

CAMERAS IN THE COURTROOM - SECOND CIRCUIT GUIDELINES

Pursuant to a resolution of the Judicial Conference of the United States adopted on March 12, 1996, authorizing each court of appeals to "decide for itself whether to permit the taking of photographs and radio and television coverage of appellate arguments, subject to any restrictions in statutes, national and local rules, and such guidelines as the Judicial Conference may adopt," the Court hereby adopts the following Guidelines:

1. **Exercise of local option.** From the date of these Guidelines until further order of this Court, proceedings of the Court conducted in open court may be covered by the media using a television camera, sound recording equipment, and a still camera (hereafter referred to a "camera coverage"), subject to these Guidelines.
2. **Applicable guidelines.** Camera coverage must be conducted in conformity with applicable statutes, national rules, any guidelines that may be issued by the U.S. Judicial Conference, and these Guidelines of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.
3. **Eligible proceedings.** Camera coverage is allowed for all proceedings conducted in open court, except for criminal matters. See Fed. R. Crim. P. 53, 54(a). For purposes of these Guidelines, "criminal matters" include not only direct appeals of criminal convictions but also any appeal, motion, or petition challenging a ruling made in connection with a criminal case (such as bail motions or appeals from the dismissal of an indictment) and any appeal from a ruling concerning a post-conviction remedy (such as a habeas corpus petition). Camera coverage is not permitted for pro se matters, whether criminal or civil. On any day when camera coverage is to occur, the Clerk's Office will endeavor to schedule civil and non-pro se matters ahead of criminal and pro se matters. Camera coverage operators will remain seated, away from their equipment, and their equipment will be turned off, during criminal and pro se proceedings.
4. **News media pooling.** Camera coverage will be permitted by any person or entity regularly engaged in the gathering and dissemination of news (hereinafter "news media"). If coverage is sought by more than one person or entity, a pool system must be used (one for still photography and one for radio and television). It will be the responsibility of the news media to resolve any disputes among them as to which personnel will operate equipment in the courtroom. In the absence of an agreement, camera coverage will not be permitted for that day's proceedings. The television pictures, audio signals, and still photographs of court proceedings made by

pool personnel must be made available to any news media requesting them upon payment of a reasonable fee to the employer of the pool personnel to share the costs of the pool personnel.

5. **Educational institutions.** The Court may also authorize the coverage of court proceedings and access to pooled coverage by educational institutions.
6. **Prior notification requirement.** News media interested in camera coverage of any court proceeding must notify the Court's calendar clerk no later than noon two days preceding the day of the proceeding to be covered (i.e., notification must be made by noon on Tuesday to cover a proceeding on Thursday, or by noon Friday for the following Monday). A calendar of the following week's cases is made public by the Court each Thursday. For good cause shown, relief from this notification requirement may be granted by the presiding judge of a panel.
7. **Discretion of Panel.** The panel assigned to hear oral argument will retain the authority, in its sole discretion, to prohibit camera coverage of any proceeding, and will normally exercise this authority upon the request of any member of the panel.
8. **Technical restrictions.** Only two television cameras and one still camera will be permitted in the courtroom. The television cameras and the still camera must each be mounted on a tripod and remain at a fixed location along a side wall of the courtroom throughout the proceeding. The still camera must either be capable of silent operation (shutter and film advance) or be enclosed in a sound-muffling device (so-called "blimp"). No artificial lighting is permitted. An unobtrusive microphone may be mounted at the attorney's lectern and in front of each judge. A sound technician may be present in the courtroom with unobtrusive sound-mixing equipment. The Clerk's Office will designate a location for a device outside the courtroom to enable news media to obtain "feeds" of video and audio signals. All camera coverage equipment must be set up prior to the opening of a day's proceedings and may not be removed until after the conclusion of the day's proceedings. If done unobtrusively, film used by the still camera operator and film or tape used by the video camera operator may be removed from the courtroom at the conclusion of the oral argument of a particular case. Operators of camera coverage equipment in the courtroom will wear business attire.

When operational, the Court's videoconferencing equipment may be used

for purposes of camera coverage.

9. **Authority of presiding judge.** The presiding judge of the panel may direct the cessation of camera coverage or the removal of camera coverage personnel from the courtroom in the event of noncompliance with these Guidelines.
10. **Personnel to contact.** The Court's Calendar Supervisor, or alternate designated in her absence, can be reached at (212)857-8591 or 8596.

Adopted March 27, 1996

Updated October 1, 2019