



Supreme Court of Arkansas

Administrative Office of the Courts

Court Security Plan

Name of Building/ Facility: _____

Building/ Facility Address: _____

County: _____

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I. **Purpose:**

Every person who attends or is present in a circuit or district court proceeding is entitled to a safe and secure environment. A Court Security Plan establishes policies and procedures to be followed by city, county, and court personnel in order to prevent and respond to court security incidents.

II. **Authority:**

Act 576 of 2007 provides that city and county governments adopt and implement security and emergency preparedness plans for their circuit and district courts. (Act 576, section 1 and Ark. Code Ann. section 16-10-1003)

III. **Definitions:** (to include any terms not commonly used)

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.

IV. **General Security Elements**

- A. ***Mail Handling:*** Procedures for mail handling should be detailed, including point of receipt and x-ray or screening of deliveries from the U.S. Postal Service, UPS, FedEx, and couriers. Include specific procedures for identifying and responding to suspicious packages and letters.
- B. ***ID and Access Control:*** Courts should provide their written policies and procedures for identification, access, and key control of facilities including signature receipts and the issuing and reclaiming of IDs, access cards, and keys. Describe procedures for scheduled checks of access and exit doors to ensure locking systems are functioning properly.
- C. ***Parking Plan:*** Detail your facility's parking program including areas dedicated to judge's parking, signage, type of controlled entry system, etc.
- D. ***Interior/Exterior Lighting Plan:*** Document procedures for inspecting and maintaining interior and exterior lighting, including emergency lighting and exit signage.

- E. ***Intrusion/Panic Alarm Systems:*** Describe procedures for testing intrusion and panic alarms, including the testing schedule. Describe how employees are instructed to respond to such alarms. Describe instructions or guidelines regarding the use of panic/duress alarms provided to judges and court staff. Provide information on who conducts maintenance and repairs, including contact information.
- F. ***Fire Detection/Equipment:*** Describe procedures for inspecting fire extinguishers, pull stations, and alarms. Include who is responsible for scheduling these inspections. List vendor and maintenance contact information. Floor plans identifying the location of firefighting equipment, alarm stations and emergency exits should be included. Floor plans should also identify emergency shut-off locations for gas, electricity and water.
- G. ***Emergency/Auxiliary Power:*** If the facility is equipped with emergency power supplies, describe the areas covered by the system, the testing schedules, fuel supply, etc. Include security measures in place used to protect the system (i.e. protected by fencing, monitored by CCTV, etc.). Provide maintenance contact information, and alternate emergency power generator vendor and resource information.
- H. ***Private Security Contractors:*** Describe the duties of security contractors (e.g. perimeter screening, patrols, reception, etc.), and reference who administers the contract, (e.g. court, sheriff, county, etc.). Include contractor supervisory authority, their training requirements, and background check requirements. Include information detailing whether contract security guards are armed or possess defensive weapons.
- I. ***Administrative/Clerk's Office Security:*** Describe what systems (e.g. controlled entrances, bullet resistant screens at public counters, panic alarms, escape route plans, etc.) are in place in administrative offices and the clerk's office.
- J. ***Jury Personnel/Jury Room:*** Describe the measures taken to ensure security of jurors, separation from the public, witnesses, and the security of jury rooms.
- K. ***Public Demonstrations:*** Describe the specific plans and procedures employed during public demonstrations to ensure the safety and security of staff, visitors, the facility, and to ensure unobstructed access to the courts. Reference applicable legal authority, Rules of Court, etc.

- L. ***Vital Records Storage:*** Describe the locations of vital records storage and how these areas are secured. Describe the storage site and include whether it is on-site or off-site, dry, secure, has access controls, and fire suppression equipment.
 - M. ***Evacuation Planning:*** Describe the evacuation plans for judicial staff, employees, and visitors. Separate responsibilities and actions for court employees and the court security provider. If these areas are addressed in existing emergency plans, refer to documentation by manual name, title, and/or page reference. Evacuation plans need to be detailed and regularly tested and drilled.
 - N. ***After-Hours Operations:*** Describe the policies and procedures for after-hours access to the facility including authorization process, means of entry (keys, access cards, escort, etc.), areas available, and authorized hours of access. Include contact names and telephone numbers for after-hours emergencies.
 - O. ***Custodial Services:*** Detail supervision of custodial personnel including hours of operation, after-hours work, controls on trash removal, etc. Describe the contract human resource policy on employee screening and background checks. Include contact information for business hours and after-hours.
 - P. ***Computer and Data Security:*** Describe the policies for training all employees on basic computer security. Basic computer security includes password use, frequency of password changes, back-up policies for specific data, off-site storage capabilities, and security of electronic media.
 - Q. ***Workplace Violence:*** Based on the sensitive nature of court employees' responsibilities and environment, it is recommended that regular workplace violence training be made available. Describe who receives this training, if applicable.
- V. **Operational Security Elements**
- A. ***Security Personnel and Staffing:*** Describe staffing requirements at each court facility, including the number, classification, roles, and responsibilities of staff for:
 - 1. Entry screening and perimeter security
 - 2. Courtroom security
 - 3. Prisoner transport
 - 4. Holding cells
 - 5. Public waiting areas
 - 6. Judicial protection

