

SB 19

An act relating to the use and possession of electronic devices by prisoners.

Support Research – Other States

Arizona: State law prohibits inmate access to the Internet, except as authorized by the department (A.R.S. § 31-242). Inmate access to tablets is authorized under *Department Order 720*, which provides for specific applications such as communication and visiting, banking, educational materials, and legal research.

Kentucky: Department of Corrections *Policy 16.6* addresses inmate tablets (and is incorporated by reference as an administrative regulation under 501 KAR 6:430E). Inmates are able to access certain applications free of charge, including messaging, job search database, inmate banking, general religious materials, learning services, law library materials, radio, and “additional resources as determined by the vendor and DOC.”

Maine: Tablets are addressed in department policy; acceptable uses include educational programs, vocational training, health education, literacy and language courses, as well as library services, counseling and religious programming (*Policy 24.10.1*). Additionally, inmates who spend time engaging in educational modules may earn access to entertainment content.

Minnesota: Department policy allows inmates enrolled in post-secondary education programs to be issued an electronic device for education-related coursework only (Policy 760.030). Another policy provides that inmates may purchase media players from the electronic kiosk provider (Policy 302.022). A November 2024 *Minnesota Star Tribune* article notes that the department stopped allowing inmates to purchase tablets in May 2023 after it switched vendors, but that it intended to begin distributing free tablets to inmates beginning in December 2024 (attached). The story indicates that the delay in distribution was caused by the vendor needing additional time to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

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