

Court of Appeals of the State of Georgia

ATLANTA, October 15, 2024

The Court of Appeals hereby passes the following order:

RE: ORDER REGARDING NEWS COVERAGE AND REGULATION OF
MOVEMENT AND PLACEMENT OF PERSONS AND AUDIO AND
VISUAL RECORDING AND TRANSMITTING EQUIPMENT IN THE
COURTROOM AND ANY RESERVED NEWS MEDIA AREAS

Pursuant and subject to the provisions of the order of the Court of Appeals of Georgia, all Courtroom proceedings may be photographed, recorded, and broadcast by news media personnel, subject to the following procedures, rules, and limitations:

- (1) Any person wishing to photograph, record, and broadcast any such Court proceedings shall submit to the Court a timely written request to do so on the attached form. Said submission shall be made not later than one week before the scheduled oral argument date unless waived by the majority of judges on the Division.
- (2) With regard to the conduct of the news media personnel and the use of photography, and broadcast equipment, it is hereby ordered:
 - (a) Not more than one “pooled” stationary electronic television camera, to be located as designed by the Court to the side or rear of the courtroom, and to be attended and operated by not more than one person, shall be permitted in the courtroom during Court proceedings;
 - (b) Not more than one still photographer, to be located as designed by the Court to the side or the rear of the courtroom and utilizing not more than two still (non-motorized) cameras, shall be permitted in the courtroom during Court proceedings;
 - (c) Not more than one audio system for aural broadcast purposes shall be permitted in any court proceeding; audio pickup for all media purposes shall be accomplished from existing audio systems present in the Court facility; provided, however, if no technically suitable audio system exists in the court facility, microphones, and related wiring essential for media purposes shall be permitted but said equipment shall be unobtrusive and shall be located in

places designated in advance of any proceedings by the Court with any cost thereto being borne by the news media;

- (d) Any “pooling” arrangements among the media required by these limitations on equipment and personnel shall be the sole responsibility of the media without calling upon the Court to mediate any dispute as to the appropriate media representative or equipment authorized to cover a particular proceeding;
- (e) The placement of the television camera equipment, as well as the seating locations for all media personnel, shall be assigned and approved by the Court prior to the commencement of the Court proceedings; all such equipment shall be positioned in such assigned places prior to the commencement of such proceedings and shall not be moved or removed while such proceedings are in session;
- (f) Only existing light shall be used for photography and no artificial or supplemental lighting devices of any type (including flashbulbs) shall be employed for either still or motion photography;
- (g) Those media personnel who are permitted to photograph, record, and broadcast the Court proceedings shall not move about the courtroom during the proceedings, and shall at all times during such proceedings remain in the areas assigned and approved by the Court;
- (h) No motor drives nor battery-operated film advances for still photography shall be used during Court proceedings. Any electronic or radio-transmitted communications between the camera operator and any media room, or any other place, shall be inaudible;
- (i) Any audio or video recording systems or equipment in the courtroom shall be actively attended at all times;
- (j) News media personnel employing electronic television camera equipment in the courtroom shall preserve for and shall provide the Court with a USB flash drive or other suitable recording (with sound) of all Court proceedings broadcast live, videotaped, and broadcast as a part of regular news coverage, or recorded for the purpose of specific future broadcast. Said regulations shall apply to each news media organization requesting permission to employ any form of television equipment;
- (k) News media personnel employing audio recording equipment in the courtroom shall preserve for and shall provide the Court with a USB flash drive or other suitable recording of all Court proceedings broadcast live, recorded, and broadcast as a part of regular news coverage, or recorded for

the purpose of specific future broadcast. Said regulations shall apply to each news media organization requesting permission to employ any form of audio recording equipment;

- (l) The costs of the necessary electrical wiring or service, audio equipment or tie-in with the courtroom's system, and costs for setting up monitors and video recording devices shall be borne altogether by the electronic media on a basis to be determined by them;
 - (m) No media will be allowed to enter or leave the courtroom until the end of a session, a declared recess, or until released by the Court.
- (3) The Court shall retain the exclusive authority to delimit, restrict, prohibit, and terminate the photographing, recording, and broadcasting of any and all courtroom proceedings. Such action may and will be taken by the Court at any time the Court determines;
- (a) That the provisions of this Order have been or are being violated or circumvented; or
 - (b) That the activities of the news media are detracting from the dignity of the Court proceedings; or
 - (c) That the ends of justice are not being served or the rights of the parties are being abridged.
- (4) If at any time, the Court decides that any of the provisions of this Order should be waived, modified, or amended, the Court will waive, modify, and amend provisions of the Order so long as such waivers, modifications, and amendments do not conflict with Canon 3 of the Code of Judicial Conduct.
- (5) Notwithstanding the foregoing, it is and will remain the sole responsibility of this Court to ensure that all its proceedings are conducted with the due dignity and decorum required of all judicial proceedings. At any time any activity or conduct occurs which adversely affects the administration of justice, the Court shall and does retain the inherent authority to exercise its discretion to restrict media coverage of such proceedings in any way necessary to preserve these ends.

NEWS MEDIA COORDINATOR

The Clerk and Court Administrator and Deputy Court Administrator, Court of Appeals of Georgia are hereby designated as News Media Coordinators for the proceedings relating to this Order. The News Media Coordinator shall serve as the liaison between the Court and the media and shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of this Order relative to media coverage.

Due to the limitations of space and possible number of media organizations requesting coverage privileges, the News Media Coordinator is hereby authorized by the Court, as he/she deems appropriate, to limit access to the courtroom.



*Court of Appeals of the State of Georgia
Clerk's Office, Atlanta,*

*I certify that the above is a true extract from
the minutes of the Court of Appeals of Georgia.*

*Witness my signature and the seal of said court
hereto affixed the day and year last above written.*

Christina Coley Smith
....., Clerk