



VERMONT SUPREME COURT

POLICY FOR USE OF SUPREME COURT COURTROOM AND ADJOINING PUBLIC SPACE

I. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

Pursuant to the Vermont Constitution, the Supreme Court has “administrative control of all the courts of the state.” Vt. Const. ch. II, § 30. The Court is responsible for security. 29 V.S.A. § 171(a)(2), (3). The Court Administrator has authority to “promulgate policies governing operations for the courts including access to and conduct in Judiciary buildings.” A.O. 3, § 2; 4 V.S.A. § 21 (providing that Supreme Court sets duties of Court Administrator).

This policy pertains to court facilities at 111 State Street, including the courtroom, public hallways, and meeting rooms directly accessible from public hallways. It does not include judicial, clerk, staff, security offices or other areas of the building not accessible to the public, such as the third-floor conference room.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that court facilities are used appropriately and with proper business objectives in mind. See 3 V.S.A. § 1203f (providing that public servants must not use state facilities “for any purpose other than for official State business unless the use is expressly permitted or required by law or by written agency, departmental, or institutional policy or rule”). All uses must be conducted in a manner that: maintains the orderly conduct of court business in a neutral forum free of actual or perceived partiality; preserves the physical condition of furniture and equipment; avoids any appearance of bias, prejudice, or favoritism; maintains safety and security; and avoids any impairment, disruption, or distraction to the Court’s business or the administration of justice for court personnel, litigants, or other users of court facilities.

II. SECURITY

- A. Court facilities must be secured at all times outside of normal hours of operation.
- B. The courtroom must be locked when not in use.
- C. Offices, judicial chambers, and other private areas are not available for any use by persons or entities outside of the Judiciary.
- D. Uses outside of regular business hours must be approved in advance by the Court Administrator.

III. COSTS

A nonjudiciary user may be required to pay the reasonable cost of operation, including costs for cleaning and security.

IV. PERMISSIVE USES

- A. Court facilities may be used by judiciary personnel if space is available and properly reserved. This includes historic uses of court facilities for judiciary and judiciary-related events such as school tours, moot court, oversight committee meetings, commission meetings, and swearing-in ceremonies. Use by the Supreme Court takes priority.

- B. Court facilities may be used by other governmental entities with prior approval by the State Court Administrator. Any use must be in keeping with the purposes and objectives of this policy and not interfere or conflict with court operations. This includes activities connected to the Vermont Supreme Court Gallery exhibitions.

V. PROHIBITED USES

- A. Court facilities may not be used for commercial purposes or for advertising of commercial activities.
- B. Court facilities may not be used for political purposes or for advertising of political activities.

VI. SUPREME COURT COURTROOM

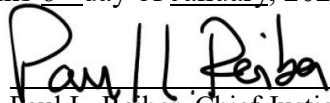
Any use of the Supreme Court courtroom is subject to the following additional restrictions:

- A. Any event must observe the applicable occupancy limit (currently 49 attendees in the courtroom as per the Fire Marshal).
- B. No food or drinks (other than water) are allowed in the courtroom.
- C. The courtroom must be reserved prior to use. A reservation must be made by contacting the Supreme Court at supremecourt@vtcourts.gov. The request must indicate the duration of the requested use.
- D. If the use requires moving furniture or specialized technology (such as livestreaming or remote participation) a request to use the room must be made to supremecourt@vtcourts.gov, specifying what room modification and technical requirements are needed. The request must be made in advance—preferably at least a week prior to the event.

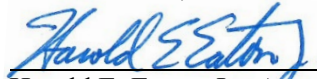
VII. EXCEPTIONS

The State Court Administrator in consultation with the Court may grant exceptions to the above provisions for good cause shown, provided that the use is consistent with the scope and purposes of this policy. The occupancy limit of the courtroom may not be waived. Any use may be conditioned on terms to ensure uninterrupted access to justice and adequate security, and to avoid unnecessary expense or disruption of judiciary activities.

Dated in Chambers at Montpelier, Vermont, this 6th day of January, 2025.



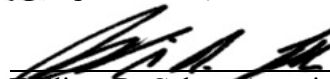
Paul L. Reiber, Chief Justice



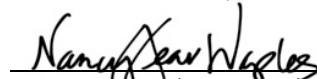
Harold E. Eaton, Jr., Associate Justice



Karen R. Carroll, Associate Justice



William D. Cohen, Associate Justice



Nancy J. Waples, Associate Justice