

VAN BUREN COUNTY – ALL COURT POLICY		
SUBJECT: COURTROOM & HEARING ROOM DECORUM	SECTION: VBC 0000-0099 General	DATE: 4/22/2015
PREPARED BY: Policy written by Frank Hardester, Circuit Court Administrator Reviews completed by: Judicial Council and Court Administration	NUMBER: VBC 0000	RECINDS: n/a

REFERENCES:

- Michigan Code of Judicial Conduct – Canon 3 A(2)
- Administrative Order 1989-1
- MCR 8.110(C)(2)(c)
- MCR 8.112

DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS: None.

BACKGROUND: This policy is designed to protect the dignity and professional image of the court and to provide court participants with guidelines for appropriate attire and behavior. Therefore, all courts in Van Buren County are adopting this policy in an effort to establish courtroom etiquette and prevent distractions to ensure the fair administration of justice.

POLICY STATEMENT:

This policy applies to the conduct and dress of those who attend court, including attorneys, litigants, witnesses, jurors, and interested parties.

Court proceedings shall be conducted in a manner that protects the dignity and seriousness of the proceedings. Conduct by any person that may interfere with the decorum of the court is prohibited and may result in removal of that person from the court.

Persons attending court are required to abide by the following guidelines, which are representative rather than all-inclusive, unless explicitly authorized by a judge or hearing officer:

A. General

1. Smoking, tobacco products, eating, drinking, and gum chewing are not allowed in any courtroom/hearing room at any time. Litigants and jurors are allowed to use cups and consume drinking water provided by the court in the courtroom / hearing room.
2. Taking photographs is not allowed in the courtroom or hearing room.
3. Demonstrations, placards, badges, T-shirts, and clothing that espouse a position on an issue before the court shall not be allowed.
4. Electronic devices that have the capacity to disrupt court proceedings must be turned off or set for silent notification during sessions of the court.

B. Attire

1. Attorneys shall wear proper business attire while attending court.
2. Jurors, parties, and witnesses should wear proper attire while attending court.

3. Clothing such as shorts, halter tops, sweat suits, denim, swimwear, exercise attire, and revealing garments shall not be permitted.
4. The jury clerk shall assist the court in ensuring compliance with this policy and may require a juror whose clothing does not comport with this policy to obtain appropriate attire or to report for service on a later date.

C. Conduct

1. Individuals other than those giving testimony shall stand at all times when addressing the court or jury, or when examining witnesses, unless excused from doing so by the court.
2. Parties and attorneys should refer to Judges as "Your Honor" or "Judge," not by the judge's first name or in another informal manner inside the courtroom.
3. Parties and attorneys should refer to Magistrates/Referees as "Your Honor" or "Magistrate" / "Referee," not by the magistrate's/referee's first name or in, another manner inside the courtroom / hearing room.

D. Discretion

It is within the judge's / hearing officer's discretion to have an individual removed from the courtroom if the individual's conduct or dress does not comport with this policy.

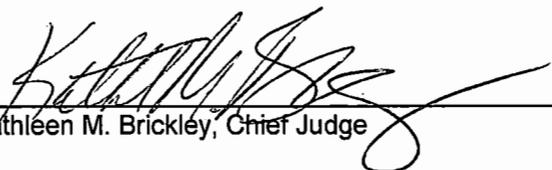
The court will consider exceptions for those who must wear special attire based on a medical condition, or cultural or religious reason. Documentation to support the exception may be requested.

FORMS USED: None.

APPROVAL:

Reviewed at Judicial Council 4/20/2015

Date: April 22, 2015



Kathleen M. Brickley, Chief Judge