

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
NO. 07-96-19

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN
AND FOR ORANGE AND OSCEOLA
COUNTIES, FLORIDA

AMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER GOVERNING SPECIAL INTEREST/HIGH
PROFILE PROCEEDINGS

WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court has promulgated rules entitled "Standards of Conduct and Technology Governing Electronic Media and Still Photography Coverage of Judicial Proceedings" and;

WHEREAS, special interest/high visibility proceedings require procedures and special accommodations to ensure full access without compromising the right of any litigant to a fair and orderly trial and;

WHEREAS, the presiding judge has the authority to order compliance with procedures for governing media coverage of court proceedings and;

WHEREAS, the presiding judge has the authority to determine whether the case he or she is presiding over is a special interest/high profile case and to determine whether to invoke this Order;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Belvin Perry, Jr., pursuant to the authority vested in me as Chief Judge of the Ninth Judicial Circuit and in accordance with rule 2.170 of the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration as amended in In Re: Amendments to Rule of Judicial Administration, 650 So. 2d 30 (Fla. 1995), it is ordered that the below stated procedures shall be followed when the presiding judge invokes this Order:

I. MEDIA COORDINATOR:

(1) The Court Administrator's Office in conjunction with the Orange and Osceola County Sheriff's Offices, is authorized to implement the procedures necessary to achieve the goals of the Order.

(2) The Court Administrator shall designate a member of the court's administrative staff to serve as the court's media coordinator/information officer. This person shall serve as the liaison between the court and the media. As information officer, this person shall be available to the media to answer questions regarding the proceedings while court is in session.

(3) If necessary, the court's media coordinator upon proper notification, shall convene a meeting of interested media representatives.

(4) At the meeting, if necessary, media representatives from video, audio and print media, shall designate (a) the pool television camera person for coverage inside the courtroom, (b) the pool still photographer for inside the courtroom, (c) the pool television camera person for coverage outside the courtroom, and (d) the pool still photographer for coverage outside the courtroom. Any "pooling" arrangements shall be the sole responsibility of the media without calling upon the presiding judge to mediate any dispute as to the appropriate media representative or equipment authorized to cover a particular proceeding. In the absence of advance media agreement on disputed equipment or personnel issues, the presiding judge shall exclude all contesting media personnel from a proceeding. Additionally, space shall be

allocated on an equitable basis and from among those holding press credentials for courtroom seating assignments in the area reserved for media representatives.

(5) Only one videotape electronic camera operated by one camera person shall be permitted in the court proceeding. Only one still photographer, using only one still camera, will be permitted in the court proceeding. Only one audio system for radio broadcast purposes shall be permitted in the court proceeding. Audio pickup for all media purposes shall be accomplished from existing audio systems present in the court facility. If no technically suitable audio system exists in the court facility, microphones and related wiring essential for media purposes shall be unobtrusive and shall be located in places designated in advance of any proceeding by the presiding judge or the Chief Judge.

(6) When space is available within a close proximity to a special interest/high visibility proceeding, the court administrator shall designate an area to serve as a media center. This facility, under the supervision of the court's media coordinator, will be open during normal working hours to media representatives with press credentials. The center will accommodate monitors and other equipment provided by media to permit coverage of the proceeding by media representatives who are unable to obtain seating in the courtroom.

II. COURTROOM ADMITTANCE:

In order to ensure the preservation of decorum and integrity of the judicial process, and to accommodate the parties, media, and the general public during the litigation of the case, the court hereby establishes the following procedures to govern media access to court proceedings in the central courthouse:

(1) All television, radio and print reporters, camera person and photographers are to exhibit media credentials at all times.

(2) Media personnel may not cover or attend "side bar" conferences and "bench" conferences.

(3) So as not to interfere with court proceedings or with a litigant or interested party's rights, no interviews shall be permitted in the presence of the jury or any member thereof, and no interview shall be permitted within the courthouse which unreasonably interferes with the safety, security, or movement of persons in the courtroom, doorways, hallways, and other areas of the courthouse, or which disrupts any court proceeding.

(4) To protect the attorney-client privilege and the effective right to counsel, there shall be no audio pickup or broadcast of conferences that occur in the court between attorneys and their clients, between co-counsel of a client, or between counsel and the presiding judge held at the bench.

(5) The videotape camera and still camera must not produce distracting sound or light. The still camera must be enclosed in a silencing device. No equipment shall be set up or taken down while the court is in session. Spotlights or flash units should be used in the interview areas only and not in the courtrooms.

(6) So as not to cause a hazard to the public, media personnel should not station themselves in the doorways of the courthouse for the purpose of recording courtroom proceedings or the entrances and/or exits of litigants, and media personnel shall not station themselves in the hallways of the courthouse in any manner that unreasonably interferes with the safety, security, or movement of persons in such hallways, or which is disruptive to any court proceeding.

(7) For the safety of the public, media personnel should ensure that no hallways, exits or

emergency exits are blocked by media equipment and/or personnel.

(8) The media should provide sufficient notice to the Court Administrator's Office of court proceedings they wish to cover so that arrangements can be made for media personnel/equipment.

(9) The presiding judge shall designate or instruct the court's media coordinator to designate a specified location in the courtroom for the pool television camera person and pool still photographer. These persons shall comply strictly with the Supreme Court's rules Governing Electronic Media and Still Photography Coverage of Judicial Proceedings.

(10) The presiding judge shall designate a specified number of seats in the public area of the courtroom for the following categories of individuals: (a) the litigants, defendants, victims and these persons' family and friends and court personnel, (b) media representatives, and (c) general public.

III. OTHER NEEDS:

(1) By arrangement with the court's media coordinator, the courtroom will be made available to the media before the proceeding for installation of necessary equipment and cable.

(2) All cables must be located so as not to constitute a safety hazard or an obstruction to pedestrian traffic.

(3) Satellite trucks and/or remote/live trucks must be parked in an area designated by the City of Orlando or the City of Kissimmee and/or the Orange and Osceola County Sheriff's Offices.

(4) The media shall reimburse Orange County and Osceola County for costs such as additional cables and equipment which the court incurs from the media's request for coverage of court proceedings.

(5) For court proceedings held outside of the courthouse such as jury viewings of the scene of the crime, the media shall comply with the instructions of the presiding judge and the Orange and Osceola County Sheriff's Offices pertaining to media coverage at locations outside of the courthouse.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE:

Administrative Order No. 07-96-05 is vacated and this Order shall become effective immediately.

DONE AND ORDERED at Orlando, Florida, this 5th day of November, 1996.

/s/ Belvin Perry, Jr.
Belvin Perry, Jr.
Chief Judge

Copies to:

All Circuit & County Judges, Ninth Judicial Circuit
State Attorney's Office, Ninth Judicial Circuit
Public Defender's Office, Ninth Judicial Circuit
General Counsel, Orange County Sheriff's Office
Orange County Corrections

Orange County Bar Association
Bar Briefs, Orange County Bar Association
Paul C. Perkins Bar Association
Hispanic Bar Association
Clerk of Courts, Orange County
Orange County Law Library
Clerk of Courts, Osceola County
The Osceola County Bar Association
The Osceola County Law Library
The Osceola County Sheriff's Office
Office of the Statewide Prosecutor
Central Florida Criminal Defense Attorneys Association

Administrative Order 07-96-19