

Unified Judicial System of
Pennsylvania

Court Safety & Security Manual



AOPC

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

Preface

Beginning in 1999, with particular focus since 2002 under the auspices of the Judicial Council of Pennsylvania, the Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts has undertaken a broad review of security and emergency preparedness issues on behalf of the Commonwealth's courts. Several surveys have been conducted, including on-site assessments of trial court security preparedness, and a formal, statewide committee was formed to address the companion issues of safety and emergency preparedness. A major goal of these efforts has been to promote cooperation and communication among the courts, court staff, county officials, and law enforcement, recognizing their respective roles in ensuring that courts are safe and prepared for potential disruptions in their daily operations.



This *Pennsylvania Courthouse Safety and Emergency Preparedness Manual* is intended to be part of a flexible framework to guide courts' participation in county-level efforts regarding court safety and emergency preparedness. It has been written in full recognition of the diverse needs and circumstances that exist in counties across the Commonwealth and its development is a prime example of the essential collaboration that has occurred within the Judicial Council's Committee on Safety and Emergency Preparedness. The Committee's members include representatives of the Pennsylvania Sheriffs' Association, the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, president judges, magisterial district judges, probation and parole offices, domestic relation court staff, court administrators, and staff of the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts. Together, they have worked tirelessly in the manual's development. Its purpose is to equip law enforcement officers, judges, clerks of court, and other county officials with information that will help them customize comprehensive safety and security plans for their courts.

The Manual's purpose is to equip law enforcement officers, judges, clerks of court, and other county officials with the information necessary to customize a comprehensive safety and security plan for their courts.

The material contained in this manual is intended to foster a positive and responsive dialogue between the courts and their partners in the other branches of government. The manual is also a valuable tool and resource. While it is not intended to circumvent existing policies and the processes by which they have been adopted, the manual does offer information that will help county policy makers customize comprehensive safety, security and preparedness policies and procedures for courts and guide court officials in their participation in such policies' creation.

Icon Key

The following icons are used throughout the manual to emphasize areas of particular importance in the effort to improve courthouse safety and security in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. They are intended to assist local court safety and security committees and manual users focus on important strategies and concepts.



Partnering

Cooperation and communication among the courts, court staff, county officials, and law enforcement is a key to success. This icon indicates where a team approach is needed.



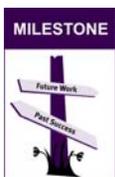
Knowledge/Expertise

This icon indicates an area where specialized skills and knowledge are required.



Key Concept

This icon indicates key themes that define this manual's approach to improving court safety and security.



Milestone

This icon indicates an area where the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania has successfully completed significant work to improve the safety and security of all courts but where additional, future effort may be appropriate.

Acknowledgements

Every successful collaboration has behind it, a champion. Madame Justice Sandra Schultz Newman of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania has provided thoughtful and exuberant leadership in spearheading the effort to make the Pennsylvania courts safer for victims, witnesses, litigants, judges, court staff and the public. Chief Justice of Pennsylvania Ralph Cappy and the Honorable Justices of the Supreme Court have been equally supportive of these efforts, as have jurists, county commissioners, sheriffs, and untold others at the county level and Governor Edward G. Rendell and members of Pennsylvania's General Assembly at the state level.

The manual would not have been possible without the hard work of four key personnel at the Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts, Don Harris, Frank Lalley, Richard Pierce, and Cherstin Hamel. They were always willing to go the extra mile and provided great insight and expertise to this project. Finally, a special thanks to Court Administrator of Pennsylvania Zygmunt Pines and Deputy Court Administrator of Pennsylvania Tom Darr, whose vision and commitment have been instrumental in the efforts that have led to this manual's publication.

Chapter 1: Approach

INTRODUCTION



Every courthouse has three critical areas that need to be protected: people, property, and information.

- ♦ **Protecting People.** A court's most valuable resource is its judges and staff. Key leaders will need to be identified and prepared to lead the court during and after any emergency or disaster. The judicial system must also be concerned about the safety of the public. It is critical that the public be kept advised of the court system's plans to make them safe at any court facility.

Every courthouse has three critical areas that need to be protected: people, property, and information.

- ♦ **Protecting Property.** The judicial system's buildings and equipment represent a major investment. The judicial system must consider how different emergency or disaster scenarios could potentially render these buildings and equipment wholly or partially unusable. Have arrangements been made to conduct business at an alternative site? Who will decide if damaged equipment will be repaired or replaced?
- ♦ **Protecting Information.** Record keeping is a central function of any court. The information maintained by the courts is critical to the functioning of an orderly society. Courts must maintain the ability to restore information while simultaneously creating new records as part of any disaster recovery plan.

Protecting People and Property

Protecting the court system and assuring its viability involves two interrelated but separate concepts: *court system safety* and *court system security*. Safety refers to protection of persons from injury or loss. Security refers to the ability to maintain business continuity. Both require two types of planning: *emergency planning* and *contingency planning*. Emergency planning means being prepared to take immediate action due to a traumatic event. It is aimed at stabilizing the situation to mitigate damage. Contingency planning means having options for different possible future events. It is aimed at moving forward once things have been stabilized. Specific security needs inevitably will vary from location to location due to local conditions and changing circumstances.

It is imperative that the people see the court system as a place where problems are resolved. The court system can ill afford to convey a message of fear from fortress-like facilities. Instead, the court system must provide a balance between access to the courts and safety and security. In the present political climate of increased emphasis on security, it is important that programs to promote court system safety and security must serve the objectives of the judicial process, not dominate them.



With regard to personal safety, courthouse safety and security efforts have typically focused on protecting judges and controlling prisoners who are appearing in court for trial. The concern must be much broader. Every individual who has business before a court,

whether voluntarily or under court order, is entitled to feel safe. The courthouse must be a safe place for litigants and their families, jurors, witnesses, victims of crime, and the general public to conduct their business.

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Protecting Information

The goal of emergency preparation and continuity of operations planning to protect information is to provide court facilities with procedures to continue system operations as soon as possible after normal operations are interrupted. The specific objectives are:

- To ensure that the court system can recover quickly in the event of a serious problem with either a hardware or software component of the system, including telephone equipment;
- To ensure that recovery can take place quickly, without loss of information, in the event of a natural disaster that affects the operation of the office; and
- To re-establish the link to the State's system or other applications as quickly as possible and without loss of information.



Most courts depend heavily on technology and automated systems, and their disruption for even a few days could cause severe financial loss and threaten the fundamental mission of the courts. The continued operations of the court system depend upon the development of a plan to minimize disruptions of critical functions and the capability to recover operations expediently and successfully.

The primary objective of emergency preparedness planning is to protect the court system in the event that all or part of its operations and/or computer services are rendered unusable. Preparation is the key. The planning process will minimize the disruption of operations and ensure some level of organizational stability and an orderly recovery after a disaster.

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Taking a System-Wide Approach to Improve Courthouse Safety

Providing safe and secure court facilities is a fundamental court administrative function for which responsibility must fall initially on court leaders: both president judges and district court administrators. It will take strong court leadership to address the inherent challenges in providing courthouse safety and security. These leadership duties include:

- ♦ Determining the roles and responsibilities of courts and executive agencies in this shared undertaking;
- ♦ Incorporating the security views of non-judicial agencies housed in shared court facilities;
- ♦ Dealing with architectural and organizational issues; and
- ♦ Balancing safety needs with available resources.

A better understanding of preparedness, business continuity concepts, improved communication, and increased staff awareness will result in a safer court system. The fundamental challenge is to make court system safety improvement efforts focused, coordinated, and improved through the participation and support of a coalition of justice system partners and county and state governments. It is critical to obtain "buy-in" from state and local branches of government, the cooperation of law enforcement and judicial leaders, and the involvement of all court system employees to ensure personal and facility security. Planning, leadership, communication, coordination, and cooperation are required to succeed. The court has responsibility for developing and maintaining comprehensive plans for court security, disaster recovery, and business continuity that are available and understood by all that work for the courts. Law enforcement, judges, court staff, and county government officials all share in the responsibility to ensure safety in the court system. Lack of comprehensive safety plans that cover policies, procedures, technology, and personnel adversely affects the safety of all who work in or visit a court facility.



Law enforcement, judges, court staff, and county government officials all share in the responsibility to ensure safety in the court system.

In the past, approaches to court system safety and security have been disjointed, piecemeal, and sometimes inconsistent. These inconsistencies have been caused by:

- ♦ The lack of an overall court system safety framework that integrates policies and procedures, personnel, and equipment;
- ♦ The misconception that many court safety enhancements are costly;
- ♦ The lack of an overall working relationship between courts and other justice system partners; and
- ♦ An over-reliance on a hierarchical approach to improving court system safety.

As a result judges, court administrators, and law enforcement officers have received separate and disconnected training. State and local government officials are routinely asked to pay the cost of enhanced safety measures, but have not been educated as to the need for them or kept informed of available options. The resulting lack of communication has impeded the implementation of long overdue improvements.

Courthouse safety improvements are best dealt with using a system-wide approach, particularly understanding the ways in which decisions made in every justice agency affect decisions in other agencies and ultimately the effectiveness of overall courthouse safety. All agency actions in the justice system have downstream or upstream effects on other agencies. The policies and work processes of the courts, law enforcement, prosecution, defense, building managers, planners, and funders require that these effects be taken into account.

Part of taking a system-wide view is identifying the court's partners in agencies and other branches of government. This includes reaching out to groups that the court may not have actively worked with in the past or even considered as a resource. The other part of a system-wide solution is sharing skills and resources among justice system agencies to develop an effective courthouse safety program during this time of budgetary cutbacks.

Chapter 2: Courthouse Security - Deter, Detect, Prevent

WHAT MUST BE DONE



A fundamental principle in the development of any court security program is that all actions taken are designed to achieve deterrence, detection, and prevention. The objectives of deterrence, detection, and prevention, can best be met by:

- Determining appropriate responses;
- Involving key individuals in security planning; and
- Assuring that there is adequate training for all personnel.

A fundamental principle in the development of any court security program is that all actions taken are designed to achieve deterrence, detection, and prevention.

Well-conceived policies and procedures, trained and properly deployed staff, and effective use of security technologies are all required to achieve these goals. In addition, where practicable, proper and effective security design of courthouses can contribute substantially to the safety of persons within the courthouse. The more effective the deterrent, the lower the incidence of security problems. Finally, courthouse security seeks to limit damage that may be caused by an action or a threat.

To help counties develop and maintain a comprehensive courthouse security programs, the *Pennsylvania Courthouse Safety and Emergency Preparedness Manual* contains both general and specific information on a number of areas believed essential to establishing a model court security program. It is meant to serve as a resource and support the efforts of local court security committees to enhance court security at every level of the Pennsylvania Court System.

Improving courthouse safety and security is effective business practice. The responsibility to make the effort is both considerable and important. This manual emphasizes practical approaches to improve courthouse safety. It provides tools to assist judges, law enforcement and court managers in making cost-effective decisions, looking first to low cost/high level of safety return in all areas of court safety, including staffing and the purchase of equipment. This manual supports the range of tools and protocols that have been developed as part of the Pennsylvania Judicial Council's Committee on Judicial Safety and Preparedness. When using the manual, remember that individual chapters should not be interpreted nor considered exclusive of one another. They are intended to complement one another.

Effective courthouse security requires a strong partnership between the courts, law enforcement, and the other branches of government. While it is incumbent upon state and local governments to aid the courts in implementing these practical standards, it is the court system's obligation to inform, communicate, and collaborate with these co-equal partners. It is the acceptance of this collective responsibility that will best assure that safe

and secure courthouse facilities are provided and maintained for the public and all who use the courts to resolve problems under the rule of law.

Pennsylvania has 67 counties, each with its own Court of Common Pleas, structured within 64 judicial districts. There are also 566 Magisterial District Judge Courts in the Commonwealth. Thus, specific security requirements vary from location to location due to local conditions and changing circumstances. This manual is designed to accommodate these differences while still setting forth a significant number of standards and protocols.

Many past court safety improvements have come as the result of a violent incident occurring at the court or on court property. It is this reactive manner of doing business that this manual seeks to replace. Court safety improvements and emergency preparedness should be part of the court's overall business plan just like case management, personnel, and budgeting. This means that court safety improvement programs must contain both the elements of deterring and preventing criminal and/or prohibited incidents and preparation for disasters and emergencies. A court security program that effectively utilizes *proactive* measures will undoubtedly realize a substantial increase in both security and safety levels.



Court safety plans must also take into consideration local and state fiscal circumstances and other issues of significance to the judicial branch of government. What is reasonable, practical, and attainable will vary from court to court or even with a local court system. They will be dependent upon a number of factors including:

- ♦ Judicial leadership;
- ♦ Judicial acceptance of court safety concepts;
- ♦ Employee cooperation;
- ♦ Employee perception of threat and safety levels;
- ♦ Public support;
- ♦ Level of risk based on location of court facility;
- ♦ Court facility safety assessments;
- ♦ Facility operations; and
- ♦ Court facility design/layout.

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Facility assessment surveys are tools that can indicate which safety and security measures need to be implemented to ensure the safety and security of the public, judges, staff, employees, and litigants. The consequences of not taking action are potentially tragic.

