

# State of Michigan



MELANIE D. STANTON  
PRESIDING JUDGE

KRIS RANDALL  
COURT ADMINISTRATOR

## Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court Grand Traverse County Family Division

### POLICY REGARDING COURTROOM AND HEARING ROOM DECORUM

#### BACKGROUND:

This policy is designed to protect the dignity and professional image of the court and to provide court participants with guidelines for appropriate attire and behavior. Therefore, the Family Division of the 13<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court and the Grand Traverse County Probate Court are adopting this policy in an effort to establish courtroom etiquette and prevent distractions to ensure the fair administration of justice.

#### POLICY STATEMENT:

This policy applies to the conduct and dress of those who attend court, including attorneys, litigants, witnesses, jurors, family members and interested parties.

Court proceedings shall be conducted in a manner that protects the dignity and seriousness of the proceedings. Conduct by any person that may interfere with the decorum of the court is prohibited and may result in removal of that person from the court. Persons attending court are required to abide by the following guidelines, which are representative rather than all-inclusive, unless explicitly authorized by the Judge.

#### A. General

1. Smoking, tobacco products, eating, drinking, and gum chewing are not allowed in any courtroom/hearing room at any time.
2. Demonstrations, placards, badges, T-shirts, and clothing that espouse a position on an issue before the court shall not be allowed.
3. Electronic devices must be turned off and may not be used in the courtroom unless authorization is given by the Judge.
4. Taking photographs is not allowed in the courtroom or hearing room.

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ADMINISTRATION  
SUITE 202  
231-922-4640

TRUANCY INTERVENTION CENTER  
SUITE B183  
231-922-4353

JUVENILE PROBATION  
SUITE B106  
231-922-4650

VOLUNTEER SERVICES  
SUITE B150  
231-922-4827

## **B. Attire**

1. Attorneys shall wear proper business attire while attending court.
2. Jurors, parties, and witnesses should wear proper attire while attending court.
3. Clothing such as hats, muscle shirts, shorts, halter tops, pajama bottoms, sweat suits, cut off denim, swimwear, flip flops, exercise attire, and revealing garments shall not be permitted.
4. The court will consider exceptions for those who must wear special attire based on a medical condition or cultural and/or religious reason. Documentation to support the exception may be requested.

## **C. Conduct**

1. Individuals other than those giving testimony shall stand when speaking to or addressing the court or jury, or when examining witnesses, unless excused from doing so by the court.

- If you have a disability that makes standing difficult, please inform the Judge.

2. Parties and attorneys should refer to Judges as "Your Honor" or "Judge,".
3. Parties and attorneys should refer to Referees as "Your Honor" or "Referee,".
4. Only one person may speak at a time. Do not interrupt the other party or the Judge when they are speaking.
5. A respectful attitude must be maintained at all times.

## **D. Discretion**

It is within the judge's / referee's discretion to have an individual removed from the courtroom if the individual's conduct or dress does not comport with this policy.

## **E. Silence**

Court proceedings are recorded. Therefore, silence is a necessity, unless you are a party to the proceeding that is in progress.

Disruptive behavior from any party, attorney, witness, juror, or person watching the court proceeding will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, talking, laughing, shouting,

making faces, rolling of the eyes, or creating other loud disturbances or creating any other disruption.

Parties involved in the lawsuit and people watching the court proceedings may not speak to the Court before or after hearings. Do not approach the Judge. The Judge is not permitted to speak with you.

#### F. Weapons

Weapons of any type are prohibited in the courtroom at all times.

**\*\* Failure to comply with this policy may result in a fine, confiscation of the electronic device, incarceration, removal from the courtroom and contempt of court.**

#### References:


Michigan Code of Judicial Conduct – Canon 3 A(2)  
Administrative Order 1989-1  
MCR 8.110(C)(2)(c)  
MCR 8.112

FORMS USED: None.

APPROVAL:

Date:

7 / 29 / 15



Melanie D. Stanton, Probate Judge  
Family Division Judge, 13<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court