

**VIRGINIA CHESS FEDERATION**  
**POLICY ON CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**  
*effective January 1, 2016*

This document, created by the Virginia Chess Federation (VCF), prescribes policy on the use and possession of cellular telephones and other electronic devices during VCF chess tournaments. In general, the VCF shall accommodate the technological innovations of the modern era, but we also shall vigorously protect the integrity of our tournaments and its games.

As described below in further detail, the foundation of our policy has 3 main points: (1) communication-capable devices must be turned off and stowed during your games, players may not carry any communication-capable devices on their person while their games are in progress; (2) players are allowed to use US Chess-approved notation devices; and, (3) music devices are allowed, but subject to these rules and the US Chess *Official Rules of Chess*.

Non-compliance with our policy subjects a player to the full range of actions by the Chief TD as allowed under the Rules of Chess ... from a warning to ejection from the tournament.

1. **Devices covered under this policy include:**

- a) Any device capable of communication between a player and an external party.
- b) Any device capable of calculating chess moves or variations.
- c) USCF-approved electronic notation devices.

2. **Communication or Calculation Capable Devices:** These are any devices *capable of transmitting or receiving information or signals, or capable of calculating moves or evaluating board positions, that can be used by a player or spectator to convey an advantage to a player whose game is in progress*. Examples include, but are not limited to, cell phones, pagers, walkie-talkies, blue-tooth headphones, iPhones, iPads, computers, certain cell phone Apps, Android watches or iWatches. The "test" of whether a device qualifies as a "communication or calculation device" simply is whether it is capable of transmitting or receiving information between a player an external party, or is capable of evaluating positions. For a player with a game in progress, all such devices under the player's control ***must remain turned off*** for the entire duration of the game. Further, while the game is in ongoing, these devices:

- a) ***Must be stowed away*** in a backpack, purse, or chessbag, or otherwise placed in the location designated by the Chief TD. If a device is left outside of the Playing Area, a player may not access that device while his/her game is in progress. Devices must remain stowed away until the game is finished. The TD has the authority to ban all such devices from the Playing Area.
- b) ***May not be carried on a player's physical person***, including in a pocket, in a coat, in a hat, other clothing, or any other container or bag carried by the player.
- c) ***May not be used until their games end***. Once a player's game ends, that player is considered a "spectator" for the remainder of the round and shall comply with the procedures described in paragraph 5 below.

3. **US Chess-approved Electronic Notation Devices (ENDs):** An "END" is *the electronic equivalent of a paper scoresheet*. The VCF allows players to use only US Chess-approved ENDs in VCF events. At this writing, the only ENDs approved by US Chess are the Monroi, e-Notate and PlyCount. Other devices that perform similar functions are not allowed. Players who use ENDs are reminded of Rule 15A, *Official Rules of Chess*, 6th Edition, which states: ***"The player must first***

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*make the move, and then record it on the scoresheet. The scoresheet shall be visible to the tournament director and the opponent throughout the game."*

4. **Spectators:** Any spectator, including players whose games are finished, may be penalized and/or evicted from the playing area for the duration of the round if their cell phone or communication device disturbs ongoing games. Parents, spouses, siblings, and relatives of players must understand that they may inadvertently cause an appropriate game penalty to be applied to their related players. If the Spectator is a player participating in the tournament, the TD may impose a penalty that affects the player's next round of play or overall total game score. The Chief TD has the authority to ban all communication devices from the Playing Hall.
5. **Rulings on Devices:** *The Chief TD shall make rulings* on what devices are allowed (or not allowed) during a VCF event. The Chief TD may ban the use of and/or confiscate any device suspected of being in violation of these rules. The Chief TD also may impose special conditions, such as requiring all players to place their cell phones on top of their desk while their games are in progress, or not allowing players to listen to music during play.
6. **Warnings and Penalties:** To enforce rulings, *the Chief TD has the authority* to impose the full range of warnings and penalties allowable under the Official Rules of Chess. Penalties include loss of time, loss of game, reduction of game points, and expulsion from the tournament.
7. **Exceptions:** Medical devices, electronic chess clocks, DGT Boards, and any other electronic device *approved by the Chief TD* are exceptions to this policy.
8. Upon request by the Chief TD, players shall surrender any suspicious device(s) for inspection before play and/or safekeeping during play.