



COURTROOM TECHNOLOGY MANUAL

United States Courthouse
413 Middle Street
New Bern, NC 28560
(252) 638-8534


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I. INTRODUCTION

Courtrooms and hearing rooms within the Eastern District of North Carolina are equipped with a variety of technologies to enhance the court's ability to meet the needs of the bar and public. The evidence presentation system allows attorneys, their staff and authorized *pro se* litigants (collectively referred to as "users" or "operators" for the purposes of this manual) to present and display many forms of evidence and testimony to the judge and jury.

This manual depicts the technology available in the courtroom in New Bern, North Carolina. Please reference the [Appendix](#) for detailed photos of equipment discussed within this manual. Users with certain versions of adobe may select the 'previous page' button  or press 'alt left arrow' to return to their original location within this document. All other users should scroll up or down to return to their original location within this document.

To view the technology available in the other courthouses in the district, [click here](#).

II. REQUIREMENTS

A. Training

At least ten (10) business days prior to the scheduled proceeding, first time courtroom technology users must contact the New Bern Clerk's Office at (252) 638-8534 to schedule training. The exact date and time of training is subject to the availability of the courtroom.

B. Testing

At least ten (10) business days prior to the scheduled proceeding, all users who intend to operate the evidence presentation system must contact the New Bern Clerk's Office at (253)638-8534 to schedule testing of their hardware and software. The exact date and time of testing is subject to the availability of the courtroom. Users should bring all laptops and media (i.e. DVDs, CDs) to ensure compatibility with the courtroom equipment. Prior to testing in the courtroom, the user must perform a virus check on all media.

NOTE: To best utilize time and resources, users are encouraged to combine the training and testing into one session, if possible. Users must also review any case management orders and the judge's preferences located on the Eastern District of North Carolina website for further requirements related to the use of technology in the courtroom.

C. Media Format

All electronic evidence must be in the following formats:

Documents and Photographs: .pdf, .jpg, .bmp, .tif, or .gif and Microsoft Office compatible formats.

Video and Audio Recordings: .avi, .wmv, .mpg, mpg4, .mp3, .wma and .wav.

NOTE: The Court uses VLC Player and Media Player to display any video media, ensure your evidence works with these platforms.

D. Real-Time Court Reporting

Real-time court reporting is available upon request and should be arranged in advance by contacting the court reporter, Tracy McGurk, at (252) 638-8729. Real-time court reporting translates the court reporter's stenotype code and electronically delivers the translation to a courtroom recipient's laptop computer for use during a proceeding. The real-time transcript is unedited and uncertified and has not been proofread to correct any computer-generated mistranslated or untranslated stenotype code. Therefore, a real-time transcript is an unofficial transcription and should not be relied upon for the purposes of verbatim citation or testimony, nor should it be used in any way to rebut or contradict the official certified transcript of the proceeding.

III. COURTROOM CONFIGURATION

A. Counsel Tables (see [photo](#) in appendix)

Although the courtroom has been equipped to accommodate multi-defendant cases, with advanced notice, the courtroom can be reconfigured to meet the needs of a multi-plaintiff case. The standard configuration is one Plaintiff table, with alternate location, and 3 separate respondent tables.

Each set of equipment includes a:

- ~ Cardioid microphones
- ~ Table-top audio speaker
- ~ Document camera
- ~ Evidence control panel
- ~ Annotation touch screen monitor
- ~ Evidence display monitor
- ~ Laptop connections for audio and video output: HDMI & VGA
- ~ Electrical power outlet located in the floor near each table

Users may project evidence from their personal laptop onto the monitors by using the video monitor connectors located on the counsel table. If audio is to be presented from the laptop, an audio plug connector must be utilized. Users must test all connections prior to the scheduled proceeding as directed in Section II to ensure that there is no delay in the proceeding due to technical difficulties. If necessary, users should bring IT staff for assistance, as clerk's office employees are only authorized to support and maintain court equipment.

To connect the laptop, users must plug either the 15-pin VGA video monitor connector or the HDMI connector located at the counsel table into the video or HDMI output on the laptop. For audio, the audio plug should be inserted into the output labeled with the headphone icon on the laptop.

