IN THE SUPREME COURT OF ALABAMA

June 30, 2026

SC-ADM-ORD-0015

In re: Pilot Project for Enhancing Audio Recording and Transcription Technology in Alabama's Trial Courts

ORDER

The Supreme Court of Alabama has the constitutional authority to make and promulgate rules governing the administration of all courts of this state. Ala. Const. Art. VI, § 150. The Court finds that advances in recording and transcription technology present opportunities to supplement the preservation of the official record in judicial proceedings and to support the efficient administration of justice. The Court desires to evaluate modern recording and transcription technologies as an additional tool for preserving the record of judicial proceedings, while continuing to recognize the important role of official court reporters within Alabama's judicial system.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

The Administrative Director of Courts is authorized to establish and administer a pilot project utilizing courtroom audio recording systems for designated trial court proceedings.

The Administrative Director of Courts is authorized to select test counties, courts, and specific courtrooms to participate in the pilot project, after consultation with the Chief Justice and affected presiding circuit court judges.

Participation in the pilot project by any court or judge shall be voluntary.

Audio recordings created under this pilot shall serve as the official recording of the proceeding and as the source record from which transcripts are prepared, unless otherwise ordered by the court. Nothing

in this Order is intended to alter or supersede the Alabama Rules of Appellate Procedure governing the preparation and certification of the record on appeal. The official record for appellate purposes shall remain the certified written transcript prepared in accordance with those rules.

Transcripts prepared from such recordings may be generated through appropriate transcription processes, provided that any transcript to be used for appellate or official purposes is reviewed, corrected, and certified in accordance with procedures approved by the Administrative Director of Courts.

The Administrative Office of Courts is authorized to procure necessary hardware, software, and related services, including systems that facilitate the creation, management, and transcription of courtroom recordings, in accordance with applicable procurement laws and rules. Presiding circuit court judges and circuit clerks are hereby authorized to purchase any equipment using money from local discretionary funds.

The Administrative Director of Courts shall report annually to the Supreme Court on the results of the pilot, including accuracy, cost, operational impact, and recommendations for future use. This pilot project shall last for three years but may be extended for two additional years by the Administrative Director of Courts, with written notice of the extension to be provided to the Supreme Court.

Stewart, C.J., and Shaw, Wise, Bryan, Sellers, Mendheim, Cook, McCool, and Parker, JJ., concur.

Witness my hand and seal this 30th day of June, 2026.

Megan B. Rhodebeck

Clerk of Court,
Supreme Court of Alabama

FILED
June 30, 2026

Clerk of Court
Supreme Court of Alabama