There is an inherent elevated risk level associated with many government facilities. Court facilities open their doors to unknown individuals, many of whom are there under duress. Issues of life, liberty, property, and family are decided whenever a court is in session. In addition to the multiple types of high threat, high profile, and emotional proceedings

conducted in these buildings, courthouses represent the judicial system and government generally, increasing threat and risk levels.

Throughout this manual, the term “Court Security Officer” is used to identify those persons responsible for carrying out various aspects of a court’s security plan. Sheriffs’ offices have primary responsibility for court security; however, individual practices throughout the Commonwealth may call for these responsibilities to be carried out by persons with varying job titles including: Deputy Sheriff, Tipstaff, Court Crier, Security Guard and possible others.

Finally, the courts are important repositories of information and represent major investments of taxpayer dollars both in physical plant and equipment. Consequently, elected officials and leaders responsible for courthouse security must recognize, acknowledge, and provide an appropriate response to this situation in advance of an incidence of violence or other disaster.

Local court safety and security committees

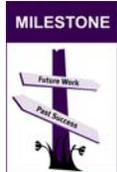
Being responsible for courthouse security requires a thorough understanding of the inter-relationships and effects of the following:

- ♦ Creating a local court safety and security committee;
- ♦ Implementing a local safety and security program;
- ♦ Reviewing specific factors dictated by the location of the court facility, with an emphasis on the elements of low-cost and practicality;
- ♦ Considering security and safety vulnerabilities identified in facility assessment surveys and threat and risk assessments;
- ♦ Addressing issues brought forward by local court security committees; and
- ♦ Initiating program monitoring and compliance reviews.

Committee Composition



Every court should create a separate and distinct safety and security committee. The membership of the committees should reflect a balance of leaders and individuals with domain expertise. These committees should then determine how the guidelines and protocols contained in this manual can be practically and reasonably applied with regard to the:



- ♦ Safety and security needs of the court facility;
- ♦ Most recent physical security assessment for the facility;
- ♦ Cost/risk factors generally; and
- ♦ Specific local fiscal and environmental factors.

Every court should create a separate and distinct safety and security committee.

The primary roles of the committee are to lead and guide courthouse safety and security improvements on the local level. The President Judge of the judicial district shall convene the committees. At minimum, the committee should be comprised of the following representatives:

- ♦ President Judge;
- ♦ County Executive;
- ♦ Sheriff; and
- ♦ District Court Administrator.

Local committees may add members on an ad hoc basis. Among the groups that committees may consider as representatives are Magisterial District Judges, clerks of court, facility managers, and risk managers. While providing a distinct function, the committees are expected to interact and cooperate with county safety committees that may already be in place. The inter-disciplinary composition of these committees is critical to both their tactical and strategic success. A successful effort will need both leadership from decision-makers at the top of their organizations and the expertise of those with first hand knowledge of operations. This manual can serve as the basis around which a plan of action can be developed.

The committees should be responsible for:

- ♦ Developing policies and procedures;
- ♦ Communicating policies and procedures to **every** court employee;
- ♦ Assuring the prompt and proper reporting of court security incidents;
- ♦ Reviewing and assessing court security incidents;
- ♦ Training concerning on-site safety and security awareness;
- ♦ Encouraging a courthouse environment that contributes to appropriate decorum;
- ♦ Deploying court security staff;
- ♦ Providing safe waiting areas for the separation parties to a case;
- ♦ Understanding the court's role within the county's Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP);
- ♦ Conducting strategic safety and security planning; and
- ♦ Preparing for emergencies.

AOPC Role on Local Safety and Security Committees



The AOPC serves as a valuable resource to every local court safety and security committee. Therefore, they are designated as an ex officio member in service to each committee. This relationship reflects the commitment that the AOPC makes to support on-going efforts to improve courthouse safety and security policies. The AOPC will maintain an office to serve as a clearinghouse for information and assistance to courts in this area. It is

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further intended to represent the partnership between the AOPC and the courts necessary to maintain safe and secure court facilities for the public.

Chapter 3: Routine Security Procedures

Throughout this manual, the term “Court Security Officer” is used to identify those persons responsible for carrying out various aspects of a court’s security plan. Sheriffs’ offices have primary responsibility for court security; however, individual practices throughout the Commonwealth may call for these responsibilities to be carried out by persons with varying job titles including: Deputy Sheriff, Tipstaff, Court Crier, Security Guard and possible others.

Regardless of the person’s job title, it is critical that they know this function is their responsibility, and they are fully trained in its execution.



Security and safety issues should be considered in the routine activities of not only those assigned to provide courthouse security but, judges, court staff, row officers and other building occupants. Policies and procedures should include specific guidelines on how routine activities should be undertaken to prevent injury or damage to property. The goal of all activities should be to deter, detect, or prevent potentially dangerous situations. This chapter identifies recommendations and considerations for the handling of mail, visitor screening, trial security, juror safety, prisoner security, and other routine tasks.

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SECURITY SCREENING



A single point of entry with personal and package screening for the public, judges, and court staff is the optimal arrangement for security screening. Additional entry points to the court facility including loading docks, delivery rooms, and sallyports should have controlled access at each location. Controlled access, or entrance control, involves the operation of security systems/equipment and enforcement of policies and procedures primarily designed to deter, detect, and prevent weapons and contraband from entering a building or area. This is the most critical security function in any court facility. Screening of persons and packages should also occur at private or separate entrances provided for judges and court staff.

A single point of entry with personal and package screening for the public, judges, and court staff is the optimal arrangement for security screening.

If carefully implemented and stringently operated, it can also be one of the most cost-effective security enhancements. Security personnel assigned to a security screening system and all court security officers should be trained and certified on specific screening aspects of the equipment they operate and policies to be enforced. To counter the factors and limits of fatigue, complacency, and patience, court security officers should be rotated to

other duties or given appropriate other relief to assure that the utmost attention is given to this critical safety function.

Court security officer demeanor at all screening locations is to be highly professional at all times. In general, officers should adhere to the following guidelines:

- ♦ Drinking, eating, smoking, and reading are not authorized at screening locations.
- ♦ System equipment should not be used as foot rests or shelves to lean or sit on.
- ♦ Officers should devote complete attention to all persons/items being screened. Personnel assigned to screening operations should be professional, diligent, and vigilant. Court security officers should not engage in any conversation that interferes with or ignore persons being screened. As a general rule, at least one court security officer should always be standing while screening persons. Under no circumstances should preference be given to nor discrimination used against any individual, including judges, lawyers, or court personnel.
- ♦ Officers should make themselves aware of the court's business and activities on a day-to-day basis. They should not allow distracting activities or conversations to take place near the screening station. The screening location should be situated, to the extent possible, to provide unobstructed sight lines of persons entering the court facility. This gives personnel an opportunity to observe, assess, and appropriately respond to a person(s) exhibiting threatening behavioral characteristics prior to their actually being screened.
- ♦ Screening operations and general explanations of policies and procedures associated with screening should be done courteously and professionally. Requests for further information should be directed to the attention of the sheriff or his/her designee. Court security officers should not state their professional or personal opinions on the court's or sheriff's policies and procedures to any person without the express approval of the presiding judge and sheriff.

Types of Screening Equipment

Fluoroscopes (x-ray machines): All fluoroscopes should be tested and calibrated each morning with a security stepwedge (instrument used to calibrate fluoroscope and x-ray machines) to ensure a 30-gauge wire can be seen at the fifth step of the wedge. Brightness and contrast controls should also be adjusted on a daily basis.

There is a false impression that the fluoroscope (x-ray machine) can damage or corrupt film, videotape, electronic devices, and computer disks. The only film that may be

damaged is high-speed film exceeding ASA 1000, and x-ray or scientific film. If necessary, these items may be inspected by hand.

Court security officers should not comment or joke about the operation of the screening device. Such comments only serve to mislead the public and distract security operations.

All packages brought in by the public, couriers, and special delivery personnel (i.e. UPS, Federal Express, etc.) should be thoroughly screened (x-ray, metal detector, and/or visual inspection) by court security personnel. This includes deliveries made to loading docks and sally ports at the court facility. All employees of the court should be discouraged from having personal packages delivered to the court facility. Even if a delivery person is known to a court security officer and has been arriving at the courthouse the same time with the exact same delivery for years, the individual and the packages should be screened. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- ♦ Purses;
- ♦ Backpacks;
- ♦ Brief cases;
- ♦ Bags;
- ♦ Boxes;
- ♦ Laptop computers;
- ♦ CD/cassette players;
- ♦ Cellular telephones;
- ♦ Pagers; and
- ♦ Radios.

All electronic devices should be turned on, by the bearer, to assure that the device is, in fact, what it appears to be. Local court safety and security committees should develop policies regarding cellular telephones that are also digital cameras. Additional security precautions may need to be put into place to maintain confidentiality of certain court proceedings and to prevent victim and witness intimidation.

Walk-Thru Metal Detectors (magnetometers): Magnetometers are designed to detect those objects consisting entirely or partially of metal which persons may be carrying. As a general practice, persons should be asked to empty their pockets prior to passing through the magnetometer. Bowls or trays should be provided for this purpose. If the magnetometer alarm is triggered, the person should be required to pass through for a second time. If the alarm continues after a person has passed through for a second time, a hand-held metal detector should be used to determine the source of the alarm. If anyone refuses to allow the search of their belongings and/or pass through security screening, they should be denied entrance into the courthouse.

Court security officers assigned to this duty station should also be provided with hand-held metal detectors to screen individuals who may be unable to pass through a magnetometer for health reason.

Discovered Weapons

Pennsylvania State Law (Title 18 Sec. 913) provides in part that:

(e) Each county shall make available at or within the building containing a court facility by July 1, 2002, lockers or similar facilities at no charge or cost for the temporary checking of firearms by persons carrying firearms under Section 6106(b) or 6109 or for the checking of other dangerous weapons that are not otherwise prohibited by law.

(f) “Court Facility.” The courtroom of a court of record; a courtroom of a community court; the courtroom of a magisterial district judge; a courtroom of the Philadelphia Municipal Court; a courtroom of the Pittsburgh Magistrates Court; a courtroom of the Traffic Court of Philadelphia; judges chambers; witness rooms; jury deliberation rooms; attorney conference rooms; prisoner holding cells; offices of court clerks; the district attorney; the sheriff and probation and parole officers; and any adjoining corridors.

“Dangerous Weapons.” A bomb, grenade, blackjack, sandbag, metal knuckles, dagger, knife (the blade of which is exposed in an automatic way by switch, push-button, spring mechanism or otherwise) or other implement for the infliction of serious bodily injury which serves no common lawful purpose.

For court facilities:

- The county must provide a weapons locker;
- Issue a receipt for each firearm; and
- Post a copy of the above-referenced law at the public entrance.

The following procedures should be followed upon the discovery of weapons during screening:

Firearms: The public is presumptively prohibited from bringing firearms onto court property. When a firearm is detected and the person carrying the firearms does not have a recognized permit to carry, law enforcement shall be immediately notified. No person other than authorized law enforcement personnel shall attempt to seize the firearm or detain the suspect. Court security officers shall then contact their supervisor and promptly and securely bring the suspect and firearm to the sheriff’s office.

Knives and other dangerous weapons: Knives of all types and lengths, all cutting instruments regardless of size and configuration, and other dangerous instruments, including disabling chemical sprays shall not be allowed into court and shall be seized following the same procedures as for the seizure of unauthorized firearms.

Signage: When security screening equipment is being used, appropriate signage shall be placed in public locations stating that persons entering the courthouse are subject to search. Pennsylvania law prohibits individuals from bringing firearms into a courthouse.

This signage should be developed and presented in a manner that ensures that this warning is accessible and understood by all persons entering the courthouse (i.e. Braille and foreign languages). This signage should be prominently displayed in all public areas of the courthouse including parking areas. Additionally, signs should be placed at each courthouse entrance that state:

“Weapons of any type are prohibited in this courthouse without the prior approval of this court and sheriff’s office. Violators will be subject to immediate arrest.”

Law enforcement officers arriving at the court facility should be advised of the following via equally visible signage:

“Attention: All law enforcement officers, armed or unarmed, uniformed or plain clothes are required to present valid departmental identification, to register, and to record the reason they are attending court with court security personnel. Failure to do so may result in non-admittance and violators may be subject to discipline.”

Duress Alarm Operation

Courthouse personnel should be trained on the use of duress alarms and encouraged to become familiar with the location of all office and courthouse duress alarms, and with public, employee, and emergency entrances, exits, elevators, and stairwells. Duress alarms should be tested regularly and response time recorded. All appropriate court personnel should be authorized to use any duress alarm when they believe a situation has escalated beyond control. Minor incidents may be reported to pre-designated personnel by phone. However, if courthouse personnel are unable to call, they should not hesitate to activate the nearest duress alarm. Courthouse employees may also call “911” for emergency assistance. Employees should be directed to state the exact location (room number) of the emergency when calling “911.”

Mail Screening

Mail screening should be implemented for all court facilities. The facility assessments done for court facilities in 2004 revealed that, in a majority of Pennsylvania courthouses, fluoroscopes (x-ray machines) or other screening devices are not available or used to screen courthouse mail and deliveries. That being the case, it is recommended that courthouse personnel be trained in “Letter and Parcel Bomb Recognition Points” and “General Responses to Suspicious Letter and Packages” on pages 76-82 of this manual. In addition, the postal inspector’s telephone number should be prominently displayed in the mailroom.