B. Podium (see [photo](#) in appendix)

The courtroom is equipped with a mobile podium that has a flat-angled top space and shelving for placing documents. On the right side of the podium is a pullout shelf set up with a HDMI and a VGA connector.

C. Witness Stand

The witness stand is equipped with an adjustable annotation video monitor, an audio speaker and one microphone. The witness has the ability to annotate or 'mark' the screen as part of the evidence presentation. See Section VI for further information regarding the use of annotation monitors.

D. Jury Box (see [photo](#) in appendix)

The jury box is equipped with 1 evidence display monitor for every 2 jurors. The monitors are adjustable so that evidence can be viewed by all jurors from any vantage point. There are also fixed audio speakers installed in the jury box.

E. Gallery

The courtroom is equipped with two large evidence display monitor fixed on a rolling stand for gallery viewing. This resource is also available for use during closing arguments.

IV. SOUND SYSTEM

A. **Speakers** (see [photo](#) in appendix)

The courtroom is equipped with a digital sound system that includes tabletop box speakers located on each counsel table, the judge's bench and the witness stand. The courtroom also has built-in speakers located inside the jury box. Sound levels are adjusted by using the volume control settings on the evidence presentation system control panel.

B. **Microphones**

The use of microphones in the courtroom is required. The courtroom is equipped with several different types of microphones and an audio recording device designed to produce a permanent digital audio record of the proceedings. When in use, the recording is continuous.

1. **Cardioid Microphones** (see [photo](#) in appendix)

Cardioid microphones are located on each counsel table and the podium. Cardioid microphones are unidirectional microphones designed to pick up sound from the front of the microphone, with surrounding sounds from the side and back of the microphone minimized. As such, individuals who are speaking must place the microphone at the proper angle and distance in order to clearly carry and capture their voice.

The court's digital sound system is highly sensitive. Individuals seated at the counsel table who wish to conduct a private conversation should always push and hold the mute button on the base of their cardioid microphone. The mute button must be held down for the desired duration of the conversation. When the mute button is engaged, the green LED indicator light on the base of the microphone is off.

2. Handheld and Lapel Microphones (see [photo](#) in appendix)

A wireless handheld microphone and wireless lapel microphones are available upon request. The courtroom deputy must have sufficient notice so that the microphones can be tested prior to use.

3. Side-Bar Bench Microphones

The judge's bench is equipped with two flat boundary microphones used for side-bar conversations with counsel. When at the bench, counsel should be aware of the microphone's location when speaking. During a side-bar conversation, white noise will be played through the speakers at the witness stand and jury box so that the conversation cannot be heard.

C. Assisted Listening Devices (see [photo](#) in appendix)

The courtroom is equipped with infrared assisted listening devices (ALD) to aid hearing impaired individuals and assist interpreters. A request for an ALD should be made to the courtroom deputy prior to use to allow for testing of the equipment. It should be noted that the devices are not compatible with hearing aids. The ALD delivers sound to the handsets wirelessly via several infrared emitters mounted throughout the courtroom. Handset users should be mindful not to block the infrared signal to the handset and should ensure that the front of the device is in direct line with one of the four emitters in the courtroom.

If the line of sight between the ALD and the emitter breaks, a static noise or beeping sound may emanate from the device. Realigning the body (i.e. sitting up straight or turning the head) may re-establish the connection. In the unlikely event that the change in position does not correct the situation, the handset user may raise his or her hand to signal for assistance.

