

**IN THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER S-2007-038  
(Supersedes Administrative Order S-1996-109)**

**PHOTOGRAPHING, RECORDING OR BROADCASTING  
IN COURTHOUSE FACILITIES**

**WHEREAS** Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.450 (“Rule 2.450”) provides for technological coverage of judicial proceedings; and

**WHEREAS** Rule 2.450 does not authorize photographing, recording or broadcasting in the corridors, hallways, or lobbies of courthouse facilities; and

**WHEREAS** photographing, recording or broadcasting in the corridors, hallways, or lobbies of courthouse facilities has the potential of disrupting other court proceedings and functions and creating safety hazards; and

**WHEREAS** Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215(b) authorizes the chief judge to regulate the use of the courthouse facilities; and

**WHEREAS** the undersigned chief judge wishes to delegate authority under Rule 2.450 to the presiding judges for determining location of media equipment in the courtrooms; and

**WHEREAS** the court must carefully balance the media’s news gathering right with the dignity of the judicial process and safety concerns of the public; and

**WHEREAS** it is necessary for the efficient and proper administration of justice in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit to update the procedures regarding photographing, recording or broadcasting in the courthouse facilities; it is therefore

**ORDERED:**

**1. Definitions**

For purposes of this administrative order, the following terms have the following meanings:

“Courthouse facility” means any building or other structure in which judicial proceedings may be conducted, including, but not limited to: the George Edgecomb Courthouse (800 East Twiggs Street, Tampa); the Courthouse Annex (800 East Kennedy Boulevard, Tampa); the Courthouse North Annex (801 East Twiggs Street, Tampa); the building located at 700 East Twiggs Street, Tampa; the Traffic Court Complex (known as

Floriland Business Center - 9309 North Florida Avenue, Tampa); and the Plant City Courthouse (302 North Michigan Street, Plant City).

“Photographing, recording or broadcasting” means using portable television cameras, still cameras, cellular telephone cameras, audio system equipment or any other electronic device to take a photograph, make a record or transmit as a broadcast.

**2. Obstructionist Conduct Prohibited**

No person, including but not limited to, photographers, videographers, news reporters, and other media personnel, shall obstruct or impede in any way the progress of persons on their way into or out from any courtroom or judicial chambers or office, nor shall any person obstruct the ingress or egress of courthouse facilities.

**3. Limitations on Photographing, Recording or Broadcasting in a Courthouse Facility**

A. Lobbies

Except as provided in this subsection, neither photographing, recording, nor broadcasting is permitted in the lobbies of any courthouse facility from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Subject to the limitations in section 2 of this administrative order, photographing, recording, or broadcasting is only permitted in designated areas in the first floor lobby of the George Edgecomb Courthouse at any reasonable time. *See* attached diagram. Any individual or organization seeking the use of the lobby in any courthouse facility except the Edgecomb Courthouse for photographing, recording or broadcasting before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:30 p.m. shall provide advanced notice to the chief judge or the chief judge’s designee.

B. Corridors and Hallways

Neither photographing, recording, nor broadcasting is permitted in any corridors or hallways of any courthouse facility between 8:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., unless otherwise authorized by the chief judge or the chief judge’s designee. Any individual or organization seeking the use of a corridor or hallway of any courthouse facility for photographing, recording or broadcasting before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:30 p.m. shall provide advanced notice to the chief judge or the chief judge’s designee.

C. Staircases and Stairwells

Neither photographing, recording nor broadcasting is permitted at any time in any staircases or stairwells in any courthouse facility.

D. Courtrooms

i. Court in Session

Subject to the limitations enumerated in Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.450(a), media coverage of judicial proceedings shall be allowed. The position of any cameras, audio system equipment or any other electronic devices to take a photograph, make a record or transmit as a broadcast shall be determined by the presiding judge. The court's public information officer may assist the presiding judge in determining an appropriate courtroom location for the media equipment.

ii. Court out of Session

Any individual or organization seeking the use of any courtroom for photographing, recording or broadcasting during a time when court is not in session shall make advanced application to the chief judge or the chief judge's designee. An individual or organization shall receive specific authorization from the chief judge or the chief judge's designee prior to photographing, recording or broadcasting in a courtroom during any time when court is not in session.

E. Media Room

On-camera interviews may be conducted at any time in the designated media room.

F. Noise Reduction

Any photographing, recording, or broadcasting permitted in a courthouse facility under this administrative order shall be conducted in such fashion as to cause minimum noise and distraction.

**4. Court Orders**

To the extent any judge enters an order regarding the control of persons in courthouse facility hallways, corridors, courtrooms or judicial chambers that is more restrictive than the provisions in this administrative order, all persons, including media personnel, shall recognize and comply with such order.

**5. Media Coverage of Judicial Proceedings Not Effected**

This administrative order in no way is intended to restrict the ability of the media to cover public judicial proceedings as provided in Rule 2.450.

**6. Sanctions**

Any person who willfully violates this administrative order shall be subject to the contempt powers of the court and to other appropriate disciplinary measures.

**7. Posting of this Administrative Order**

This administrative order shall be posted in a prominent place in each courthouse facility and on the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit's Internet web site.