It is recommended that local court safety and security committees develop policies that prohibit the delivery of personal packages to the court facility.

In larger courts, consideration should also be given to having a central mail receiving station where all mail sent to the court could be screened. The main advantage to this is

that personnel assigned to these duties could be thoroughly trained to identify and handle suspicious packages and letters.

Daily Inspections of Buildings and Grounds



A security plan should include daily and weekly inspections of the interior and exterior of all court facilities, including the courthouse grounds and parking areas.

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Perimeter: A thorough search of the courthouse exterior should include all common areas, parking lots, landscaping, dumpsters, etc. Particular attention should be paid to areas adjacent to screening locations, as individuals may have placed weapons and other contraband in these areas.

Emergency exit and employee entrance doors should always be secured. Any doors left ajar, evidence of attempted unauthorized entry; equipment malfunctioning, or suspicious containers/packages should be directly reported to the court security supervisor for documentation and immediate notification of the sheriff.

Courthouse Floors: A thorough search of each court floor, including public restrooms and conference rooms, should be conducted daily before and after court hours. The detection of any unauthorized person or package should be directly reported to the court security supervisor for documentation and immediate notification of the sheriff.

Garage Area: A thorough search of the courthouse garage area, if applicable, should include all common areas, doors, stairwells, elevator bays, etc. Court employee entrance(s) and judicial elevator doors should always be secured. Court security officers should maintain a visible position near the garage entrance and also patrol the facility on a roving basis. The detection of any unauthorized person or package should be directly reported to the court security supervisor for documentation and immediate notification to the sheriff.

When court facility inspections reveal items that can be easily corrected by the court security officer on patrol that should be done. Court security supervisors should report all mechanical problems, unlocked utility closets, penthouse and roof access doors, system malfunctions, etc. to the attention of the sheriff. Court security officers should question suspicious persons detected in secure or sensitive areas, as well as any other individuals not displaying recognized identification. The detection of any unauthorized person or package should be directly reported to the court security supervisor for documentation and immediate notification to the sheriff.

Key Control and Registration

The distribution of all courthouse security and master keys should be rigorously controlled, documented, and noted in building contingency plans. Special attention should be given to private contractors and companies that are given access to the court facility. These individuals should be subjected to a background check or their employer should provide information that indicates that they have been subjected to a background check as

a condition of their employment. Concentrated efforts must be made to confirm the return of these keys immediately upon the transfer, retirement, or termination of any courthouse employee or private contractor with access to the court facility. Keypad entry systems should be routinely reprogrammed with new entry codes. All electronic entry systems must be updated upon the transfer, retirement, or termination of any courthouse employee.

Identification Badges

Courthouse identification badges provide a uniform way to identify court employees and judicial officers. Identification badges can readily be made part of electronic key systems. A distinct advantage of a badging system is that it is easy for the public to identify a courthouse employee who can assist them in the event of an emergency.

Reports and Records

Local court safety and security committees should develop a method, consistent with AOPC and local procedures, to report all security incidents. A standardized reporting form and procedure has been developed for all courts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This information will be maintained by the AOPC. It is imperative that these forms be used to report security incidents. The data gathered from these reports will form the basis for resource requests and to develop an accessible database for information concerning types of incidents and information about individuals involved in the incident(s). The incident reporting system does not substitute for law enforcement documentation and reports as outlined below.

Documentation via standardized law enforcement reporting forms and systems is required for all incidents that occur during court security officer tours of duty. Incidents are occasionally brought forth that result in a need to recall specific information and details months or even years later. The ability to refer to report documentation will refresh agency, officer, and witness memories, accurately reaffirm original actions and positions, and assist in agency response preparation. Daily logbooks should be maintained as a matter of agency policy. These logbooks should include descriptive entries such as:

- ♦ Shift assignments;
- ♦ Special assignments;
- ♦ Incidents;
- ♦ Detail instructions; and
- ♦ Shift hours.

Examples of incidents that require documentation include but are not limited to:

- ♦ Detection of firearms, dangerous weapons, and/or contraband;
- ♦ Courthouse and/or courtroom disturbances;
- ♦ Removal of individuals from the courthouse and/or courtrooms;
- ♦ Arrests and service of warrants;
- ♦ Discrimination allegations;

- ♦ Suspicious persons, items and/or activities;
- ♦ Bomb threats;
- ♦ Security equipment malfunctions;
- ♦ Courthouse systems requiring repair;
- ♦ Security breaches;
- ♦ Acts of courthouse vandalism;
- ♦ Acts of intimidation, stalking, and threats;
- ♦ Courthouse systems and alarm testing and drills; and
- ♦ Courthouse systems and alarm servicing and repair.

Chapter 4: Safety and Security Procedures for Court Proceedings

ROLE OF COURT SECURITY OFFICERS



Court security officers should be tasked with the responsibility of securing each courtroom prior to the day's proceedings and after court has adjourned for the day. A thorough check under benches, tables, and chairs is essential to securing each courtroom. Special attention should be paid to reducing the possibility of anything in the courtroom being used as a "weapon of opportunity." Weapons of opportunity may include:

- Microphones;
- Letter openers;
- Plastic or metal water containers;
- Flag poles;
- Clothes trees;
- Name plates;
- Staplers;
- Inflexible pens and pencils; and
- Improperly secured law enforcement firearms.

Weapons of opportunity may include:

- ***Microphones;***
- ***Letter openers;***
- ***Plastic or metal water containers;***
- ***Flag pole;***
- ***Clothes trees;***
- ***Name plates;***
- ***Staplers;***
- ***Inflexible pens and pencils; and***
- ***Improperly secured law enforcement firearms.***

Unless otherwise directed by the presiding judicial officer, court security officers should unlock and open courtrooms at least one-half hour prior to the start of a scheduled court proceeding. If assigned to a courtroom, court security officers should be in court a minimum of 10 minutes prior to the start of a scheduled courtroom proceeding.

Once any court proceeding begins, it is the court security officer's responsibility to ensure courtroom decorum is being maintained. The presiding judge should establish standards for courtroom decorum. The court security officer should quickly address any disturbance from the gallery in accord with instructions from the judge. The primary response should be to deescalate the situation if at all possible. Appropriate court security officer responses range from a simple warning, "Be Quiet," to requesting the offending person to accompany the court security officer into the hallway. Removal from the courtroom may be done for two specific reasons:

1. To allow the court security officer to fully explain why the person was removed from court. At this point, the person may either be allowed back into court or instructed that he/she will not be allowed back in, without further disturbing the court.
2. To avoid any potential confrontation from occurring in the courtroom if the person is being removed from the proceeding.

Acting in cooperation with the presiding judicial officer, court security officers should use discretion and professionalism prior to and during the removal any person from a courtroom. The sheriff or his/her designee should be immediately notified of any incident resulting in a person being removed or banned from a courtroom.

LESS-THAN-LETHAL WEAPONS FOR COURT SECURITY OFFICERS

In cooperation with sheriffs' offices, local court safety and security committees may wish to consider using less-than-lethal weapons as a substitute for firearms worn by court security officers. Less-than-lethal weapons were developed to provide law enforcement, corrections, and military personnel with an alternative to lethal force. They are designed to temporarily incapacitate, confuse, delay, or restrain an adversary in a variety of situations. Of particular interest to courts is their ability to reduce collateral effects, such as injury to bystanders or unacceptable damage to property and environment.

Tasers and held electrical shock devices: There are two types of electrical shock devices that have potential use in the court environment. The first is a handheld direct contact weapon that has two probes that are pressed against the skin (or clothing) of an aggressor. When the operator presses a switch, the skin contact and pressed switch complete a circuit, and the subject receives a debilitating and possibly painful electrical shock. The second device, commonly referred to as a Taser, fires two barbs connected to trailing wires that lead back to the operator. When the barbs penetrate the subject's skin or clothing, an electrical circuit is completed and an electrical discharge (similar to direct contact weapon discharge) automatically results.

One benefit of electrical stun devices is that they produce an immediate incapacitating effect. The incapacitating effect of the dart-firing electrical shocking device can be instantaneous and last for several seconds. This is usually sufficient time to allow the subject to be properly restrained. A Taser also can be reactivated repeatedly if more time is required for restraint or backup.

Another benefit of electrical weapons is that they can be used in confined spaces like courtrooms and corridors found in court facilities. The maximum range of the direct contact weapon is the length of the arm of the person employing it. The maximum range of the dart-firing electrical shocking device is 15 to 21 feet.

In addition, these weapons are easy to operate. Both the direct contact and the extended range weapons are relatively small and can easily be carried and can be operated with only one hand. Preventive maintenance is critical to ensure that the power source is fully charged or replaced as necessary.

COURTROOM DESIGN

The well area and public area should be clearly defined and separated by a partition. Almost all courtrooms have some separation in this regard. Where such separation is not present, it can still be incorporated using simple theater cordoning equipment. Even unobtrusive separation allows judicial officers and security personnel to instantly make an

assessment of a person's intentions, manifested or otherwise, while allowing them time to respond appropriately. Also, only fixed seating (benches or individual chairs clamped together) should be allowed in public seating areas in the courtrooms. Freestanding chairs are potential weapons and have been used in such a manner to create courtroom disturbances.

Courtroom exits leading to judge-controlled access areas should be secured to prevent any unauthorized entry. Those exits designated for emergency use should be equipped with delayed exiting panic hardware. This type of door hardware satisfies fire codes and will prevent anyone from entering a designated security area for a pre-programmed period of time. Courtroom lighting should be controlled using a key activated system. An alternative is to have separate banks of lights controlled by multiple light switches in varied locations.

SAFETY OF JURORS, WITNESSES, AND THE PUBLIC

The safety and protection of the public is of paramount importance to the court system. In order of likelihood, the first contact most citizens will have with a court is either as a defendant in a traffic case, as part of jury service, or as a small claims litigant. No matter what the reason for his or her presence at the court, it is the responsibility of every judge and court employee to maintain court safety for the public.

Nearly every person who comes to a court facility is under duress. One of the first things that any court can do to reduce this inherent level of stress is to provide a safe, clean, and comfortable environment. The local court safety and security committee should participate in efforts to keep the courthouse clean and comfortable. These efforts contribute to the ability of the court facility to convey positive architectural messages about what takes place within the physical structure of the building.

Another way the committee can assist in this regard is to assure that the first communication trial participants receive--the summons, subpoena, or trial setting document--has the capacity to have safety and security information contained in the documents. These "first communication documents" provide an excellent opportunity to advise the public about court safety policy and procedures and any special courthouse security measures being taken in a particular case.



Court web sites provide an additional means to inform the public about court policies and procedures concerning safety and security efforts undertaken to protect the public.

Threats and intimidation directed towards jurors, witnesses, or litigants, especially in domestic matters, often occur in hallways before entering the court or during breaks. These threats can be eliminated, or greatly reduced, by providing separate areas for jurors, witnesses, and parties to a case. If it is not practicable to provide separate rooms in these

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circumstances, the court may wish to use lightweight plastic theater style cordons to achieve separation. In any event, physically separating individuals under stress or duress is one of the most fundamental safety improvements that any court can make.

Jurors are particularly sensitive about their safety and the use of personal information they provide as a function of their jury service. One of the first places this concern can be addressed is by controlling access to the jury list and the information contained on the list. Local court safety and security committees should work with the elected court staff (Clerks and Prothonotaries) in their counties to develop policies to protect juror privacy. If jurors are transported as part of a sequestered jury or a jury view, it is advisable to use unmarked vans. Vehicles used to transport jurors should be searched in advance for materials that may contain information about the trial or other prohibited items. When transporting jurors, be sure to inform state, county, or local officials who may have to provide additional security on the road.

Written instructions concerning the appropriate treatment of jurors, under normal circumstances and when sequestered, should be developed by judges and court staff. These instructions should be provided to court security officers and other law enforcement so that they are familiar with the court's policies and procedures. If jurors need to be evacuated during a court session, court staff and court security officers should cooperatively move them to a predetermined location where they should remain until ordered to return to the court or moved to another safe location. It is recommended that jurors be reminded not to discuss the case or speculate on why they were evacuated. The trial judge, after consultation with trial counsel, has the sole responsibility as to what, if any, information is given to the jury panel concerning the evacuation.

Judge or court staff may want to address these points during juror orientation:

- ♦ General measures to ensure jury security;
- ♦ Emergency evacuation routes and types of building alarms;
 - ♦ Evacuation procedures can be printed on the reverse side of juror identification badges;
- ♦ Who will direct jurors in an emergency situation;
- ♦ How to proceed in the event of an illness or personal emergency; and
- ♦ How information will be given to them in the event of bad weather or building closures.

This information can also be integrated into juror orientation videos used in many courts.

When jurors arrive in the courtroom, be aware that the presence of elaborate security precautions can have a negative impact on their interest in serving as a juror. Wherever possible, try to make security unobtrusive, at least during preliminary juror selection. If there is a need for elevated courtroom security it may be advisable to ask prospective jurors, as part of voir dire examination, what they think of the security measures.