1. Assisted Listening Device Usage Instructions:

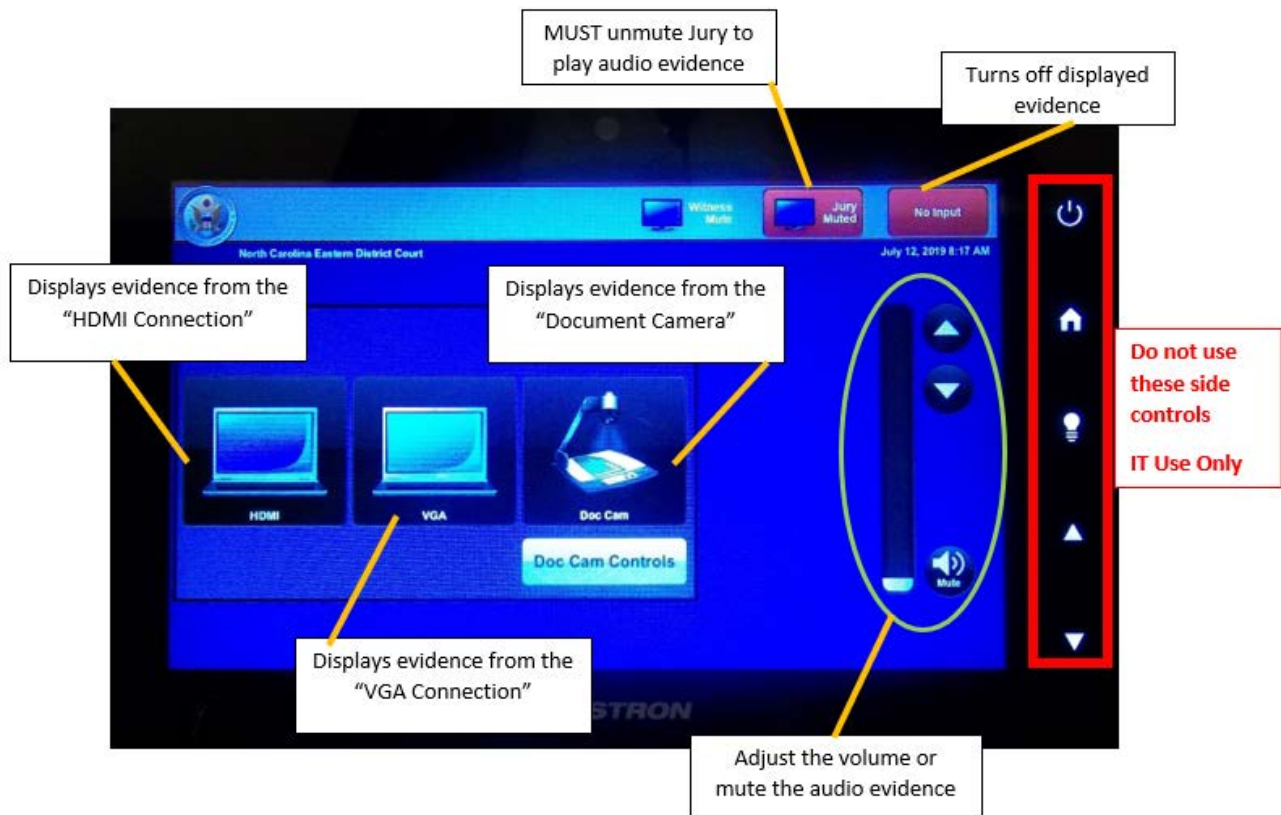
- Assisted Listening Devices (ADL) are available from the courtroom deputy.
- The body pack is on a lanyard and should go over the head, facing forward.
- The dial in the center of the top is to adjust the volume.
- The knob on top is the channel selector.
- Channel 1 is for use by the interpreter
- Channel 2 is for assisted listening.
- The headphones use a standard 3.5 mm jack.
- Users are welcome to use their own headphones, if that is their preference.
- If the clerk mutes streaming from the courtroom, that also mutes the feed to the ALD

V. EVIDENCE PRESENTATION SYSTEM

A. Evidence Control Panel

Evidence control panels are located on each counsel table, the courtroom deputy's desk and the judge's bench. The control panel allows the operator to govern how evidence is viewed and heard.

1. To begin, the operator should touch the screen on the evidence control panel so that the screen with the "HDMI, VGA, and Doc Cam" is displayed.

