

ALASKA COURT SYSTEM
OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR
ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN NO. 45

TO: ALL HOLDERS OF ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN SETS:

Area Court Administrators	Presiding Judges
Clerk of the Appellate Courts	Senior Staff
Third District Rural Training Assistant	Administrative Associate
Full-Time Clerks of Court	Rural Court Analyst
Magistrates at locations with no full-time clerk	
Law Libraries at Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau & Ketchikan	

SUBJECT: Media Coverage

This administrative bulletin is adopted pursuant to Administrative Rule 50(e)(4) and applies to any media coverage allowed under Administrative Rule 50.

1. Number of Cameras. Not more than two portable television cameras (or 16mm sound or film cameras), operated by not more than one camera operator each, will be permitted in a courtroom or adjacent areas in any trial court proceeding or during a recess in the proceeding. A judge may allow only one such camera operated by one camera operator if the judge determines that the courtroom size warrants this limitation. In Anchorage, not more than one such camera operated by one camera operator is permitted in the hearing room adjacent to the traffic courtroom on the first floor of the "old" court building and in Courtrooms "B", "D", "J", and "District Courtroom 10" in the "new" court building, unless the judge presiding at a proceeding held in one of these rooms specifically authorizes an additional camera and operator. Not more than two television cameras (or 16mm sound or film cameras), operated by not more than one camera operator each, will be permitted in a courtroom or adjacent areas in any courtroom or adjacent areas in any court of appeals or supreme court proceeding or during a recess in the proceeding. These provisions do not apply to a courtroom which the administrative director has designated as a media courtroom.
2. Number of Photographers. Not more than two photographers operating not more than two still cameras each will be permitted in a courtroom or adjacent areas in any judicial proceeding or during a recess in the proceeding. These provisions

do not apply to a courtroom which the administrative director has designated as a media courtroom.

3. Number of Audio Systems for Radio Broadcast. Not more than two audio systems for radio broadcast purposes will be permitted in a courtroom or adjacent areas in any proceeding or during a recess in the proceeding in a trial court, the court of appeals, or the supreme court. These provisions do not apply to a courtroom which the administrative director has designated as a media courtroom.
4. Audio Pickup. Audio pickup for all media purposes must be made from existing audio systems present in the court facility. The court will provide audio connections for the media at microphone level output.
5. Pooling. "Pooling" arrangements among the media required by these limitations on equipment and personnel are the sole responsibility of the media without resort to the court or court personnel to mediate any dispute as to the appropriate media representative or equipment authorized to cover a particular proceeding. In the absence of media agreement on disputed equipment or personnel issues, the court may exclude all contesting media from a proceeding.
6. Audio Recording. Audio recording of court proceedings are permitted in all court proceedings open to the public, unless the judge presiding at the proceeding determines that the equipment produces a distracting sound or is otherwise obtrusive.
7. Sound and Light Criteria.
 - (a) Type of Television and Audio Equipment Allowed. Only television and audio equipment which does not produce distracting sound or light may be used to cover judicial proceedings. If the judge presiding at a proceeding determines on motion of the parties or on the judge's own motion that the equipment produces distracting sound or light, the judge may order coverage to cease until the distraction has been eliminated. No artificial lighting device of any kind may be employed in connection with a television camera, and no camera may give any indication of whether it is or is not operating, such as by use of a red light to note operational status.
 - (b) Type of Photography Equipment Allowed. Electronic flash or flash cubes, as well as motorized cameras which produce distracting sound, are prohibited from use in any proceeding.

8. Location of Equipment and Personnel.
 - (a) Television Equipment. Television camera equipment must be positioned in a location or locations in the courtroom or adjacent areas as designated by the judge presiding at the proceeding or the judge's designee.
 - (b) Still Photography. A still camera photographer shall position himself or herself in a location in the courtroom or adjacent areas as designated by the judge presiding at the proceeding or the judge's designee, and shall take photographs only from that location. The photographer's movements while taking pictures must be unobtrusive, and he or she should not, for example, assume body positions which would be inappropriate for other spectators.
 - (c) Radio Broadcast Audio Equipment. Radio broadcast audio equipment must be positioned in a location or locations in the courtroom or adjacent areas as designated by the judge presiding at the proceeding or the judge's designee.
9. Movement of Equipment During Proceedings. Television and audio equipment and tripod-mounted still cameras must not be placed in or removed from the courtroom except prior to commencement or after adjournment of proceedings each day, or during a recess.
10. Conference of Counsel. To protect the attorney-client privilege and the effective right to counsel, there may be no broadcast of conferences which occur in the courtroom or the court facility between attorneys and their clients, between co-counsel of a client, or between counsel and the judge held at the bench. As a further precaution, due to the sensitivity of courtroom recording equipment, the judge presiding at the proceeding may inform counsel at the outset of the proceeding that the court will entertain requests from counsel to go off record for attorney-client conferences.
11. Behavior and Dress. Media representatives are expected to present a neat appearance in keeping with the dignity of the proceedings and be sufficiently familiar with court proceedings to conduct themselves so as not to interfere with the dignity of the proceedings, or to distract counsel or the court.
12. Credentials. Media coverage under this plan is allowed only by members of the working press and other media representatives. Media representatives must present their credentials upon request. Before coverage will be allowed, media

representatives shall obtain identification from the area court administrator for the judicial district or the clerk of court in which the proceeding occurs after presenting such credentials as may be requested. Identification must be worn at all times when covering judicial proceedings.

13. Procedures for Obtaining Approval.

- (a) Request to Cover a Trial Court Proceeding. Media personnel desiring to cover a proceeding before a trial court must submit an application to the judge presiding at the proceeding on a form provided by the area court administrator's office. If no judge has been assigned to the proceeding the application must be submitted to the area court administrator and will be forwarded to the judge immediately after assignment is made.
- (b) Request to Cover Appellate Procedures. Media personnel desiring to cover a supreme court or court of appeals proceeding shall submit a request to the court through the office of the clerk of the appellate courts on a form to be provided by the appellate clerk's office.

14. The judge presiding over a proceeding may alter the foregoing provisions of this bulletin for that particular proceeding upon a showing of good cause.

15. Liaison. The area court administrator shall maintain communication with media representatives with respect to coverage of trial court proceedings to ensure smooth working relationships. The clerk of the appellate courts shall maintain this communication with respect to coverage of supreme court or court of appeals proceedings.

Dated: _____

Arthur H. Snowden, II
Administrative Director