The type of trial and the amount of publicity will dictate security considerations for jurors. Jurors should be kept out of public hallways and gathering areas to keep them separate from parties, witnesses, and the media. Jurors should be kept together and should take breaks in secure areas not accessible to the general public. Jurors should use secure hallways from the courtroom to the deliberation room. Jurors should never simultaneously use a hallway that is in the process of being used for transporting prisoners or custodial witnesses. For trials where the threat level is greatest, personal escorts should be used to accompany jurors to and from their cars, or they should be escorted by van from a remote assembly site where they may park away from the courthouse, trial participants, and the media.

Jurors impaneled for a case or in deliberations after the close of normal business hours should be escorted to their vehicles.

Protection from Abuse Hearings



Cases involving domestic violence require additional and heightened safety and security policies and procedures. Wherever possible, a secure waiting room close to the courtroom where protection from abuse (PFA) hearings are heard should be reserved for petitioners and

victims. In the event that this is not possible, other steps must be taken to reduce opportunities for contact between victims and respondents. It is not uncommon for victim and witness intimidation to take place in non-verbal ways. Pre-hearing contact puts the petitioner at immediate risk of harm and increases the likelihood of violence after the hearing.

Because numerous hearings are often scheduled for the same time, the protective resources of the court security officer may be stretched. Therefore, careful planning and management before the hearing will help prevent potential problems.

Cases involving domestic violence require additional and heightened safety and security policies and procedures.

It is also important for the court to control the courtroom setting during a PFA hearing to prevent intimidation. After an injunction hearing, the judge should prevent the respondent from making any contact with the petitioner and alert the respondent that such contact is a violation of the restraining order. The respondent should also be instructed to remain in the courtroom for a set period of time to allow the petitioner to leave the courthouse first. A more costly alternative is to have the court security officer accompany the petitioner to his/her vehicle.

Sequestered Juries

For sequestered juries, suitable arrangements may need to be made for hotel accommodations with sign-in and sign-out logs for telephone calls, visitors, and other requests of jurors. Security personnel should keep a general log of juror activity while sequestered. A sufficient number of security personnel of each gender should be assigned to assist the jurors. Additional arrangements should be considered for the jurors' meals and for other forms of diversion, especially during a lengthy trial.

Prisoner Security

In cooperation with local court safety and security committees, trial judges and the sheriff's office should jointly develop policies regarding where, when, and how in-custody defendants are restrained. It is important that the local court safety and security committee assist judges and sheriffs in this regard by identifying:

- ♦ Case types:
 - ♦ High threat; and
 - ♦ High profile.

- ♦ Type of proceeding:
 - ♦ Jury trials; and
 - ♦ Sentencing where imprisonment is a likely result.



Prisoner movement within a courthouse requires continuous communication and cooperation between the judge(s) and sheriff's office. Law enforcement officers assigned to control prisoners should not be armed when they are transporting prisoners within the court facility, in a courtroom, or holding cell area. This lessens the possibility of a prisoner acquiring a firearm while being escorted by the deputy or during any type of disturbance or escape attempt. This allows efforts to be concentrated on regaining control of the prisoner, preventing the escape, and curtailing the disturbance.

Law enforcement officers assigned to control prisoners should not be armed when they are transporting prisoners within the court facility, in a courtroom, or holding cell area.

The proper placement and positioning of sheriff's personnel in courtrooms is essential when securing prisoners. Considerable attention should be given to this integral component of prisoner security. Deputies assigned to secure prisoners should not only be positioned within direct proximity, but also between the prisoner and any potential target (i.e. escape routes and judges). This will allow personnel to intercept instead of reacting to and pursuing a prisoner's actions.

TRIAL RISK IDENTIFICATION



Certain case types, like protection from abuse, juvenile gang-related cases, and child custody and visitation, are presumed to be high-risk cases. By considering the type of hearing or trial and the individuals involved, it is possible to estimate the inherent risks associated with a particular court proceeding. This is done using a two-fold approach of assessment and investigation. The totality of the circumstances and local resources may determine whether these tasks are done concurrently or separately and by one person or a team of people. The following chart can help determine low-, moderate-, or high-risk potentials based on the type of trial, the participants involved, and the stage of the trial.

By considering the type of hearing or trial and the individuals involved, it is possible to estimate the inherent risks associated with a particular court proceeding.

Trial Risk Identification Table

	Civil Cases	Criminal Cases
LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti – Trust Bankruptcy Contracts Environmental Matters Freedom of Information Labor Suits Land Condemnation Personal Injury Product Liability Real Property Tort Claims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auto Theft Embezzlement Forgery Counterfeiting Fraud Larceny Theft Perjury Public Corruption Burglary
MODERATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contested Small claims Child Abuse and Neglect Civil Rights Violations Deportation Foreclosures Seizures, Forfeiture and Penalties Tax Violation High Profile / Media Intensified Related Threat Analysis and Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assaults Extortion Terroristic Threats Stalking Firearms Violations Obstruction of Justice Organized Crime – RICO Violations Armed Robberies Sex Offenses High Profile / Media Intensified Anti-Government / Treason Offenses Related Threat Analysis and Assessment
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection from Abuse Child Custody Associated Violent Criminal History Related Threat Analysis and Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mass / Serial Violent or Sex Offenses Escape Homicide Kidnapping Bombing Attacks Narcotics Trafficking Related Threat Analysis and Assessment Domestic Violence

High-Threat and High-Profile Trials

By using the trial risk identification chart on Page 25 the sheriff's office can identify and prepare for court proceedings that potentially may threaten the safety and security of the participants. Managing such trials requires a thorough operational plan and clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all those involved.

The sheriff's office should be immediately advised of all new arrest and/or court activity involving threat-making groups. This information is essential for the preparation of security operational plans, judicial protection, and assuring building security integrity. Immediate notification allows the sheriff time to plan, gather intelligence, conduct threat and risk assessments, and consult with the judiciary. Subsequently, other justice system agencies may be requested to provide the sheriff with timely notification and information on any arrest involving high-profile criminal and civil cases. The following are some identified threat groups associated with high-threat and high profile trials:

- ♦ Street gangs;
- ♦ Prison gangs;
- ♦ Political extremist groups (domestic);
- ♦ Drug cartels;
- ♦ Biker gangs;
- ♦ Terrorists (domestic and foreign); and
- ♦ Organized crime

OPERATIONAL PLAN

To prepare for a high-profile/threat trial, the sheriff's office should produce an operational plan that includes detailed information on policies and procedures, individual and team assignments, judicial directives, trial operations, prisoner controls, and emergency response procedures. The purpose of the plan is to provide all security personnel with specific information pertaining to a particular case or court proceeding. The following are suggested documents to include in an operational plan:

- ♦ Copies of official correspondence;
- ♦ Description of leader roles;
- ♦ Threat source profile;
- ♦ Threat analysis and assessment;
- ♦ Intelligence and informational reports;
- ♦ Security personnel data sheet;
- ♦ Judicial personnel data sheet;
- ♦ Daily activity log;
- ♦ Weapons policy – Use of deadly force;
- ♦ Less-than-lethal weapons policies and registers - stun guns and belts, mace, batons, etc.;
- ♦ Key assignment and control log;

- Copies of indictments, arrest and search warrants;
- Prisoner processing forms and criminal histories;
- Photographs of the defendant;
- Area maps and courthouse floor plans;
- Aerial photographs of courthouse and adjacent areas;
- Primary and alternate prisoner and juror transport routes;
- Courtroom design layout;
- Courtroom video and audio recording capabilities;
- Prisoner, media, and visitor courtroom seating arrangements;
- Key agency emergency contact list;
- Local, city, county, state, and federal law enforcement support and coordination; and
- Sheriff and court security officer post assignments

Individual Roles & Responsibilities



It is important to carefully define the roles and responsibilities of the agencies and individuals participating in a high-risk or high profile trial. Following are outlines of assignments. Local conditions may dictate that certain individuals may perform more than one of the functions listed below.

It is important to carefully define the roles and responsibilities of the agencies and individuals participating in a high-risk or high profile trial.

Respective roles and responsibilities for sheriff's office, judge, and clerk of court:

Role	Person Responsible
Liaison to trial judge(s)	Sheriff or designee
Overall responsibility for trial security	Chief deputy sheriff/under sheriff or designee
Brief sheriff and serve as courtroom team leader as necessary	Supervisory deputy sheriff
Responsible for daily operation of operational plan	Deputy courtroom team leader
Overall responsibility for trial	Judge
Security of exhibits and court records	Clerk of court
Liaison to jury	Jury bailiffs

PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNED COURT SECURITY OFFICERS

The following guidelines are intended to describe the duty requirements of court security officers, whether contract or Sheriff's Office deputies.

Court Security Officers will report to the command post at least 15 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled shift assignment. Court Security Officers will report for duty physically fit and mentally alert. A court security officer, who is unable to perform assigned duties due to illness or unspecified reason, will immediately notify the trial supervisor. The trial supervisor and/or respective team leaders will confirm duty assignments and brief personnel on a daily basis. The trial supervisor will immediately brief all assigned personnel of any changes made to the trial operational plan.

Personnel will remain on duty until properly relieved or instructed to secure their post assignment. At the conclusion of each day, all personnel will report to the command post for the daily debriefing. Specialized equipment will be signed out when scheduled shifts commence and signed back in when shift is completed.

Trial personnel will either be on post, in the immediate area of the command post, or in designated areas of the courthouse. All other locations are to be authorized by the command post prior to any departure.

Personnel will not discuss office internal matters, procedures, policies, grievances, personalities, finances, personal or family problems with or in the presence of judicial officers, the general public, attorneys, media, defendants, and prisoners. There will be no unnecessary display of firearms and/or intermediate weapons.

Personnel, including off-duty personnel, will remain vigilant for persons exhibiting any unusual curiosity for trial proceedings and sheriff office activities and conducting counter surveillance operations.

A daily activity log will be maintained in the command post for the review and recording of trial shift assignments, revisions, modifications, and operational incidents.

COMMAND POST AND COMMUNICATIONS

The command post will serve as the central point of contact for the duration of the trial. It should be located in a department or courthouse office as designated by the sheriff. Communications will consist of: command post base station, portable radios equipped with approved privacy kits (the trial supervisor will determine if, when, and for whom radio privacy kits will be utilized), radio chargers and batteries, and reserve radios.

Chapter 5: Security Issues for Courthouse Offices

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY



Security and safety in the courthouse is primarily the responsibility of the sheriff's office, court security officer(s), and contract security guards. Still, court staff and staff from other offices located in the courthouse play an important role in deterring, preventing, and detecting the occurrence of problem incidents. Every judge and court employee should perform the following tasks on a daily basis:

1. Inspect their office or work area for tampering or suspicious packages or bags;
2. Inspect their office or work area to determine if there are unauthorized or unknown individuals in restricted areas; and
3. Make the appropriate response if something or someone is not as it should be.

Every judge and court employee should perform the following tasks on a daily basis:

1. *Inspect their office or work area for tampering or suspicious packages or bags;*
2. *Inspect their office or work area to determine if there are unauthorized or unknown individuals in restricted areas; and*
3. *Make the appropriate response if something or someone is not as it should be.*

A major component of any security program is the realization that individuals must assume a degree of personal responsibility to ensure their own safety and security. This section reviews court security issues as they pertain to clerk of courts offices, prothonotary's offices, other court offices, and other county agencies and departments whose offices are located in the same building as the court of common pleas or magisterial district judge court.



Proper staffing and staff training are the keys to a safe and secure court facility. Security equipment is not a substitute for alert and observant staff. Alarm systems are only useful if staff know how to use them, what the response will be, and where it will come from. A closed circuit camera is of little value if no one is available to monitor it and respond when necessary.

Proper staffing and staff training are the keys to a safe and secure court facility. Security equipment is not a substitute for alert and observant staff.

This chapter discusses methods for preventing and handling violence in the workplace and training courthouse staff to appropriately respond to potentially threatening situations. The information on pages 33 and 34 may be distributed to all employees that work in a building that also houses court offices and courtrooms.

The chapter concludes with suggestions on implementing an occupant emergency plan, which is intended to supplement the operational and contingency plans of the sheriff's office.

PREPARING STAFF FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS

For courthouse security programs to be successful, it is essential that they be supplemented with what can be labeled “employee recognized response actions.” For every potentially dangerous situation, employees should be thoroughly familiar with what is required of them. This can be accomplished through:

- ♦ Regular security awareness training;
- ♦ Understanding the occupant emergency plan;
- ♦ Fire/evacuation drills;
- ♦ Informational bulletins;
- ♦ Use of the courthouse safety quick reference guide; and
- ♦ Training videos.

Safety and security bulletins and pamphlets should clearly identify appropriate actions for specific situations. For example, a staff person who notices an unfamiliar person lingering in the hallway for an extended period of time may be instructed to contact the sheriff's office. All circumstances that present a potential danger should be linked to an appropriate action, as follows:

- ♦ No action required;
- ♦ Incident report filed concerning suspicious activities;
- ♦ Duress alarm activation; and
- ♦ Building evacuation.

It is recommended that pre-employment background investigations be conducted on courthouse custodial and maintenance staff personnel whether they be government employees or contract workers. They usually have unrestricted facility access and, appropriately, should undergo investigations similar to law enforcement officers. All courthouse contractors should be issued and identified by courthouse-specific identification cards. These “temporary credentials” are to be prominently displayed for easy recognition by the judiciary, courthouse employees, and security.