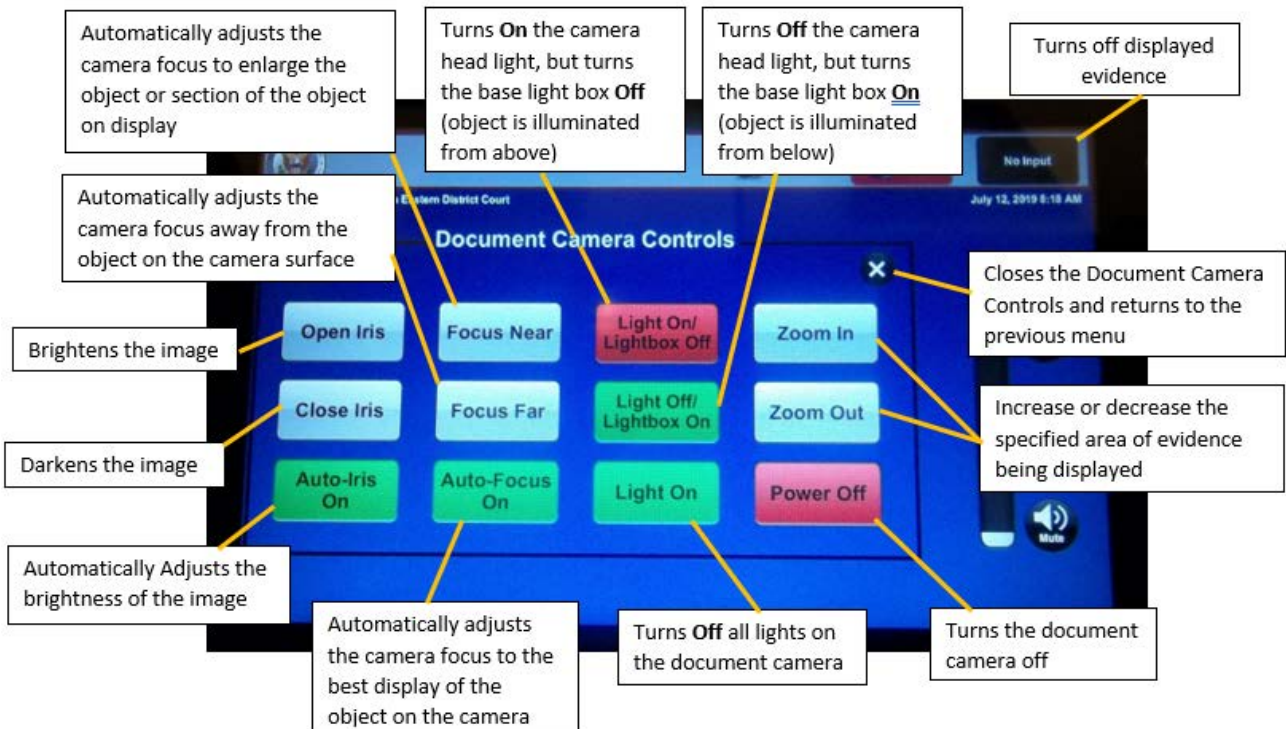


B. Document Camera (see [photo](#) in appendix)

The courtroom is equipped with document cameras that permit a user to place documents, photographs or three dimensional items (i.e. set of keys) on the camera for projecting onto the monitors.

A document camera is located on each counsel table, although only one camera at a time can display evidence. The document cameras can be controlled by either using the evidence control panel or the manual control buttons on the camera head. The document camera should be retracted after each use to keep an unobstructed view for the court, counsel, witness and jury.

