

JACKSONVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy: 12-2

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COURTROOM SECURITY & COURT HOLDING FACILITY

PURPOSE: To provide the Jacksonville Police Department with guidelines for providing court security for the Jacksonville District Court, in accordance with A.C.A. §16-10-1001 et. al.

POLICY: It is the policy of this Department to provide physical security for the Jacksonville District Court (JDC) facility and court proceedings. The integrity of all court proceedings must be protected by adhering to a strict level of security. By maintaining the standard of security set out in this policy, officers of this Department help insure the safety of the Judge, participants in court proceedings, and the public. This Department recognizes the potential for violence or threat of violence against the court and its participants and is committed to utilizing security measures to deter those who would take violent action against the court and its participants during court proceedings.

DEFINITIONS:

- I. COURT SECURITY SUPERVISOR: Any certified officer appointed by the Support Services Commander to supervise the courtroom security for the day.
- II. COURTROOM SECURITY OFFICER: Any certified officer who is assigned the duty of providing security inside the courtroom while the JDC is in session and who has completed the approved Courtroom Security training program
- III. COURT PERIMETER AND ENTRANCE PERSONNEL: Any certified officer or cadet assigned at the court entry point for the operation of the screening devices while the JDC is in session and who has completed the approved Courtroom Security training program.
- IV. EMERGENCY RESTRAINT CHAIR (ERC): A specially designed restraint chair maintained in the Court Holding Facility, utilized to restrain unruly prisoners and insure the safety/security of the courtroom procedures.
- V. PROHIBITED ITEMS: No weapons of any type; which includes firearms, cutting instruments of any type (i.e. knives scissors, or anything with a cutting edge, etc.), tools of any type, aerosol sprays or containers (i.e. mace, pepper spray, hairspray, shaving cream, etc.), or electronic devices or equipment of any type (i.e. cellular telephones, personal assistant devices, palm notepads, Blackberries, pagers, Ipods, walkmans, MP3 or CD players, radios, cassette players or any recording device, handheld or key ring games).
- VI. COURT FACILITIES: All areas encompassing the courtroom, including judge's chambers, prosecuting attorney's offices, court holding cells, hallways, and key controlled areas.

PROCEDURES:

- I. ADMINISTRATION
 - A. The security of the Jacksonville District Court on court days is the responsibility of the Jacksonville Police Department. The primary persons assigned to maintain court security are the courtroom security officer and court perimeter and entrance personnel. These employees

are assigned to the Support Services Division. Other officers of the division will fill these roles if the primary officers are unavailable. These officers' primary role will be to maintain security and decorum in the courtroom.

- B. The primary responsibilities for the courtroom security officer is:
 - 1. Provide courtroom security;
 - 2. Watch for any suspicious person, package, or activity that could cause a threat to the court;
 - 3. Maintain order in the courtroom;
 - 4. Prohibit prisoners from talking with prisoners and members of the public;
 - 5. Serve legal processes as ordered by the court;
 - 6. Escort prisoners to and from the holding facility; and
 - 7. Conduct pre and post court facility inspections.
- C. Court perimeter and entrance personnel have the primary responsibilities of:
 - 1. Maintain order in the hallway outside the courtroom, so court proceedings are not interrupted;
 - 2. Watch for any suspicious person, package, or activity that could cause a threat to the court;
 - 3. Screen visitors to the court for weapons and/or prohibited items; and
 - 4. Assist with pre and post court facility inspections.
- D. Officers present, whether on-duty or off-duty, will immediately respond to all requests for assistance as directed by the judge, courtroom security officer, or a supervisor.

II. FACILITY

- A. The JDC facility includes not only the courtroom, but also the Jacksonville Courts Building relating to the direct operation of the court. The following areas are included:
 - 1. Courtroom;
 - 2. Judge's chambers;
 - 3. Prosecuting attorney's office;
 - 4. Court holding facility;
 - 5. Hallways and public waiting areas surrounding the courtroom;
 - 6. Key controlled areas; and
 - 7. Doors that provide entrance and exit into the courtroom and hallways.
- B. The JDC has three (3) entrances. A double door entrance from the main lobby of the Jacksonville Courts Building, a side entrance from the rear of the Courts Building adjacent to the court holding facility area, and a private entrance from the judge's chamber attached to the front of the courtroom. Access to this third entrance is controlled via a numbered pad lock door, which limits access to authorized persons only.
 - 1. Main Courtroom Entrance: Either two (2) certified law enforcement officers or one (1) certified law enforcement officer and one (1) cadet will hold this position. They will be present at the court entry point for the operation of the screening devices while JDC is in session. A pre-court and post court sweep will be conducted by court security personnel to check for any suspicious packages or personnel not conducting official business. Once the front court doors are opened by the court security officer, all personnel must receive screening either by passing through the metal detector or by the handheld detector. During the screening any items identified on the prohibited items list will not be allowed in the controlled area. Person(s) wishing to dispose of these items will be afforded access to an amnesty box, which will be positioned at the main court entrance. Once the items are placed in the amnesty box the Jacksonville Police Department or JDC is not legally responsible for the items. Any items not recovered at the end of court will be disposed of per Jacksonville Police Department Policy. Subjects wishing to keep these items must immediately remove the items from the building.