

Rule 10: General Rules of Court Decorum and Safety

- 10.1** No person shall be permitted in the working area of Court staff, Topeka Police Department Court Officers or probation officers unless so authorized by the Administrative Judge, except those city employees whose duties require their presence therein. Furthermore, no persons shall be allowed into judge's chambers unless they have first been authorized to be admitted by a judge or by personnel who office in judge's chambers. Judges chambers include all offices and conference rooms located behind the security door on the 2nd floor, southwest corner, of the Court facility.
- 10.2** Law enforcement, Animal Control and Code Enforcement officers and Zoning/Planning Inspectors shall be subject to the rules enumerated in rule 10.1 and shall further be subject to the following rules:
- A. Those officers or inspectors who are witnesses for the City of Topeka shall be quietly seated in such place(s) as may be permitted or designated by the Court.
 - B. Inquiries by officers or inspectors concerning those cases pending on the current day's dockets in which they are scheduled as City of Topeka witnesses shall be made to the Prosecutor or Court staff prior to the commencement of the docket call therein, or following the final disposition of such docket, or at such time the Court is not in session. Such inquiries are not to be directed to the courtroom docket clerks or Prosecutors while Court is in session.
- 10.3** No weapons are permitted in Court except as carried or possessed by law enforcement, Animal Control and Code Enforcement officers and Zoning/Planning Inspectors, or as needed for evidence in Court, without the permission of the Court. The Court may require that any firearm intended for introduction as an exhibit be presented to security staff for a safety check prior to its being brought into the Courthouse. However, none of the above-referenced authorized persons are permitted to bring a weapon to Court for any case in which he/she is the accused. Any employee wishing to carry or possess a firearm shall follow the procedure set forth in Personnel Manual Section 10.9.
- 10.4** Any person not identifiable as an employee of the Municipal Court, or as a uniformed or otherwise identifiable Topeka Police Officer, Code Enforcement or Animal Control Officer or Zoning/Planning Inspector or other recognizable law enforcement authority or as a Court Official displaying a City of Topeka photo identification card designating the person as such and who wishes to conduct business with or witness a proceeding of the Municipal Court, is subject to a magnetometer, wand, and personal search, as well as an x-ray scan and physical inspection of his/her personal belongings, before entry is permitted. Such search may include briefcases, parcels, purses, bags, or other containers carried by persons seeking admission. Any items discovered during the course of these searches which, in the judgment of the attending security personnel, might be considered a possible threat to the safety of others if used as a weapon, may be impounded for return to the relinquishing individual upon departure from the Court or as soon as practicable thereafter pending a decision as to its lawfulness. Persons refusing to relinquish weapons to Court Security may be prohibited from entering the Court facility. If any object so surrendered to the care of the Court is determined to be contraband under local, state or federal law or court rule or otherwise being possessed illegally, it may be confiscated and ordered disposed of

or held as evidence by the Administrative Judge and the person from whom it was obtained arrested and charged with appropriate statutory violations. Nothing in this section shall be construed to be other than a discretionary function of a duly-empowered Topeka Police Department Court Officer.

- 10.5** All persons who wish to do business in Municipal Court will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with and appropriate to the operation of a court of law. All persons in or near any Courtroom or any of the office areas of the Court staff, probation staff or Topeka Police Department Court Officers will conduct their conversations and other activities in such a manner as not to disrupt the business and operation of the Municipal Court, the Judges, the Municipal Court staff and personnel. Any misconduct may be punishable by contempt of Court or other appropriate sanctions by the Court.
- 10.6** Persons bringing children to the Municipal Court offices will keep such children within adult supervision and reasonably quiet so as not to disrupt the business and operations of the Court, the Judges, the Municipal Court staff and Court personnel. Children are not permitted in Courtrooms unless specific permission is granted by a judge.
- 10.7** While Court is in session the Topeka Police Department Court Officer shall protect the Judge and Court staff from non-court personnel who may attempt to approach the bench, clerk station, witness stand, or attorney tables except as otherwise directed or permitted by the Judge, the Clerk, or by the attorneys involved in such person's case before the Court.
- 10.8** All personal or portable telephones, audible pagers and other electronic devices brought into a Courtroom shall be turned off or silenced while Court is in session. Any audible electronic equipment creating noise in the Courtroom, which is not authorized by the Court, is subject to confiscation, and the person who possessed such item may be subject to contempt of court or other appropriate sanctions by the Court.
- 10.9** All persons attending Court are expected to be dressed appropriately for the dignity and decorum of a court proceeding. All persons attending Court should wear, at a minimum, a shirt (or blouse, sweater, etc.), pants or skirt, and shoes. Shorts, tank tops and swimwear are not appropriate attire for Court proceedings. Hats and head wear shall be removed in the Courtroom. Persons dressed inappropriately may be required to exit the Courtroom and may be subject to contempt citations. Moreover, anyone ordered to exit the Court due to inappropriate attire may be required to post a cash bond of no less than \$100.00 and acquire a new court setting.

The conduct and demeanor of attorneys when present during any Court proceeding shall reflect respect for the dignity and authority of the Court. The proceedings conducted in Court shall be maintained by the Court as an objective search for the applicable facts and the correct principles of law. Attorneys should be dressed appropriately for the decorum of a courtroom proceeding. No shorts or jeans are permitted. Attorneys shall be seated in the Courtroom gallery until their case is called.

- 10.10** Food and drink will not be brought into the Courtroom except upon the express permission of the Judge. Spectators will not be permitted to engage in any activity which interferes with Court proceedings.

- 10.11** No spectator, counsel or party attending a Court proceeding shall carry a sign or display pins, buttons or other materials, which is designed to communicate a position or message to others while Court is in session.
- 10.12** Attorneys and pro se litigants shall rise when addressing the Court, and shall make all statements to the Court from the counsel table or the lectern facing the Court. They shall not approach the bench, except with the permission of the Judge. Unless the Judge specifically prescribes otherwise, an attorney must stand when questioning a witness and should refrain from moving about except as may be necessary for the presentation of exhibits or other assistance to the Court.
- 10.13** While questioning witnesses, attorneys or pro se litigants shall stand at the counsel table or at the lectern. They shall not approach the witness unless permitted by the Judge. Only one attorney for each party may participate in the examination or cross-examination of a witness.
- 10.14** Pro se defendants should be prepared to present their cases in a proper manner. It is not the Court's duty or responsibility to represent or instruct the pro se defendant on court procedure, evidence, rules, or how to defend a case.