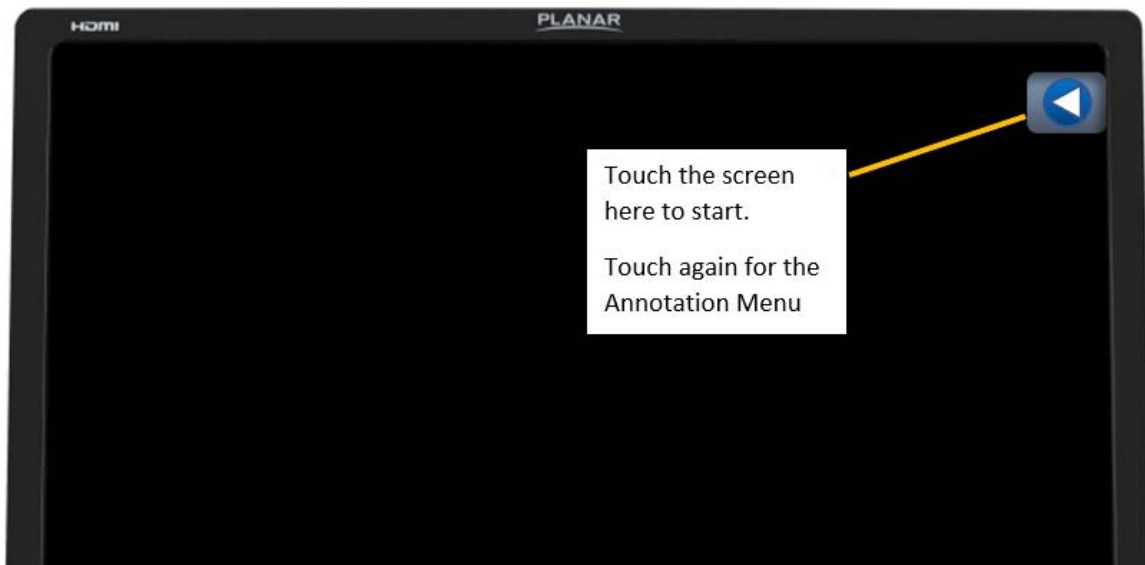
1. To begin, the operator should open the document camera by lightly grasping the gray ring in the middle of the extension arm and gently pulling up.
2. The operator can either use the evidence control panel or the manual buttons on the camera to adjust the focus and lighting on the camera.
3. When using the evidence control panel to make adjustments, the operator should first select the Doc Cam Controls button, which will bring up the Document Camera Control screen.
4. The Document Camera Controls screen will allow the operator to make adjustments to the lighting and focus of the camera.
5. The control buttons for manually adjusting the camera are located on the camera head. To zoom in and out, the operator should roll the gray wheel up and down.