Personal Safety and Security Training Outline – People, Property, Information

This outline has been designed to assist local court safety and security committees in the development of in-service training for judges and court staff in the area of personal safety and security. It is recommended that the committees consult with law enforcement to bring their skills and resources to augment the training.

PEOPLE - Personal Safety and Security Topics

- ♦ Incident awareness – recognizing threats;
- ♦ Proxemics (using space to increase safety);
- ♦ Pre-violence indicators;
- ♦ Avoiding violent confrontations;
- ♦ Assessing body language and interpersonal communications;
- ♦ Inappropriate and threatening communications;
- ♦ Terrorism - federal, state and local statutes;
- ♦ Inherent risk factors - occupation, gender, age, environment;
- ♦ Limiting/defining criminal opportunity, ability, desire, and intent;
- ♦ Heightened security and awareness levels;
- ♦ Defensive tactics;
- ♦ Expectations for safety and security;
- ♦ Advance preparation and planning;
- ♦ Environmental and location awareness; and
- ♦ Instinctive or intuitive reactionary responses.

PROPERTY - Building Security Awareness

- ♦ Areas of refuge;
- ♦ Security systems and equipment;
- ♦ Remote and local monitoring – centralized monitoring;
- ♦ Duress/panic alarms and responding agencies;
- ♦ Emergency response plans/actions;
- ♦ Mail and package screening;
- ♦ After hours safety;
- ♦ Controlled access system policies;
- ♦ Public, private, and prisoner circulation;
- ♦ Entrances and exits - private and public;
- ♦ Emergency exits;
- ♦ Evacuation plans;
- ♦ Bomb threats;
- ♦ Parking areas;
- ♦ Compliance with building security policies and procedures; and
- ♦ Alternative business locations.

INFORMATION – Records and technology protection

- ♦ Emergency communications;
- ♦ “Take-away” records back-up materials;
- ♦ Remote access capabilities;

- ♦ Information back-up policies;
- ♦ Firewalls against cyber-vandalism or attack; and
- ♦ Security of confidential or sensitive court records.

MAINTAINING SAFETY AND SECURITY AT THE COURTHOUSE



The following information is intended to help courts deter, detect, and prevent, potentially dangerous incidents in the courthouse.

Every court employee should know:

- ♦ How to report an emergency;
- ♦ How to recognize emergency signals;
- ♦ Their duties in each type of emergency; and
- ♦ The location of emergency equipment, including duress alarms, and exits.

Every court employee should know:

- ♦ **How to report an emergency;**
- ♦ **How to recognize emergency signals;**
- ♦ **Their duties in each type of emergency; and**
- ♦ **The location of emergency equipment, including duress alarms, and exits.**

Many court staff have been provided with a desktop disaster planning and recovery checklist. This checklist should be adapted for local use and can be updated with a dry erase pen.

Daily Steps to Prevent Security Incidents

All courthouse employees should have a general idea of what the court’s business is from day to day. A simple way to increase communication in this regard is for all courts to provide court calendars to the court security detail, highlighting high-risk cases. Security incidents are more likely to occur at the courthouse when the following circumstances are present:

- ♦ The court appearance of an antagonistic witness or codefendant, especially if gangs are involved;
- ♦ When the case involves constitutional rights, freedom of speech, or abortion;
- ♦ Requests for restraining orders in domestic violence cases;
- ♦ During prisoner transport;
- ♦ At sentencing;
- ♦ When a juvenile is ordered to be placed in a detention facility;
- ♦ When a decision is rendered in family or small claims court;
- ♦ When parental rights are in dispute; and
- ♦ During “last chance” meetings before incarceration.

EMERGENCY AND SECURITY SITUATIONS – PEOPLE, PROPERTY, AND INFORMATION

People - Personal Security

- ♦ Maintain a low profile. Do not openly talk about your job or volunteer information when you are around strangers.
- ♦ Office money for coffee, gift, and flower funds should always be kept in locked cabinets.
- ♦ Place coat racks in center of work area and not next to doors leading to hallways. Never leave items of value in pockets of garments on coat racks.
- ♦ If working after hours, keep all doors locked, even in secure areas. Never advertise that you will be working alone.
- ♦ Assailants often hide in women's restrooms. Look into corners when entering the restroom. Check stalls if possible. After hours, women should always go to restrooms in pairs, if possible. If alone, use the restroom while other employees are still in the office.
- ♦ Radios and other personal items should be placed in a locked container at the end of the workday.
- ♦ Employees should not bring personal items of substantial value to the office.
- ♦ If your purse or wallet is stolen, **DO NOT** provide PIN numbers to telephone callers who may say they are officials of your bank or the local police department.
- ♦ Pay attention to personal vehicle security by looking for signs of tampering.

Property - Office Security

- ♦ Do not allow visitors into secure areas if you are uncomfortable with the purpose of their visit.
- ♦ Do not allow persons visiting one office to have access to other secure offices or areas.
- ♦ Immediately report persons who appear unannounced in your work area.
- ♦ Do not admit unexpected repairpersons or delivery persons without checking to verify that they have a right to be in the work area.
- ♦ Ask strangers in your work area for identification or promptly call the sheriff's office.
- ♦ Devise a simple code system to alert others in your office that there is a problem.
- ♦ If the public uses the court facility after hours, the local court safety and security committee should develop policies to screen after hours visitors and patrol the facility after the meeting has concluded.
- ♦ Keep all security doors locked at all times, especially those leading from public areas into secure areas.
- ♦ Always keep important files in locked cabinets.

- Be alert for strange objects and packages. Packages can be discovered more easily if offices are kept neat and orderly.
- Never touch or disturb a strange package or briefcase found in your work area. Notify law enforcement immediately.
- Avoid routines, if your job entails handling or depositing funds; vary the times of day and days of the week that you perform these tasks.
 - This is a special concern for small or isolated Magisterial district judge offices. It is strongly recommended that escorts be provided while performing this task.

Information - Computers and Servers

Consider the following measures to protect computers from illicit activity, cyber-vandalism, and accidental damage:

- Restrict access to areas housing computers, network equipment and computer servers.
- Lock doors to areas housing servers at all times.
- Maintain a back-up power source.
- Assure that appropriate fire suppression equipment is in place.
- Define an orderly, automated, emergency shut-off plan for computers to minimize data loss.
- Require that computer back-up files be kept in the courthouse and off-site in a fireproof site.
- Restrict access by using passwords that change at least every 90 days.
- Require strict adherence to policies concerning the use of court computers for personal business.
- Require computers to run an automatic virus detection program on a daily basis.
- Require that individual users log-out when they are away from their workstations.

PLACEMENT OF WEAPONS OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE COURTROOM



Weapons of opportunity can be found in any courtroom in any courthouse in America. Even the simplest of everyday objects can be turned into lethal weapons. The assessment of common pleas court facilities conducted in 2004 found that this issue had not been adequately addressed in most courthouses. The most important thing to do is to become aware of those items which may become weapons of opportunity and which may be used by someone who wishes to disrupt the proceedings, attempt retribution, effect an escape, or cause injury or death. The proper placement of objects in the courtroom can do more than anything else to minimize or eliminate the threat of their use

Weapons of opportunity can be found in any courtroom in any courthouse in America.

as weapons of opportunity. Institute training in awareness of weapons of opportunity for all court staff.

The following list identifies common weapons of opportunity and recommendations for their safe use.

Judge's name plate	Make the judge's nameplate out of cardstock in a tent-fashion, as with seminar nameplates, or affix the nameplate in front of the bench so that it cannot be grabbed and used as a weapon.
Pencil or pen at counsel table	Replace the pen or pencil at counsel table for a criminal defendant with a golf pencil or a high security pen—100% plastic, flexible construction, which uses water-based ink and contains no metal.
Judge's gavel	Move the gavel so that it is out of reach of someone standing nearby.
Staplers, Scissors, Letter openers	Keep staplers, scissors, and letter openers in a drawer at all times while not in use.
Microphones	Install microphones so that they are a permanent fixture or purchase lightweight flat devices for placement on counsel tables.
Microphone and electrical cords	Keep electrical cords concealed. If they must be exposed, consider taping them down with duct tape so that they cannot readily be grabbed to tie or strangle someone.
Large pointed objects such as clothes trees, coat hangers, flag pole eagles, and points	Keep clothes' trees out of the well, away from the bar; and place flags behind the bench rather than between the witness stand and jury so that the flagpoles cannot be used as weapons.
Water pitchers and glasses	Use only lightweight, shatterproof pitchers and plastic or Styrofoam cups.
Firearms worn by law enforcement	Appropriate weapons' retention training and equipment should be required.

Suspicious Packages



Suspicious packages may arrive in the mail, delivered as a package to the court facility, or appear to be abandoned on courthouse premises. **Never assume that a bag, envelope, package, or briefcase left in a public place in the courthouse has simply been “forgotten.”** Precaution should be taken to

determine the potential volatility of their contents before they are moved or opened. If you are uncertain **contact law enforcement immediately.**

Never assume that a bag, envelope, package, or briefcase left in a public place in the courthouse has simply been “forgotten.”

In any event, these steps should be followed:

- Do not open, confine, or submerge the package;
- Isolate the package;
- Open windows and doors in the area; and
- Prepare for evacuation if necessary.

Courthouse staff should be trained in identifying and responding to the discovery of a suspicious package. The following list includes some characteristics of a letter or package that indicates the contents may be dangerous:

- Foreign mail, air mail, and special delivery;
- Restrictive markings such as confidential, personal, etc.;
- Excessive or no postage;
- Handwritten or poorly typed address;
- Incorrect titles with name;
- Title with no name;
- Misspellings of names and common words;
- Oily stains or discoloration;
- No return address;
- Excessive weight;
- Rigid or bulky envelope;
- Lopsided or uneven package/envelope;
- Protruding wires or tinfoil;
- Excessive securing material such as
- Masking tape or string;
- Strange odor; and
- Evidence of opening and resealing.

Evacuations



Judges and court staff should be familiar with the courthouse evacuation plan. All court employees have a personal responsibility to know who has the authority to order an evacuation, how the evacuation will be announced, what their responsibility to others is during an evacuation, where they should report, and what system will be used to signal that it is safe to return to the building. Local court safety and security committees should assure that signage indicating evacuation routes and procedures is adequate and placed throughout the court facility.

All court employees have a personal responsibility to know who has the authority to order an evacuation, the evacuation will be announced, what their responsibility to others is during an evacuation, where they should report, and what system will be used to signal that it is safe to return to the building.

Hostage Situations

Court security staff should be prepared to handle a hostage situation. If a situation occurs, staff should contact a predetermined local law enforcement agency with a trained negotiator on staff. The first 20 or 30 minutes are the most critical in a hostage situation. During this time, employees should make every attempt to limit dialogue with the hostage taker and prevent an overreaction by refraining from taking any overt action that threatens the hostage taker or endangers the hostage. When the response team arrives, employees should be prepared to tell them the exact number of hostages and hostage takers, the exact location of the incident, and the content of any communications with the hostage taker.

If you are taken as a hostage, the following guidelines can help ensure your safety:

- Be patient and expect a long wait. Remember that time is key in the hostage negotiation process.
- Comply with your captor's requests to the best of your ability. Do not be argumentative. Do not volunteer to do anything for the hostage taker and never make suggestions.
- Remain silent if instructed to do so.
- Try to rest whenever possible. This helps eliminate tension and helps pass time.
- Remember that a response plan is in effect, even if you cannot hear or see anything.
- Only attempt to escape if it is totally safe. Being a "hero" may threaten your safety and that of others.
- Inform your captors if another hostage needs medical attention. Do not attempt to help another hostage unless your captor gives you permission.
- Be prepared to speak with law enforcement officials after the event.

If law enforcement officials make a hostage rescue attempt, follow these guidelines:

- Do not run or make any fast or sudden moves. You might be mistaken for a captor by the rescuers.
- Be alert for any signals from the outside.
- Stay on the floor.
- If a chemical agent is used, do not panic. Close your eyes and take short light breaths.

Personal Threats



Every threat should be assessed; do not assume that anyone is "just blowing off steam." Threats against the court system have grown substantially in recent years. Many of these threats are made against individuals. Others allege that bombs have been planted in the courthouse. Most threats are made by telephone.

Every threat should be assessed; do not assume that anyone is "just blowing off steam."

The following chart offers three levels of de-escalation techniques.

Threat Source	De-escalation Techniques
Level One - ANGRY / HOSTILE PERSONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Stay calm and attentive; ♦ Maintain eye contact, if the incident is in-person; ♦ Be courteous and informative; ♦ Remain patient; ♦ Respond honestly; ♦ Keep the situation in your control; and ♦ Be aware of your office security environment.
Level Two - THREATENING PERSONS	<p>All techniques in Level One plus;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Offer appeasement; ♦ Appear sympathetic; ♦ Follow through on any statements you make; ♦ Do not confront threatening individuals; ♦ Signal to a co-worker or supervisor that you need help; ♦ Attempt to create a physical separation by moving back; and ♦ Use prearranged code or duress alarm system.
Level Three - ARMED PERSONS	<p>All techniques in Levels One and Two plus;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Stall for time; ♦ Talk while following instructions; ♦ DON'T BE A HERO; ♦ Never attempt to grab a weapon; and ♦ Watch and take advantage of any safe opportunity to escape.

