

Electronic Evidence in Montana's Federal Courtrooms

**U.S. District Court & U.S. Bankruptcy Court
District of Montana**





Available Methods of Digital Delivery are:

- document cameras for paper, x-ray or photographs
- connections for computer-based evidence presentation, i.e. laptop, iPad, Surface
- ergonomic podiums and witness stands with touch-screen displays for annotation and printing
- integrated video conferencing
- digital audio recording



Sound Systems

All courtrooms are equipped with state-of-the-art sound systems which include:

- Room-wide speaker system
- Microphones at lecterns, counsel tables and witness box
- Wireless microphone for jury selection
- Audio inputs at counsel tables
- Hearing impaired/interpreter infrared headphones
- Jury audio-masking system for sidebar conferences (white noise)
- Audio Conferencing (teleconferencing)



Video Systems

- VGA & HDMI computer-based connections at counsel tables and/or lecterns, i.e. laptop, iPad, Surface (see individual courthouse locations for specific information on what is available at that site)
- Integrated video conferencing systems for remote appearances

*Video inputs: Standard male cable connections for VGA 15 pin or HDMI or both at counsel tables and/or lectern.

- Courtrooms with VGA-only, support only Standard Definition (SD), standard-screen (4:3) video.
- Courtrooms HDMI support High Definition (HD), wide-screen (16:9) video.
- Courtrooms with both support both.



Digital Audio Recording/Realtime Reporting

For The Record (FTR) is predominantly used in Bankruptcy proceedings and in proceedings before Magistrate Judges.

Court reporters are predominately used form proceedings before Article III Judges. Realtime reporting must be requested in advance by filing a *Notice of Intent to Utilize Realtime Reporting* with the Court.

Consult District Court's and Bankruptcy Court's websites for more information on transcript requests and RealTime availability.



Types of Software Required to Present Electronic Evidence in the Courtroom

Since electronic evidence is simply a straight video/audio display from a laptop or similar device, the Court does not have any electronic evidence presentation software requirements.

Basically, the software is dependent on your law firm requirements, ease of use, technical support and financial considerations. There are many software applications available.



How do I request to use electronic evidence for court?

Electronic evidence presentation, video testimony, realtime reporting and wifi access require notification and in some instances permission from the Court prior to the proceeding.

Please refer to the case Scheduling Order for more information on requesting these items.



Digital Annotations to Evidence

- Electronically displayed evidence (i.e. documents and images) can be digitally annotated by the attorney's touchscreen monitor at the lectern and witness' touchscreen in the witness stand.
- Each touchscreen allows its operator to freehand draw colorful lines and pointers to highlight displayed documents for discussion. These annotations are an overlay to the evidence and are not permanent modifications to the evidence.
- The annotated evidence can be “captured” at any point during examination with a print-screen feature and printed in color by the courtroom clerk.
- **Annotated evidence is not an exhibit unless printed during the proceeding and admitted as an exhibit.**
- Be sure to clear all annotations when examination is completed. Annotations can be cleared by either touchscreen or by the courtroom clerk.

Electronics Available By Courthouse Location: Billings

Courtroom	Audio Conf	Video Conf	Digital Audio Recording	Interpreter System	Listening Aid	Evidence Presentation	Wifi Access
Big Horn	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ HDMI & VGA*	✓
Snowy Mountain	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ HDMI & VGA*	✓
Ella Knowles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ HDMI & VGA*	✓
						HDMI preferred as VGA requires a converter and can make images blurry	

Electronics Available By Courthouse Location: Butte

Butte Courtroom	Audio Conf	Video Conf	Digital Audio Recording	Interpreter System	Listening Aid	Evidence Presentation	Wifi Access
District & Bankruptcy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ VGA & HDMI	

Electronics Available By Courthouse Location: Great Falls

Courtroom	Audio Conf	Video Conf	Digital Audio Recording	Interpreter System	Listening Aid	Evidence Presentation	Wifi Access
Charles Pray	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ VGA only	✓
Chief Mountain	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ VGA only	✓

Electronics Available By Courthouse Location: Helena

Courtroom	Audio Conf	Video Conf	Digital Audio Recording	Interpreter System	Listening Aid	Evidence Presentation	Wifi Access
Courtroom #1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ VGA only	✓
Courtroom #2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ VGA only	✓

Electronics Available By Courthouse Location: Missoula

Courtroom	Audio Conf	Video Conf	Digital Audio Recording	Interpreter System	Listening Aid	Evidence Presentation	Wifi Access
Article III Courtroom	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ VGA & HDMI	✓
Magistrate Courtroom	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ VGA & HDMI	✓



Jury Evidence Recording System (JERS)

The U.S. District Court for the District of Montana utilizes the digital Jury Evidence Recording System (JERS) to allow evidence admitted at trial to be viewed via touchscreen monitor by the jury during deliberations.

JERS reduces the need to handle physical evidence while allowing the jury to view evidence multiple times, play audio and video recordings, and zoom in on pictures and documents.