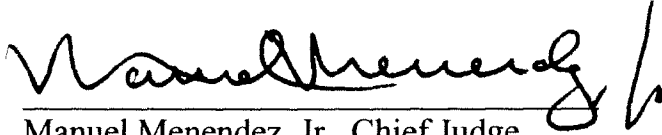
**8. Previous Administrative Order Superseded**

This administrative order supersedes Administrative Order S-1996-109.

**9. Effective Date**

This administrative order is effective immediately.

**DONE AND ORDERED** in chambers in Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida this 28<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2007.

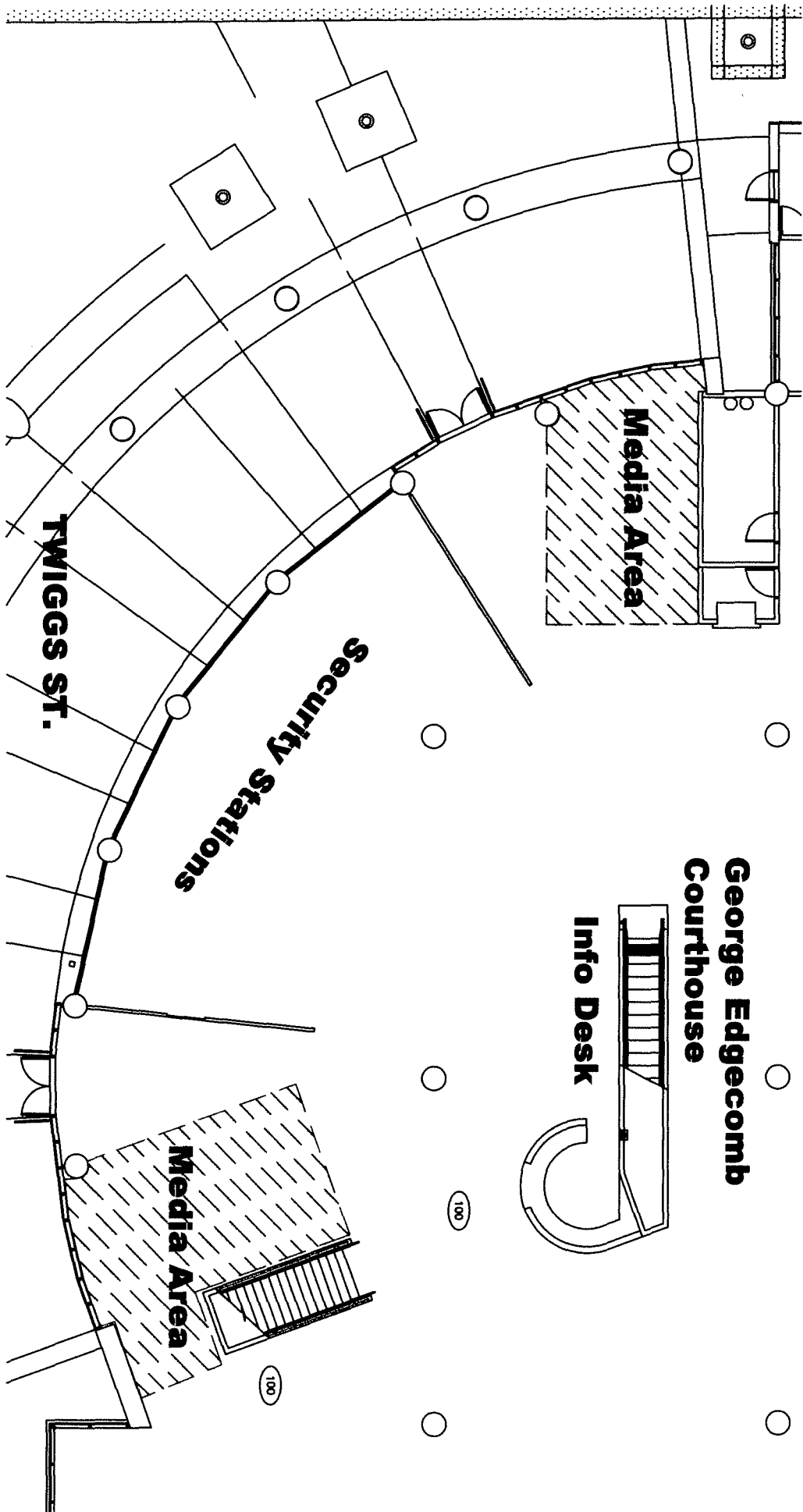
  
Manuel Menendez, Jr., Chief Judge

Attachment – Media area of the first floor lobby of the George Edgecomb Courthouse

Original to: Pat Frank, Clerk of the Circuit Court

Copy to: All Judges  
Michael L. Bridenback, Court Administrator  
Mark Ober, State Attorney  
Julianne Holt, Public Defender  
David Gee, Sheriff  
Pat Bean, County Administrator  
Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners  
Local News Media  
All Court Programs and Departments

**JEFFERSON ST.**



**TWIGGS ST.**

**Security Stations**

**Media Area**

**George Edgecomb  
Courthouse**

**Info Desk**

**Media Area**

100

100