

STATE BOARD OF WORKERS COMPENSATION
Policy for electronic and photographic news coverage of proceedings

Unless otherwise provided by rule of the State Board of Workers Compensation or otherwise ordered by the assigned judge after appropriate hearing (conducted after notice to all parties and counsel of record) and findings, representatives of the print and electronic public media may be present at and unobtrusively make written notes and sketches pertaining to any proceedings at the Board. In any event, said representatives are to provide the assigned Judge advance notice of their intent to attend and to make such notes and sketches so the Judge may insure that they do not otherwise interfere with the proceedings. However, due to the inherent distractive nature of electronic or photographic equipment, representatives of the public media utilizing such equipment or seeking permission to do so are subject to the discretion of the Presiding Judge as well as the following restrictions and conditions;

(A) Persons desiring to broadcast/record/photograph proceedings must file a timely written request (form attached as Exhibit "A"), no later than fourteen days before the subject proceeding, with the judge involved and all parties of record prior to the hearing or trial, specifying the particular proceeding for which such coverage is intended; the type equipment to be used in the hearing room; the proceeding to be covered; and the person responsible for installation and operation of such equipment,

(B) Approval of the Judge to broadcast/record/photograph a proceeding, if granted, shall be granted without partiality or preference to any person, news agency, or type of electronic or photographic coverage, who agrees to abide by and conform to these rules, up to the capacity of the space designated for in the hearing room. Violation of these rules will be grounds for a reporter/technician to be removed or excluded from the hearing room (and contempt proceeding initiated),

(C) The Judge may exercise discretion and require pooled coverage which would allow only one still photographer, one television camera and attendant, and one radio or tape recorder outlet and attendant. Photographers, electronic reporters and technicians shall be expected to arrange among themselves pooled coverage if so directed by the judge and to present the Judge with a schedule and description of the pooled coverage. If the covering persons cannot agree on such a schedule or arrangement, the schedule and arrangements for pooled coverage may be designated at the judge's discretion,

(D) The positioning and removal of cameras and electronic devices shall be done quietly and if possible, before or after the hearing or during recesses; in no event shall such disturb the proceedings. In every such case, equipment should be in place and ready to operate before the time the hearing is scheduled to begin.

(E) Overhead lights in the hearing room shall be switched on and off only by board personnel. No other lights, flashbulbs, flashes or sudden light changes may be used unless the judge approves beforehand.

(F) No adjustment of central audio system shall be made except by persons authorized by the Board. Audio recordings of the proceedings will be from one source, normally by connection to the central audio system. Upon prior approval of the Board, other microphones may be added in an unobtrusive manner to the public address system.

(G) All television cameras, still cameras and tape recorders shall be assigned to a specific portion of the public- area of the hearing room or specially designed access areas, and such equipment will not be permitted to be removed or relocated during the court proceedings.

(H) Still cameras must have quiet functioning shutters and advancers. Movie and television cameras and broadcasting and recording devices must be quiet running. If any equipment is determined by the judge to be of such noise as to be distractive to the proceedings, then such equipment can be excluded from the hearing room by the Judge.

(I) Reporters, photographers, and technicians must have and produce upon request of Board officials credentials identifying them and the media company for which they work.

(J) Proceedings shall not be interrupted by a reporter or technician with a technical or an equipment problem.

(K) Reporters, photographers, and technicians should do everything possible to avoid attracting attention to themselves. Reporters, photographers, and technicians will be accorded full right of access to proceedings for obtaining public information within the requirements of due process of law, so long as it is done without detracting from the dignity and decorum of the hearing.

(L) Other than as permitted by these rules and guidelines, there will be no photographing, radio or television broadcasting, including video taping pertaining to any proceedings on the floor where the , hearing or proceeding is being held or any other floor whereon is located a hearing, whether or not the hearing is actually in session.

(M) No interviews pertaining to a particular proceeding will be conducted In the hearing room except with the permission of the judge.

(N) Upon receipt of request pursuant to exhibit "A" which is attached hereto, the board shall give notice to all parties involved in the case and field judges shall contact the administrator of the facility at which the proceeding is going to be held, if the proceeding is not scheduled to be held at a board facility, to determine that facilities rules or requirements with respect to the request and the granting of the request shall be, in addition to the Judge's discretion, subject to that facility's administrator giving approval of the request.

(O) A request for installation and use of electronic recording, transmission, videotaping or motion picture or still photography of any proceeding shall be evaluated pursuant to the standards set forth In QCGA § 15-1-10.1.