Using Proxemics as a Threat and Violence De-Escalation Technique

Proxemics, sometimes called body space, is a personal comfort zone that determines how close another individual can come without heightening personal concerns for safety. It can be used to aid decision-making in response to violations of this comfort zone. The following table outlines standard comfort zone levels based on familiarity with an individual.

<p>Intimate Zone: 6"-18"</p> <p><i>Used for emotionally based relationships and close friendships</i></p>	<p>Personal Zone: 18"-4'</p> <p><i>Where we normally converse with others on a one-to-one basis</i></p>	<p>Close Social Zone: 4'-7'</p> <p><i>Where we conduct impersonal business, converse with strangers</i></p>
<p>Far Social Zone: 7'-12'</p> <p><i>Used for formal social affairs or business - i.e. police desk sergeant</i></p>	<p>Close Public Zone: 12'-25'</p> <p><i>Marks the limits of interpersonal concerns - conferences & training</i></p>	<p>Far Public Zone: Beyond 25'</p> <p><i>Used by persons addressing large or formal groups</i></p>

The following chart has suggested techniques to reduce the potential for violence.

Minimizing Violence: Personal Conduct Techniques

DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Situate yourself so visitors cannot block your path to an exit. ◆ Project calmness, move and speak clearly, quietly and confidently. ◆ Be an empathetic listener; encourage the person to talk and listen patiently. ◆ Focus your attention on the person and appear interested. ◆ Maintain a relaxed, attentive posture. ◆ Position yourself at a right angle (a non-threatening, defensive stance) instead of right in front of the person. ◆ Ask the person to move to a quieter (and safer) area to discuss their situation. ◆ Use delaying tactics to give a person time to calm down. ◆ Be reassuring and point out options. ◆ Avoid any physical contact or finger pointing. ◆ Avoid extended periods of eye contact. ◆ Watch your non-verbal "body language" gestures.
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DO NOT

- ♦ Use styles of communication that manifest either hostility or apathy.
- ♦ Assume a challenging stance.
- ♦ Make accusatory, demanding, or demeaning comments.
- ♦ Make sudden movements that can be seen as threatening.
- ♦ Issue challenges or threats.
- ♦ Criticize, act impatiently, or attempt to bargain.
- ♦ Try to make the situation appear less serious than it is.
- ♦ Make false statements or promises.
- ♦ Try to impress the person with your credentials.
- ♦ Take sides or agree with obviously distorted versions of the truth.
- ♦ Use complicated or technical language when explaining information.
- ♦ Invade someone's personal space; maintain at least four to seven feet of separation.

Threats Received By Telephone



The majority of threats made against the court system, judge, and court staff are delivered over the telephone. No threat, whether in person or by telephone, should be disregarded. **An assessment should be made of every threat received.**

An assessment should be made of every threat received.

The following tables present guidelines for handling inappropriate telephone contact.

Threatening Calls	Harassing/Obscene Calls	Nuisance Calls
<p>Calls in this category require Assessment and intervention by law enforcement.</p> <p>What to do: Hang up immediately; Use available telephone security features; Record as much information about the threat as possible; and Contact law enforcement.</p>	<p>These calls may include silent calls.</p> <p>What to do: Hang up immediately; If the calls persist, unplug your phone or do not answer; Use available telephone security features; and Contact telephone security personnel to discuss alternative options.</p>	<p>These calls are intended to irritate.</p> <p>Prank Calls - Generally calls made at random, and if the caller does not get the response they want, will usually stop after one or two attempts.</p> <p>Anonymous Calls - Typically are attempts to get information</p>

Bomb Threats

EXPERTISE



The primary reasons that bomb threats are delivered to courthouses are to disrupt court proceedings and dishearten court staff. Although it may be impossible to detect every bomb, with the proper training and equipment court staff may be able to provide valuable assistance in uncovering all but the most sophisticated bombs.

The primary reasons that bomb threats are delivered to courthouses are to disrupt court proceedings and dishearten court staff.

It is an unnerving experience for anyone to receive a telephoned threat. But there are ways to minimize personal fear and still concentrate on gathering information that may help law enforcement personnel identify the person making the threat. The first step is to realize that virtually any courthouse employee could receive such a call. The second step is to be aware that careful procedures have been developed to counter such threats and to arrest and convict the callers.

If you receive a threat, follow these procedures:

- ♦ Pay careful attention to the caller's references to names of those threatened, time or nature of threatened assault, locations of purported bombs and times of detonation, and names of those whom the caller intends to harm with the bomb;
- ♦ If the caller appears ready to hang up without giving the vital information noted above, the employee should try gently, but persuasively, to obtain it. The employee should encourage the caller to continue talking and not to hang up the phone;
- ♦ The employee should write down certain information while on the phone, including the time, the caller's exact words, background noises, gender of caller, tone of voice (calm or excited), probable mental state, age, accent, and speech impediments;
- ♦ Try to get the caller to identify the location of the bomb and the time the event will occur; and
- ♦ Be prepared to complete a security incident report form either on-line or as a hard copy.

OCCUPANT EMERGENCY PLANS

Pennsylvania statutes require each county to maintain an occupant emergency plan (OEP). An OEP is developed in order to minimize the danger to life and property arising from the effects of attack, fire, flood, explosion, serious weather conditions, and other disasters affecting courthouses. The OEP is primarily a life safety plan that supplements operational, contingency, and emergency plans prepared by local court safety and security committees.

It is imperative that the local court safety and security committee has a fundamental understanding of the information contained in their local OEP.



It is imperative that the local court safety and security committee has a fundamental understanding of the information contained in their local OEP. The prescribed policies, procedures, and methods for the establishment of an OEP in a courthouse should be implemented in accordance with recognized state and local property management statutes and regulations. A risk management employee of the county is usually assigned responsibility for developing the OEP, which should include conducting test drills for natural disasters, fires, and weather emergencies. The law enforcement department, usually the Sheriff's Office, that is responsible for courthouse security should be listed as a technical advisor for the courthouse OEP. Judges and members of the local court safety and security committee should make themselves available to assist with the coordination and design of comprehensive OEP's for all court facilities.

The OEP should be distributed to all offices located in the courthouse or court facility, as well as the sheriff and other local law enforcement agencies, as necessary. Offices and individuals receiving a copy of the OEP should become familiar with the plan. At the same time, the plan will contain some sensitive information. Details of the OEP should not be discussed with the public or media.

A courthouse OEP should include the following:

- ♦ Courthouse emergency information;
- ♦ Descriptions of the duties and responsibilities of agencies and individuals;
- ♦ An OEP organizational chart, including succession of command;
- ♦ Warning, signal, and emergency instructions;
- ♦ Evacuation routes procedures;
- ♦ Employee bomb threat action plan;
- ♦ Employee fire action plan;
- ♦ Employee medical action plan; and
- ♦ Courthouse utilities diagram.

Chapter 6: Security Incident Reporting



This chapter reviews the security incident reporting system developed in Pennsylvania that is to serve as a supplement to, and not a replacement for, a call for emergency response.

This chapter reviews the security incident reporting system developed in Pennsylvania.

REPORT EVERY THREAT



Judges and court staff **must** report any threat or inappropriate communication that they receive. Sanctions for failing to reports threats include, but are not limited to, loss of funds related to improving courthouse security. These incidents should be reported to law enforcement for assessment and, if appropriate and indicated, investigation. The purpose of reporting all security incidents is twofold:

*Judges and court staff **must** report any threat or inappropriate communication that they receive.*

1. To maintain a statistical database of security incidents to:
 - a. Support resource requests; and
 - b. Measure court security improvements.

2. Assist law enforcement to assess and investigate court security incidents.

Using the Security Incident Reporting Fact Sheet

The incident reporting fact sheet should be prepared and submitted on-line, no later than the close of the business day on the day of the event. Any judge or court employee may submit a report. The report is automatically forwarded to the district court administrator, the AOPC, and local sheriff or other law enforcement.

Where local circumstances make on-line reporting impractical or inefficient the local court safety and security committee shall develop policies and procedures to provide for adequate and timely reporting of court security incidents.

Purposes of the Security Incident Fact Sheet

There are three purposes for the Security Incident Fact Sheet:

1. For the AOPC to gather data from individual courts to measure both the level of security incidents and reduction in incidents after court security improvements have been made;

2. To allow the AOPC to provide the Legislature with quantitative data to support future requests for funding courthouse and court facility safety and security improvements; and
3. To provide law enforcement with the information they need to assess and, if necessary, investigate court security incidents.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SECURITY INCIDENT FACT SHEET

The following offices should receive the fact sheet after a judge, magisterial district judge, or court employee has prepared it:

- ♦ District Court Administrator/President Judge;
- ♦ AOPC (routed through the DCA/PJ); and
- ♦ Sheriff's Office.

Definition of a Security Incident

“A security incident is an event that has the potential to cause, or has in fact caused, personal injury or property loss.”

Definitions of Reportable Incidents

The following are definitions of incidents that shall be reported:

- A. Attempted or actual acts of violence to persons or property of the court;
- B. Verbal or written threats of future violence; and/or
- C. Conduct (inappropriate communication or actions), which causes concern about the possibility of future violence.

Examples of Conduct that Constitutes a Reportable Incident

Common sense will be required when making the decision to report an incident. Judges and court employees are encouraged to file a report if they believe such action is prudent. The examples listed below are provided to illustrate reportable inappropriate communications that should be reported:

1. Any threats, whether direct or specific, veiled (“Now I know why they blew up the courthouse in Oklahoma City.”), or conditional (“ You had better...or I will.”);
2. An **extraordinary** sense of outrage over the handling of a court case;
3. References to a special history or shared destiny with a court official;
4. Suspicious behavior, stalking behavior, or research on the personal affairs of a court official;
5. Admonishments (historical or religious etc.) for a court official to change his/her lifestyle or personal behavior;
6. References to death, violence, or suicide;
7. References to public figures who have been attacked;
8. References to individuals who have attacked public officials; and

9. Belief that a court official owes a debt to the individual.

Other Reporting Still Required



The security incident fact sheet (please refer to next page) is not intended, nor should it be used to, replace other incident or law enforcements investigative reports already mandated for use.

The security incident fact sheet is not intended, nor should it be used to, replace other incident or law enforcement investigative reports already mandated for use.

Chapter 7: Court Facility Assessments

THE PURPOSE OF COURT FACILITY ASSESSMENTS



A physical security assessment is a fundamental component of any courthouse safety and security plan. For purposes of this section a court facility is either the Common Pleas courthouse or a building containing a court system related function. The strengths and limitations of the courthouse's physical plant dictate, in large part, the policies, procedures, and staffing deployment developed by the local court safety and security committee. In addition, court facility assessments can:

- Provide baseline data used to develop safety and security improvements;
- Identify strengths and limitations; and
- Provide data for comparison.

A physical security assessment is a fundamental component of any courthouse safety and security plan.

Court facility assessments are not meant to prescribe improvements or dictate that changes to the physical plant are warranted.

THE ROLE OF FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

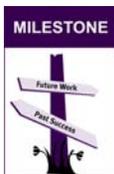
For courts in Pennsylvania, facility assessments will be maintained in an on-going database. To maintain the viability of the data it is necessary that:

- At a minimum, each court facility in Pennsylvania undergo a reassessment on a biennial basis;
- The facility assessment tool be revised to keep current with trends and system needs;
- A reassessment be conducted after any new construction, remodeling, or renovation; and
- Reassessments be conducted using teams comprised of members from outside the judicial district of the court being reassessed.

In November 2003, teams of individuals, trained by the AOPC, were given the assignment of conducting facility assessments for all common pleas court facilities in the Commonwealth of PA. These teams returned results for 83 Common Pleas court facilities from all 67 counties in PA.

To this end, it will be critical that the AOPC maintain the skill set required to perform facility assessments in the future. This skill set was initially developed in November 2003.

2004 Assessment of Courts of Common Pleas Court Facilities



In November 2003, teams of individuals, trained by the AOPC, were given the assignment of conducting facility assessments for all common pleas court facilities in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. These teams returned

results for 83 Common Pleas court facilities from all 67 counties in Pennsylvania. A data summary of the results appears on the pages that follow. A complete electronic file of all data captured in the assessment is maintained by the AOPC and will serve as the baseline to measure improvements to the courts' facilities.

Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts Physical Security Assessment Data Summary

	Yes	No
Perimeter (e.g., fences and gates)		
1. Is the perimeter of the courthouse grounds clearly defined by a fence, wall, or other type of physical barrier?	24	57
2. Does the barrier limit or control vehicle or pedestrian access to the courthouse?	23	55
Lights		
1. Is the entire perimeter lighted?	60	22
2. Are light fixtures suitable for outside use (i.e., are they weather- and tamper-resistant)?	64	15
3. Is the exterior of the building (particularly entry points) sufficiently lighted to discourage unlawful entry attempts or placement of explosives against the walls?	55	26
4. Are public areas (including parking spaces and walkways) sufficiently lighted to discourage attacks against persons or vehicles?	53	30
Parking Areas		
1. Is a reserved parking lot on courthouse grounds?	61	21
2. Is the reserved area closed or locked during non-business hours?	20	57

	Yes	No
3. Are parking spaces reserved by name?	27	56
4. Are parking spaces reserved by number?	31	52
5. Is there direct access for judges from the garage to nonpublic elevators or restricted corridors?	18	64
6. Can unattended vehicles park near or next to the courthouse?	77	6

Landscaping

1. Do landscape features provide places for potential intruders to hide?	36	46
2. Are there items such as bricks, stones, or wooden fence pickets which could be used by intruders as weapons, missiles, or tools?	14	68
3. Does landscaping (bollards, benches, site elevation, or declination) impede a vehicle from being driven into the building?	33	46
4. Are jersey-type barricades used to block access to certain exterior areas?	4	79

Doors, Windows, and other Openings

1. Are all exterior doors at least 1¾-inch solid core wood, metal clad, or metal?	44	38
2. Are all hinge pins internally located, welded, or otherwise treated to prevent easy removal?	56	24
3. Are exterior locks designed or exterior doorframes built so that the door cannot be forced by spreading the frame?	63	17
4. Are all unused doors permanently locked?	71	11

	Yes	No
5. Are windows that could be used for entry protected with:		
a. locking devices	60	21
b. metal bars	11	68
c. mesh	9	69
d. intrusion alarms	8	71
e. other	14	24
6. Are windows on the ground floor made of tempered glass or ballistic plastic?	26	53
7. Is the roof accessible by means of:		
a. fire escape	4	79
b. another building	8	75
c. a pole or tree	1	81
d. other	16	26
8. Are openings to the building (e.g., tunnels, utility and sewer manholes, culverts, and service ports) properly secured?	51	23
9. Do judges and court officers have a private entrance to the building?	28	54
10. Is there security screening at that private entrance?	13	48 ¹
Ceilings and Walls		
1. Do all walls extend to the ceiling?	54	26
2. Are drop or removable ceilings used in the courthouse?	76	4

¹ Some teams answered in the negative when there was no private entrance.

	Yes	No
Alarms		
1. Does the courthouse have an intrusion alarm system?	32	51
2. Is the system regularly tested?	31	14 ²
3. Where does the alarm system terminate?		
a. sheriff's office	17	27
b. local law enforcement office	3	39
c. commercial controls station	9	35
d. other	22	13
Attics, Basements, Crawl Spaces, and Air Conditioning and Heating Ducts		
1. Are doors to basements, utility rooms, boiler rooms, crawl spaces, and attics locked when not in use?	60	21
2. Are crawl spaces secured from unauthorized entry?	53	17
3. Are air-conditioning and heating vent openings in public areas secure from tampering?	48	33
Elevators		
1. Are private elevators provided for judges?	13	67
2. Are certain elevators used exclusively to move prisoners?	20	57
3. Are prisoner elevators marked "Not for Public Use"?	10	43
4. Are prisoner elevators controlled by key?	25	27
5. Are prisoner elevators programmed to bypass floors?	17	35
Public Area (waiting areas, rest rooms, and hallways)		
1. Are waiting rooms next to courtrooms?	48	33

² Some teams answered in the negative when there was no intrusion alarm system.

	Yes	No
2. Is the number of waiting rooms sufficient to separate parties to a case?	21	51
3. Are drop or removable ceilings used in waiting rooms?	42	29
4. Are public rest rooms routinely searched?	38	45
5. Are rest rooms next to courtrooms?	48	34
6. Are drop or removable ceilings used in rest rooms?	48	34
7. Do any trash receptacles allow easy concealment of contraband?	67	15
8. Are directions (directories and floor plans, if appropriate) clearly posted in all public areas?	58	25
Offices Handling Money		
1. Does the cashier's window have security features?	30	46
2. Who escorts the employee carrying money to the bank?		
a. sheriff	28	35
b. local police	1	55
c. state police	0	55
d. no one	36	28
e. other	20	19
3. Is the bank deposit made at varying times each day?	43	26
Courthouse Procedures		
1. Is there a procedure for routine daily inspection of the courthouse?	54	29
2. Is the court facility patrolled 24 hours a day, seven days a week?	24	59

	Yes	No
3. Are tenants given periodic instruction about the various emergency procedures?	64	19
4. Are periodic fire and evacuation drills held?	59	24
5. Are public, private, and prisoner circulation patterns separated and well defined?	26	55
6. Is there a routine inspection of packages and shipments entering the courthouse?	31	50
7. Is there a policy concerning personal package deliveries made to the courthouse?	34	49
8. Does the court have an emergency management/continuity of operations plan (COOP)?	52	27
9. Does the court have a safety and security committee?	66	17

Courtrooms: Location

1. Do spaces above, below, and next to the courtroom present a security hazard?	27	55
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Courtrooms: Doors, Windows, and Other Openings

1. Are all unused doors secured?	53	27
2. Are there separate entrances into the courtroom for:		
a. judges	65	14
b. in-custody defendants	34	44
c. spectators	44	36
3. Is the prisoner entry door far enough from the public seating area to prevent passing contraband?	41	32
4. Are all windows draped to obscure vision (particularly of the bench) from outside?	60	14

	Yes	No
Courtrooms: Lights		
1. Is there emergency lighting?	69	12
Courtrooms: Furnishings		
1. Is the main area or well separated from the spectators by a barrier?	57	17
2. Is there a physical barrier between the well and the judge's bench?	47	28
3. Is the judge's bench closed at both ends to restrict access from the well?	15	61
4. Are potential weapons, such as drinking glasses, water carafes, and ashtrays, kept out of the defendant's reach?	35	47
Courtrooms: Security Devices		
1. Is the bench reinforced to make it bullet resistant?	21	56
2. Is there a duress alarm in the courtroom?	68	14
a. Does the duress alarm also indicate location?	67	6
3. Are duress alarm buttons installed at:		
a. the bench	64	10
b. clerk's station	17	56
c. bailiff's station	7	61
d. chambers	48	25
e. judge's secretary's desk	43	26
f. other	28	16
4. Does the courtroom have a telephone?	59	23
5. Does the courtroom have a public address system?	48	33
6. Does the courthouse have a public address system?	32	48

	Yes	No
Courtrooms: Security Procedures		
1. Is there a policy for firearms to be carried into the courtroom by:		
a. bailiffs	47	26
b. law enforcement officer witnesses	63	16
c. law enforcement officer spectators	61	17
d. other	36	17
2. Are bailiffs armed in the courtroom?	44	26
3. How many bailiffs provide court security on a daily basis?	68	16 ³
a. Fixed post only	27	
b. Roving post only	4	
c. Both fixed and roving post	37	
4. Courthouse security is provided by: (check all that apply)	77	7
a. Sheriff only	64	
b. Private Security Agency only	5	
c. Sheriff and Private Security Agency	8	
5. Are there procedures for the emergency evacuation from the courtroom of:		
a. prisoners	64	15
b. judges	59	19
c. jurors	54	16
6. Is there a policy to secure weapons and other contraband offered as evidence?	50	16
Judges' Chambers and Related Offices		
1. Is visitor access controlled by clerks, bailiffs, or secretaries?	68	8

³ Nine court facilities reported no fixed or roving security and seven court facilities did not answer.

	Yes	No
2. Do these chambers have more than one means of entry and exit?	55	15
3. Are the chambers routinely locked when the judge is not present?	54	22
4. Are outside views, particularly of judges' desks, obscured?	52	24
5. Do chambers have duress alarms?	53	24
Witness Waiting Room		
1. Are witness waiting rooms provided?	43	37
2. Is it possible to separate prosecution and defense witnesses?	52	25
3. Is public access to waiting rooms restricted?	23	44
Jury Deliberation Room		
1. Is the jury deliberation room next to the courtroom or accessible through a controlled passage?	53	12
2. Are the windows draped?	55	6
3. Are rest rooms provided as an integral part of the deliberation area?	58	10
4. Is the deliberation room routinely searched for contraband before occupancy?	40	29
5. Is the deliberation room locked when unoccupied?	30	39

Chapter 8: Security of Exhibits

While the presiding judge has the overall responsibility for the trial, the clerk of court/official court reporter is the custodian of court records and exhibits. As such, they have primary responsibility for the control and security of courtroom exhibits.

STORAGE OF EXHIBITS DURING TRIAL

Store exhibits during trial using the following procedures:

- Keep exhibits in a secured area in the courtroom during the trial;
- Lock courtroom doors anytime that no one is present to maintain exhibit security.
- If a secured storage cabinet/vault is not available in the courtroom, place drugs, weapons, money, valuables, or sensitive material in the clerk of court's vault each night;
- Oversized exhibits, except for sensitive or dangerous items, may be stored in the courtroom, if the courtroom is kept locked;
- Keep denied exhibits or those withheld from the jury separate from admitted exhibits during the trial;
- Keep admitted exhibits in numerical order during the trial;
- If counsel or the court takes an exhibit from the clerk during trial, the clerk must note the exhibit number and who took it; and
- If counsel stipulates, and the court approves, large and unwieldy exhibits can be represented by a photograph. The photograph is marked with the same information as the actual exhibit.



Courts should consider long-term storage of exhibits in a locked and alarmed evidence room.

Courts should consider long-term storage of exhibits in a locked and alarmed evidence room.

MANAGING AND DISPOSING OF EXHIBITS

Standard policies and procedures for managing exhibits after trial should be established and applied in a routine systematic manner. The local court safety and security committee should review and approve all procedures regarding exhibits and evidence that may impact safety and security at the courthouse.

Handle exhibits after trial using the following procedures:

- At the conclusion of civil and family trials, ask the attorneys whether they will stipulate to the release of all or a portion of the exhibits.

- At the conclusion of criminal, traffic, and juvenile trials, if there is an acquittal, inform the party that submitted the exhibits to remove them within 30 days or less. If there is a conviction, exhibits should be retained in an orderly fashion in a locked room or vault and kept together at one location.
- Drugs, weapons, and ammunition should be stored by law enforcement agencies after trial. Storage at law enforcement agencies is more secure, and access is better controlled.
- When transferring the custody of exhibits to law enforcement, a receipt acknowledging transfer of their custody should be obtained and filed in the case file.
- After conviction, and after appeal and applicable retention periods have passed, weapons should be transferred to the sheriff's office for destruction.

SECURITY OF FIREARMS AS EXHIBITS

The following rules for handling exhibits assure a safer environment for all participants while maintaining the ability of prosecutors and defense counsel to display and perform demonstrations of operability that may be essential to their case.

Treat Every Firearm As If It Is Loaded

Check the firearm each time it is touched even if a mechanical block is in place. A firearm must be checked every time it is handled, whether it has been offered as an exhibit or is merely being identified during foundation prior to its being offered, and regardless of who is handling it. Checking a firearm each time it is handled is not prejudicial to the rights of a defendant, but is an absolute necessity and essential safety practice even if a mechanical block is in place. Any time a firearm is handled it is susceptible to being grabbed and loaded quickly; thus, a mechanical block is recommended.

Always Point the Firearm Away from People

Extra care must be taken that a weapon is not pointed at jurors, spectators, parties, and court personnel. A firearm may be demonstrated safely, but only if the handler knows how to operate or hold it safely. This applies to both counsel and witnesses. When a firearm is held or being demonstrated or passed, it should be pointed at the ceiling, the floor, or at a wall with no one between the weapon and the wall. Be sure that all counsel who handle the firearm or any weapon of any kind are aware what direction the firearm is pointed and that witnesses are cautioned—especially lay witnesses, but sworn personnel as well—to be aware of what direction the firearm is pointed. Security officers must be especially attentive whenever a firearm is being handled in a courtroom.

Know How Firearms Should Be Held and Handled

EXPERTISE



There is a protocol for the proper handling of all firearms. It is imperative that judges insist upon these protocols being followed. Defendants should never be permitted to examine weapons as exhibits.

Firearms should always be held with fingers **OUTSIDE** the trigger and trigger guard unless counsel is demonstrating or directing a witness to do so. The natural tendency is to grip a firearm with the index finger inside the trigger guard and on the trigger.

There is a protocol for the proper handling of all firearms. It is imperative that judges insist upon these protocols being followed.

- **Handguns** – should be held by the barrel pointed at the floor, with the handgrip pointing away from the individual holding the weapon;
- **Revolvers** - cylinder swung open or weapon broken open if hinged;
- **Semi-automatic pistols** - slide locked open, if slide can be locked open in place; and
- **Shotguns and rifles** - held by the neck of the stock pointing at ceiling with action open, hinged shotguns may be pointed at floor with action open.

The safest way to transfer a firearm is to place it, action open, on a table and let the other person pick it up. Make sure the other person does so by the barrel, never with a finger inside the trigger guard. Semi-automatic handguns should be placed down on a table or the witness stand with the slide back, ejection port up. Revolvers should be placed down with the cylinder swung open and up. A witness should be instructed to point the weapon at the ceiling or floor and not put a finger inside the trigger guard or on the trigger unless it is necessary as part of a demonstration, and then only if the firearm has been just checked and cleared, or has a mechanical block in place.

