

# KENT COUNTY COURTHOUSE

## Media Access Protocol

The following is the established media protocol for all courts in the Kent County Courthouse (17<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court, 61<sup>st</sup> District Court and Kent County Probate Court).

1. The media must electronically submit [SCAO MC27](#) - Request and Notice for Film and Electronic Media Coverage of Court Proceedings as follows:
  - Contact the Kent County Courthouse Mailroom for all 61st District, 17th Circuit and Probate Court requests - [courthousemailroom@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:courthousemailroom@kentcountymi.gov) or fax (616) 632-5485.
2. Forms must be submitted ASAP and, when possible, one to three days prior to the Court proceeding; late requests will be at the discretion of the Judge presiding over the hearing in question. Media request for arraignments must be submitted by 8:00am the day of the proceeding.
3. Media personnel with cameras or equipment will be required to provide and wear employment identification while in the Courthouse. Media passes will be distributed by courthouse security upon entry.
4. The location of the media motion camera in a courtroom will be the same from courtroom to courtroom. (The designated location is the corner on the well side of the bar adjacent to the jury box).
5. Live streaming or broadcasting can be done from the exterior feed located in the center of the east side of the Courthouse adjacent to Ionia Avenue. Signal splitting of the single feed is the responsibility of the user.
6. Microwave transmitting from inside the Courthouse is not allowed without the prior approval of the Facility Manager at (616) 632-5500.
7. Still/press cameras in the courtrooms will be limited to the gallery or audience area and will not be allowed to pass the bar.
8. Security for all Courthouse functions is provided by the Kent County Sheriff's Department. Immediate decisions regarding security will be made by the on-duty deputies for that proceeding. Arranged security will be determined and approved/denied by the Lieutenant or Sergeant and the Facilities Manager.
9. Members of the Jury are not to be filmed or photographed.
10. Media representatives will conduct themselves so as not to disrupt or distract the Jury or the Court.
11. Media exiting prior to the conclusion of a proceeding must do so without distraction to the Court.
12. At Judicial discretion, media can be directed not to film or take pictures of identified Court participants.
13. For good cause, exercising judicial discretion and in accordance with law, media can be prohibited from filming, photographing, or recording specific court proceedings.
14. The Kent County Courthouse is a public facility. This facility, like many others, also has restricted areas where the public and/or media are not permitted. Enforcement of all security and restricted areas will be maintained by the security staff.
15. **Ultimate responsibility for interpretation, enforcement, or departure from the terms of the protocol will rest with the judge presiding over the hearing at issue.**

- **Requests can be made for a hearing to be livestreamed on YouTube or participation via Zoom. Livestream or virtual participation is not automatic, but reviewed after a request and permission granted or denied at the sole discretion of the judge presiding over the hearing.**
16. Upon entering the Court House and going through security screening, Media personnel will sign in at Information desk with cadet.
  17. Sign in procedure will be done on media sign in sheet to include name (printed), News Station they are with, Court Room they are going to and signature.
  18. Media personnel will turn over a valid ID (driver's license or News Station ID) to cadet.
  19. Media personnel will turn over a valid ID (driver's license or News Station ID) to cadet.
  20. At the conclusion of their business in the court house, media personnel will return to the information desk and turn in media pass.
  21. Once the cadet receives the media pass back they will then return the personal ID back, and have the individual sign out.
  22. The cadet will initial in the appropriate box that they have received the media pass back and that the media personnel have concluded their business in the court house.
  23. Court Staff - The signed form should be copied by the Judge's staff and the copy given to the Facility Manager (or one of his/her staff if the Facility Manager isn't available). Please fax this form to (616) 632-5485. This will then be communicated as needed with Security and IT.
  24. The effective date of the protocol is October 1, 2008.