

**COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS OF ALABAMA  
COURTROOM MEDIA PLAN**

*Effective October 21, 1993  
Including Amendments Received Through May 1, 2014*

1. Proceedings of the Court of Criminal Appeals held in the courtroom of the Judicial Building may be broadcast by television or radio, and may be recorded electronically or photographed, if in compliance with the provisions of Canon 3A(7B) of the Canons of Judicial Ethics.
2. No broadcasting, recording, or photographing should detract from the dignity of the court proceedings.
3. Persons desiring to broadcast, record, or photograph official court proceedings must make a timely request to the Clerk of the Court of Criminal Appeals prior to the hearing, trial, or event, specifying the particular case, hearing, or event for which coverage is desired. Request forms are available in the Clerk's Office.
4. Written consent from attorneys and parties, if present, shall be obtained on a form, copies of which are available in the Clerk's Office.
5. Consent to cover a proceeding shall be granted pursuant to these rules without partiality or preference to any person, media outlet, or type of coverage. Consent may not be given, refused, or withdrawn as to one type of coverage, or as to any particular media outlet, and given, refused, or withdrawn to another type or another media outlet.
6. No more than four (4) still photographers and two (2) television cameras will be permitted in the courtroom for coverage at any time while a trial or hearing is in session. However, the Marshal shall allow all photographers and television stations to participate either by pooling, or by dividing the time so that all will be allowed to participate. The positioning and removal of cameras shall be done as quietly as possible and in no event shall disturb the proceedings of the court.
7. The Marshal, upon request, may permit persons to obtain audio from the court's recording system on a first come, first served basis, if the systems are compatible. The Marshal, in his discretion, may allow microphones and wiring to be placed at the counsel's lectern and at no more than three locations on the bench. Microphones shall be placed in advanced of the trial or hearing and shall be unobtrusive or hidden. All wiring shall be located on the floor next to the wall or along the bottom of the bench, where possible. Otherwise, the wires must be placed where they will not interfere with anyone or constitute a hazard. The Marshal shall inspect the location of any wires and microphones to see that they shall comply with the rules. Wiring cannot be removed while court is in session, except during recesses.

8. No lights, flashbulbs, flashes or sudden light changes may be used except with the express authorization of the Marshal or the court, provided, however, that overhead lights, when provided may be switched on and off by the Marshal.
9. Every person desiring to cover a proceeding will furnish his own equipment.
10. All television cameras are restricted to the rear of the courtroom. Television cameras or still cameras which produce distracting noise or sound cannot be used.
11. During sessions of court, photographers using still cameras may sit anywhere in the courtroom designated for use by the public, and may take pictures, but the Marshal, upon request of a party, attorney, witness, or judge, may require them to take photographs only while standing behind the back row of seats. If a photographer wants to take pictures while standing he must take them from the area behind the back row of seats.
12. Television personnel shall be limited in their movements to the rear of the courtroom and to the area behind the back row of seats. There shall be no unnecessary movement of cameramen.
13. The Marshal may allow wireless recording devices to be operated in the courtroom if they are not too bulky and if they do not make a disturbing sound. The operator may sit or stand. If he stands, he must be behind the back row of seats. Whether he sits or stands, he must keep the recording device with him.
14. All persons covering a hearing or event will avoid activity which might distract, and will remain within the restricted areas designated by the court or the Marshal.
15. Attorneys must observe Disciplinary Rule 7-107, Trial Publicity, Code of Professional Responsibility of the Alabama State Bar<sup>1</sup>, which covers conduct of all attorneys with respect to trial publicity.
16. This plan shall not preclude the coverage of an event or hearing by a news reporter or other person who is not using a camera or electronic equipment, but is taking notes or making sketches.
17. All persons who request and are granted permission to cover a hearing or event are subject to this plan and thereby agree to observe the rules and objectives set out in it.

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<sup>1</sup> *Note from the Clerk:* The Alabama Rules of Professional Conduct became effective January 1, 1991, and superseded the former Alabama Code of Professional Responsibility. Rule 3.6, Trial Publicity, now covers the subject matter former covered by Rule 7-107 of the Code of Professional Conduct.

18. In the event the court is in session at a place other than the courtroom in the Judicial Building, this plan shall be followed to the extent possible. Details regarding coverage of sessions held outside of Montgomery must be cleared with the Marshal, prior to the session.

19. The restrictions under this plan are not applicable to the coverage of investiture, ceremonial, or non-judicial proceedings.