broadcast in court must be familiar with, and comply with this rule and the California Rules of Court, rule 1.150.

(g) No Restriction On Judicial Discretion. This rule does not restrict a judge’s discretion to regulate sound or image capturing, photographing, recording or broadcasting in his or her courtroom.

(h) Court Reporter Use of Audio Software. Except as may be ordered pursuant to subdivision (g), “media coverage” does not include the use of audio software as personal notes of a court reporter to assist in the preparation of verbatim records of court proceedings, providing recording capabilities are turned off and not used during any break or recess in the proceedings when stenographic notes are not being taken. Such personal notes are not an official record of the court, and may be used only by the court reporter, or by a substitute court reporter in the absence of the court reporter who reported the proceedings, to assist in accurately transcribing the verbatim record, and must not be retained after the verbatim record is transcribed.

(Rule 2.17 [7/1/2011, 1/1/2016] amended and effective January 1, 2017)