- B. ***Perimeter and Entry Screening:*** Describe the security at each point and how many personnel are used at each location. Describe the procedures used to screen all persons and items entering the facility (e.g. laptops, cell phones, pagers, etc.). Describe any special provisions for screening individuals with wheelchairs and/or baby carriers. Describe the equipment used at each screening station (e.g. metal detectors, X-ray machines, etc.) and the policies covering their use. Describe the type of signage used to notify individuals of the court's screening policies and prohibited items. Include any exceptions to weapons for police officers, employees, etc.
- C. ***Prisoner/Inmate Transport:*** Describe inmate transportation and emergency plans in the event of an escape, attempted escape, or in transit medical emergencies. Describe protocols governing the escort of prisoners to and from the courthouse, including staffing levels required to safely escort prisoners. Include juvenile transportation policies.
- D. ***Holding Cells:*** Describe the holding areas where inmates, including juveniles, can be detained and supervised by security personnel while awaiting court appearances, during court proceedings, or returning to jail facilities. Include cell check/well being check schedules. Include protocols for the movement of inmates from holding areas to courtrooms, emergency evacuation of inmates, in-custody medical emergencies, administrative segregation, and segregation of inmates from the public and contact with witnesses, families, victims, etc.
- E. ***Interior and Public Waiting Areas:*** Describe the procedures for monitoring hallways and public waiting areas, separation of juries, witnesses, and others in a public setting. Include response procedures for incidents in public areas, how incidents are recorded, and which personnel are responsible for handling calls to these areas.
- F. ***Courtroom Security:*** Describe bailiff/Court Security Officer's duties including courtroom preparation, security sweeps, and in-session courtroom duties. Document the allocation of court security personnel based on perceived risks posed in a case (e.g. family, criminal, juvenile, etc.). Describe the security of environmental controls, lights, heat, etc. Describe the evacuation routes for judges from the bench and for staff from other areas of the courtroom. Identify where ballistic protection is installed, if applicable. Describe witness, spectator and inmate management procedures. Describe procedures for emergency medical response to the courtroom. Describe the lockdown procedures for unused courtrooms and procedures for ensuring that potential assault items are removed or secured.

- G. ***Jury Trial Procedures:*** Describe jury control procedures including care of the jury during trial, transportation, deliberations, etc. Include any special security provisions for jurors during high risk/high profile trials.
- H. ***High Risk/High Profile Trials:*** Describe pre-trial planning procedures and the measures taken for high risk or high profile trials. Include information as to the allocation of security personnel based upon factors such as the type of trial, number of participants, media coverage, and degree of anticipated risk. Identify specific personnel responsible for managing traffic, parking, and overall security of the court facility, courtroom, perimeter security, media control, and infrastructure. Describe any special accommodations made for witnesses. Identify specific courtrooms which may be specially equipped or suitable for high security, multi-defendant or high media/public interest trials.
- I. ***Judicial Protection:*** Describe the parking arrangements for judges and their movement between chambers and the courtroom. Describe specific methods for securing chambers, parking, and maintaining separation of judges from the general public as they arrive and depart from work. Describe any access control for separate judicial entrances. Describe procedures for handling threats against Judicial Officers and court staff.
- J. ***Incident Reporting and Recording:*** Describe the system for reporting security breaches and incidents. Identify who receives these reports within court administration, judges, and the Administrative Office of the Courts. Describe procedures for maintaining confidentiality of these reports and distribution lists.
- K. ***Security Personnel/Staff Training:*** Describe the training and frequency of training provided to security personnel and staff on evacuations, emergency procedures, general security awareness, and changes to the local security plan. Describe any drills involving all staff and how often these are conducted.
- L. ***Courthouse Communication:*** Describe each type of communication used:
1. **Internal Communication:** Describe how security/emergency plan information is distributed to court staff and judges. Identify whether this information is clear and simple and reinforced through directives, rules, manuals, handbooks, bulletins, emails, and/or newsletters.
 2. **Radios:** Describe if radios or other electronic methods of communicating are available for emergency response, whether all agencies within the court facility share a common frequency, and which channel/frequency is utilized.

3. **Telephones/Cell Phones:** Include phone tree and list all emergency and after-hours contact numbers for security personnel and staff, if applicable. Describe process for updating this information maintaining confidentiality and dissemination.
- M. ***Bomb Threats:*** Describe procedure for responding to bomb threats; under what circumstances and by whom an evacuation may be ordered. Include specific instructions for the recipient of a bomb threat (e.g. bomb threat checklist, notifications, etc.). Include telephone numbers used to contact security, 911, etc.
- N. ***Hostage/Escape/Lockdown/Active Shooter Procedures:*** Detail specific procedures provided to all court staff regarding hostage situations, escapes or escape attempts, active shooter situations and/or lockdowns. Describe if equipment exists to secure a courtroom from the outside. Describe if procedures are consistent with local agencies managing hostage negotiations and how often those procedures are drilled and tested with those agencies.
- O. ***Firearms Policies and Procedures:*** Describe procedures and policies for the following areas:
1. Courthouse policies on carrying firearms inside the facility by anyone, including but not limited to the public, judicial staff, and on and off duty law enforcement officers.
 2. Security personnel carrying weapons in holding cell areas, while escorting inmates, and while accomplishing duties inside courtrooms.
 3. Availability, training, and use of less-lethal weapons.
- P. ***Restraint of Defendants:*** Describe policies and procedures for restraining defendants in the courtroom. Include types of restraints available and how court security personnel receive authorization from the court to implement additional security measures.