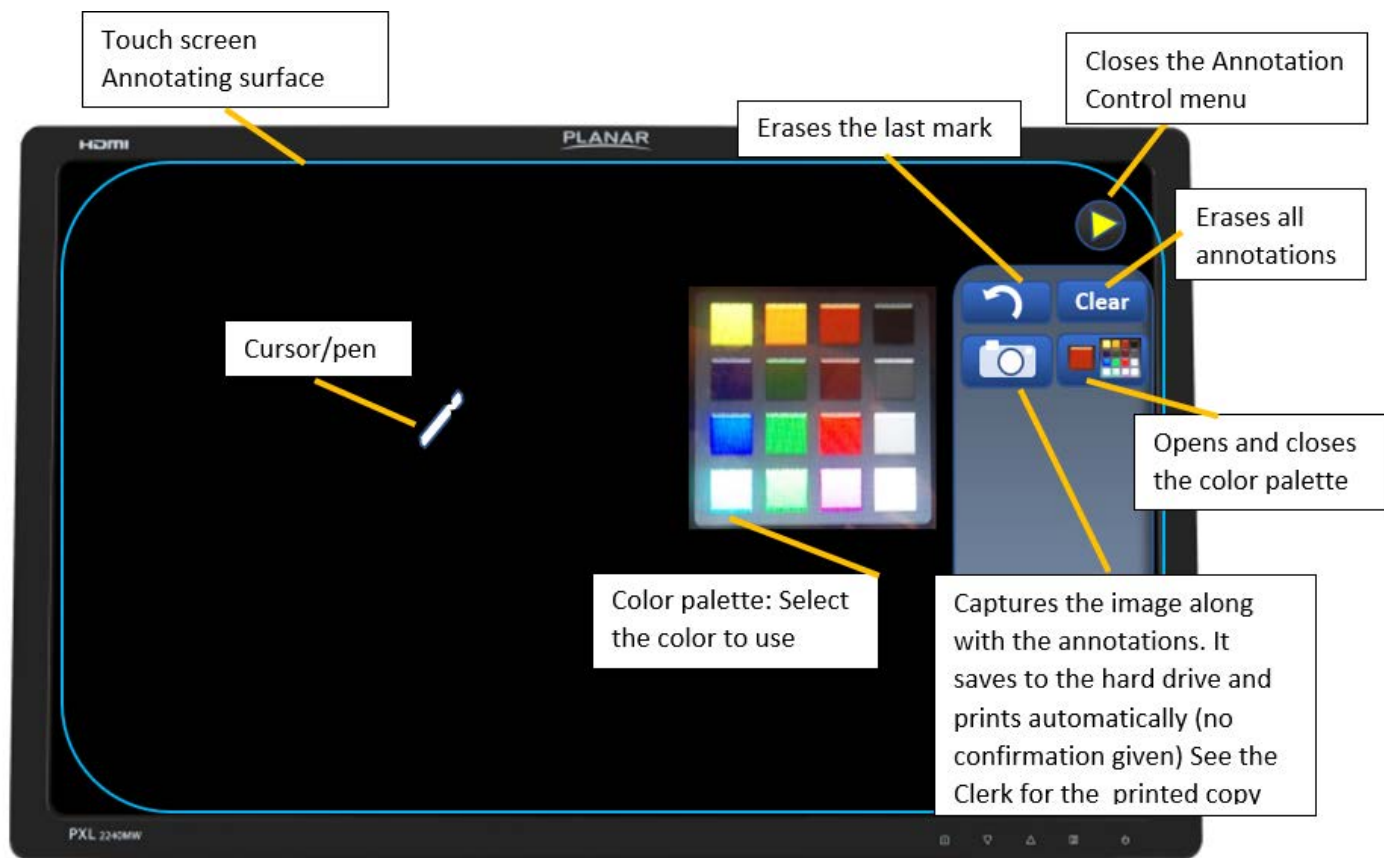


C. Annotation Monitors

The courtroom is equipped with five (5) annotation touch screen monitors. Three (3) annotation monitors are located on the defendant/defense tables, one (1) annotation monitor is located on the plaintiff/government tables, and there is one (1) annotation monitor on the witness stand.

These monitors permit the user to annotate or mark the evidence being displayed on the evidence display monitor with the touch of a finger or approved stylus pen. The stylus pen will be provided upon request to the courtroom deputy.





1. **Drawing.** Using a stylus pen or finger, marks can be made directly on the screen to identify or emphasize a portion of evidence. The use of fingernails, pens or other objects will damage the monitor.
2. **Printing screens.** After the evidence has been annotated, users may save and print the image on the screen by opening the annotation menu then press the camera button. This must be done while the marks are still on the monitor, as the annotations cannot be recovered once the screen is cleared.

NOTE: There are no visual confirmations that the annotation has saved or printed. Therefore, the user should wait for confirmation from the Courtroom Deputy that the document has been printed before clearing any annotations from the screen.

VI. APPENDIX

DESCRIPTION

PHOTO

Counsel Table



Podium



Jury Box



Speakers



Microphones

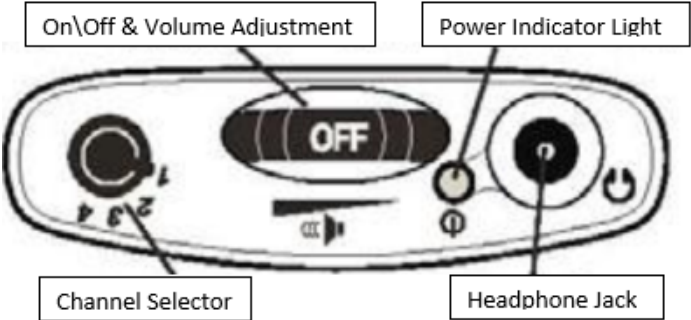
Cardioid



Handheld and Lapel



Assisted Listening Device (ALD)



Document Camera

