



MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH

COURTROOM TECHNOLOGY TIPS FOR PRACTICING ATTORNEYS AND SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS IN THE TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT, WASHINGTON COUNTY

Washington County Court has a limited number of courtrooms that are equipped with technology and cannot guarantee availability. It is highly recommended you notify the Court a minimum of two weeks in advance of the hearing or trial if you require a technology equipped courtroom.

Advance notice may be provided by written letter to the Court or via telephone communication with Court Administration staff.

With advance notice of need we *may* be able to provide a technology equipped courtroom which contains:

- Document camera – the ability to display exhibits from the witness stand to TV screens in the courtroom. The document camera is operated by the courtroom clerk.
- Counsel table technology hook-ups – the ability to display media or exhibits from the attorney or litigant laptop to the TV screens in the courtroom. The counsel table displays are controlled by the courtroom clerk.
 - A video (VGA) cable is required to connect to the counsel table. It is recommended that you bring your own VGA cable. The court has a few spare VGA cables that have the VGA connection on both ends, however availability cannot be guaranteed. If your computer does not have a VGA connection, you are responsible for bringing your own adapter.
 - An audio cable is required if you intend to play media that contains sound. It is recommended that you bring your own audio cable. The court has a few spare audio cables if needed, however availability cannot be guaranteed.
- Power connection outlets – 2 connections are located in the top of the counsel table, 4 connections are available in the cabinet under the table. If you need additional power connections, please bring your own power strip.
- DVD player with the ability to display DVD contents to the TV screens in the courtroom. The DVD display is controlled by the courtroom clerk. The clerk will run the video straight through and will not be responsible for starting and stopping the video. If you need the video stopped/started, please bring your own technician and equipment to do so.
 - IMPORTANT NOTE: video that has not been professionally produced may **not** be able to be played in the DVD player.
 - Plays: DVD-R/W, DVD+R/W
 - Plays: CD-R/W, WMA, MP3, JPEG
- Wireless microphones – two types of wireless microphones are available for your use during opening and closing statements:
 - Lapel microphone
 - Hand held microphone
- Podium on wheels
- Easel with paper and markers
- Long distance and International phone calls can be arranged only by permission of the Court and advance notice by counsel or self-represented litigants.

What the Court will provide with advance notice of need in **ALL** courtrooms:

- TV and DVD on a portable cart
 - IMPORTANT NOTE: video that has not been professionally produced may **not** be able to be played in the DVD player.
 - Plays: DVD-R/W, DVD+R/W
 - Plays: CD-R/W, WMA, MP3, JPEG
- Power connection outlets – 2 connections are located in the top of the counsel table, 4 connections are available in the floor box under the table. If you need additional power connections, please bring your own power strip.
- Podium on wheels
- Easel with paper and markers
- Long distance and International phone calls can be arranged only by permission of the Court and advance notice by counsel.

Recommendations for successful technology presentations:

- Make advance requests for a technology equipped courtroom if required
- If you are unfamiliar with the court provided equipment, make arrangements with the Court Administrator's office to visit the courtroom and test the equipment in advance of your hearing/trial.
- If you are unfamiliar with the courtroom, make arrangements with the Court Administrator's office for a visit to the courtroom to look at what is available in terms of technology, space and overall set up.
- Allow adequate time to set up and test your equipment on the day of your hearing/trial.
- Technology does fail. No matter how much you test, back up and prepare, a glitch can occur at some point during your trial. You need to be prepared:
 - Have adequate backups to equipment
 - Bring a second laptop loaded with the same software and files that can be substituted in the event of an equipment failure.
 - Consider bringing paper copies of documents and actual photographs that can be displayed using the document camera.
 - Bring your own tech support with you to the courtroom or have them on standby to assist you.
 - Consider bringing a computer operator with you to sit at counsel table and operate the equipment.
- Be aware of the format your video is in and be sure it works on your laptop
 - The only way to guarantee your DVD will be able to be viewed in the courtroom is to bring your own laptop on which the DVD has been test-played.
 - If you intend to offer a DVD as an exhibit, it must be professionally produced in a format that plays in a standard DVD player and must be submitted in a case.

What the Court will **NOT** provide:

- Laptop or desktop computer
- Hard wired internet access
- Access to the Court's secured wireless internet
- Tech support for hardware or software issues. Tech support to start/stop a video during testimony.
- Responsibility for any damage to non-court owned equipment, even when potentially caused by connection to court owned equipment.

NOTE: When you use Court provided equipment, you waive liability on the part of the Court for any damage caused to your equipment from connecting to Court owned equipment. You are responsible for the safety and security of your own equipment. If you elect to leave your equipment in the courtroom during times that court is in recess, you do so at your own risk.