Establish Rules for Firearm Transportation to Courthouse

It is recommended that the local court safety and security committee develop policies and procedures to facilitate and control the transportation of a weapon into the courthouse for use as a demonstrative exhibit. Trial counsel, including the prosecutor's office, should be required to notify the trial judge and court security office whenever they intend to bring a firearm to the courthouse as a trial exhibit. In addition, they should provide information as to what arrangements have been made for its safe condition, safekeeping, and transfer prior to its being offered as evidence. Procedures should also be developed for convicted spousal abusers to safely turn in their firearms.

Establish Rules for the Security of the Firearm

The local court safety and security committee should establish a written policy regarding how weapons are to be secured and who is responsible for their security during trial, morning and afternoon breaks, and noon and overnight recesses. Often judges, sheriffs, and counsel are unaware of who is responsible for securing weapons used as exhibits in a

trial. A written policy establishes responsibility for weapons security and lessens the risk of loss and injury. This is true for all weapons, as well as for drugs or any other contraband material.

Establish Rules for Placement of Weapons in the Courtroom

Placement of a firearm or other weapon is as important as any consideration when handling firearms as exhibits in the courtroom. Do not allow the firearm to be placed on the reporter's table, counsel table, the clerk's desk, on the bench, or anywhere it can be reached and be turned into a weapon of opportunity. Even with a mechanical block in place, a firearm still can be used as a club. Counsel may want to place a firearm or other weapon on counsel table or in front of a defendant on the witness stand in an attempt to see the reaction of that defendant. If trial counsel wishes to do this, the court and courtroom security detail should be informed in advance so that they are not caught off-guard.

Additional precautions should be taken when self-represented defendants participate in a trial. Self-represented defendants should be informed that they will not be allowed to handle weapons offered as exhibits. Arrange for the court security officer, bailiff, or court clerk to carry exhibits between the counsel table and the witness stand.

Use a Mechanical Block Whenever Possible

There are a number of different types of mechanical blocks that may be used with varying degrees of effectiveness to keep firearms safe and secure in court.

Types of mechanical blocks:

Trigger lock – trigger locks are placed on either side of the trigger guard of a handgun or long gun. They are held in place by a cylinder that connects one side with the other, with the gun's trigger and trigger guard sandwiched in between each side of the trigger lock. Care must be taken in relying on this device because if it is placed too loosely on a single-action semi-automatic weapon, it could slide back and fire a bullet. This is especially true with the type of triggers on handguns that have a solid trigger that slides straight back when pulled. If possible, the cylinder on the trigger lock should be placed behind the trigger to block the trigger from being able to be pulled back. It is not always possible to place the trigger lock over the trigger guard so that the cylinder is behind the trigger. In that event, where the trigger lock cylinder is in front of the trigger, as in all cases, it is extremely important to make sure that the trigger lock is on tightly and that it will not slide back and allow the firearm to discharge a round.

Electrician's strap or cable tie - This device, once in place, cannot be removed without cutting it off. It is fairly inexpensive, but is not reusable once it is applied. It may be used on any size pistol, but particularly on smaller semi-automatic pistols, such as .22, .25, .32, .380 caliber and other smaller handguns. However, extreme care must be taken when used on revolvers to assure that the hammer will not come back and enable the gun to be fired. When this strap is applied behind the hammer of double action handguns, it may still be possible to pull the trigger. The preferred method to secure a revolver with electrician's strap is to run the strap down the barrel. On revolvers that hinge or break open, where the

cylinder does not swing to the side, place the tape through the barrel and insert it through the cylinder and secure it. On rifles and shotguns where the long gun has a magazine or is pump action or semi-automatic, it is possible to run the strap up through the action and out the ejection port and secure it.

Flex cuffs - These have the same advantage as the electrician's strap above, but their thickness makes them more durable and more difficult to cut through. Because they are wider and thicker, they are less pliable, and, thus, may be more difficult or impossible to maneuver or fit through smaller openings or spaces.

Padlock - This is the preferred method for securing a handgun because of its ease of use. Its use should be required whenever it is anticipated that there will be ammunition in the courtroom at the same time. **It is highly recommended that facsimile ammunition be used to demonstrate the operation of any weapon in a courtroom.** Opening the action, placing the bicycle padlock down through the ejection port into the magazine well, and locking it in place at the butt of the handgun may secure semi-automatic pistols, such as 9mm, .40, and .45 calibers. The padlock prevents anyone from grabbing a magazine, whether loaded or unloaded, and inserting it into the magazine well by the handle. It also prevents a single bullet from being chambered or placed into the gun through the ejection port into the chamber and fired. With the bicycle padlock in place, the gun cannot be loaded or fired.

When used to secure revolvers, the bicycle padlock has the advantage of being able to disable the weapon in a number of ways. First, a revolver with a swing cylinder may be secured by merely placing the padlock through the top strap. This prevents the cylinder from closing and allowing the hammer and firing pin to come near the cylinder or bullet. Firing a round through a revolver with a padlock placed in this manner is impossible. Second, inserting the padlock through the barrel at the muzzle and locking it in place by the open cylinder may secure a revolver. Third, depending on the caliber of the revolver, the lock may be inserted through the cylinder itself and locked, which will prevent the cylinder from being aligned and being fired. Where the caliber of the revolver is too small to allow the lock to be inserted through the barrel or through the cylinder, the first method is the only method that will work.

By securing a revolver with a padlock through the top strap, counsel can still demonstrate loading of the weapon with the cylinder swung out and locked open, show trigger pull in either double action or single action, and demonstrate the effect of pulling back on the hammer.

SAFEGUN SafeTclaw Universal Gun Lock - This is very similar to the padlock and can be used on virtually any firearm. It is adjustable and will secure most long guns, sporting and military. It fits all handguns. The top hook of the SafeTclaw hooks over the ejection port, while the bottom end fits into the bottom of the magazine well. The SafeTclaw is then held in place against the butt of the pistol until it is secure. It can work equally well to insert the hook end into the ejection port and snug the other end up in place against the muzzle and secure it there as well. On revolvers, the SafeTclaw works in much the same way. It can be hooked into the chamber and the key end inserted into the

end of the muzzle. It also can be applied by placing the SafeTclaw into one end of the cylinder and securing the key end into the other end of the cylinder, thus preventing the cylinder from closing and thus prohibiting a bullet from being fired.

Safegun gunlock - This plug fits semi-automatic pistols but will not work on revolvers. The T-type plug is inserted through the ejection port of the pistol with the top part of the tubular “T” inverted so that the front end is inserted into the chamber and the rear end protrudes towards the hammer and firing pin. It is locked in place with a key, which extends an interior cylinder, locking the “T” plug in place. A number of different sizes fit different firearms, and no one “T” plug is a universal fit, although some will fit more than one brand of pistol. There are specific directions on each particular model to insert it with the long end on the expanding cylinder pointing either toward or away from the chamber of the pistol.

Bicycle cable lock- This may be used as an effective method to keep a number of revolvers and semi-automatic handguns together. This device is also especially suited to use in long guns, where an electrician’s strap is not long enough or where steel cable is desired. The advantage of bicycle cable over electrician’s strap is that it cannot be cut with a razor or knife.

Mossberg cable lock - This is very similar to the bicycle cable, but is generally shorter and secured by a keyed padlock.

Keep Ammunition Separate from Firearms



Ammunition and firearms should be kept separate in the jury room and in the courtroom. This becomes absolutely essential if there is no mechanical block on the firearms or if electrician’s strap, which can be cut easily, is used. Plans must be made to coordinate with the sheriff and secure the ammunition in a separate room outside the courtroom and away from firearms.

Ammunition and firearms should be kept separate in the jury room and the courtroom.

Use Caution When Allowing Demonstrations Using Firearms

Demonstrating Revolvers - When it is absolutely necessary or essential in a trial to have ammunition near a firearm to show how a revolver is loaded, or for some other legitimate purpose, use a mechanical block in the revolver, such as a bicycle padlock through the top strap or through the barrel. This allows for a demonstration without any possibility that it will fire.

Demonstrating semi-automatic pistols - The trial counsel may need to show how a semi-automatic pistol is used in order to show intent or to corroborate the testimony of a witness. Trial counsel may need to have a jury understand the effect of having the slide stop back, indicating that the magazine is empty, or of having the slide slam forward, indicating that the magazine was loaded with one or more rounds. Some pistols will lock the slide back after firing the last round or when the magazine is empty. Some pistols will lock the slide back without the magazine locked in the magazine well, but only if done

manually. Still others have a magazine disconnect, or magazine safety, which prevents firing with the magazine removed, a safety feature which prevents deliberate firing during a magazine change or if the magazine is lost.

In order for this to be demonstrated by inserting a magazine into the pistol, there can be no mechanical block. A trigger lock will not assure that the hammer on a semi-automatic pistol will not strike the firing pin. The presence of a decocker or decocking lever is an insufficient safeguard to allow a safe demonstration of this with live ammunition.

Therefore, any demonstration of the loading or chambering of ammunition into a semi-automatic pistol must be done with facsimile ammunition. Counsel should be required to have officers or agents clear weapons outside of court in the presence of the court security officer in charge of weapons or in charge of security in your courtroom before a hearing or trial begins.

Displaying firearms - In addition to keeping a number of firearms secured together by means of a bicycle cable, firearms may be displayed on a pegboard. The firearms, whether handguns or long guns, may be secured to the pegboard by electrician's straps or cable ties, flex cuffs, or wire. The advantage to the pegboard is that all of the weapons admitted into evidence may be displayed safely, so that none may be removed and fired or otherwise thrown or used as a blunt object.

Clearing Long Guns Requires Extra Caution

It is not enough to work the action several times with lever-action, pump-action or semi-automatic rifles, and shotguns. Cases have been reported where a round became lodged, crimped, or stuck at the far end of the magazine tube and was not jarred loose until working the action over a dozen times. With long guns of this nature, it is absolutely necessary to remove the tube and follower and visually check for any plug or other obstruction. Continually racking the slide or working the lever action will not assure that the long gun is unloaded.

SECURITY OF NON-FIREARM WEAPONS AS EXHIBITS

Knives: All knives should be secured to a pegboard for their display in court.

Razors, box cutters, and other sharp instruments: These should be kept in heat-sealed pouches or secured to a pegboard for their display in court.

Bombs, bomb components, blasting caps, and fuses: Consider photographs in lieu of the actual devices, unless they can be made inert and can be secured and stored safely. Contact the U.S. Marshals Service; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms of the U.S. Treasury Department; and your local bomb squad or explosive ordinance disposal team for additional recommendations.

SECURITY OF OTHER SENSITIVE EXHIBITS

Money

Money and other valuables should be secured in a locked file cabinet during court recesses, lunch hours, and at times when exhibits would otherwise be left unattended. Money that is the proceeds of a crime or of drug sales may be the subject of a civil forfeiture. Stolen money and other stolen property should be turned over to the district attorney for return to the rightful owner.

Drugs

Drugs are especially attractive to theft. Drugs should be secured in a locked file cabinet during court recesses, lunch hours, and at times when they would otherwise be left unattended. After conviction, and after appeal and retention periods have passed, drugs should be transferred to the confiscating agency or sheriff's office for destruction.

Chapter 9: Developing Contingency Plans for Court Safety



All agencies and individuals responsible for maintaining the safety and security of the courthouse and its occupants must be prepared to react to emergency and potential-emergency situations. These situations run the gamut, from power outages and inclement weather to natural and man-made disasters. Local court safety and security committees should take these guidelines and issues into consideration when developing contingency security and safety plans for their court facility. It is critical that the courts, law enforcement, and emergency government develop these plans collaboratively.

All agencies and individuals responsible for maintaining the safety and security of the courthouse and its occupants must be prepared to react to emergency and potential-emergency situations.

CONTINGENCY SAFETY AND SECURITY PLANS



Each court facility should have an individual building security plan that covers all established considerations and features unique to that facility. Building security plans should explicitly cover and provide for the planned and organized responses of law enforcement and emergency personnel to duress alarms, threats, hostage situations, assaults, vandalism, dangerous individuals, and prisoner escapes.

Each court facility should have an individual building security plan that covers all established considerations and features unique to that facility.

Responsibility for implementing contingent operations, individual and shared, should be clearly defined and outlined. The local court safety and security committee should be knowledgeable about, and coordinate, the building security plan with the county and include representatives of all agencies that occupy the courthouse. This is especially important in courthouses that share facilities with non-court agencies. The committee should evaluate existing security plans and practices and make recommendations for improvements, and take into account directives contained in the Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) for the court facility.

Realizing that law enforcement or emergency government personnel may be called upon to take command, temporarily or permanently, during emergency situations, personnel from both the court and these departments should be familiar with the courthouse's design, security systems, and security-related policies and procedures.

In the event of a critical incident and/or crisis situation occurring within a courthouse the sheriff and/or police department may implement a contingency plan. Some typical components of a critical incident contingency plan include but are not limited to:

- The immediate response and assignment of an on-site supervisor to coordinate and ensure implementation of the plan;
- Emergency notification telephone numbers of pre-designated officials. Notification itself will be conducted by senior management or personnel previously authorized;
- Additional emergency notification telephone numbers of Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and federal law enforcement agencies;
- Activation procedures and operational requirements for security command posts;
- Maps, diagrams, blueprints, and floor plans of all entrance/exit locations for the courthouse and other court facilities;
- Names, addresses, and 24-hour contact numbers of facility management, utility, and maintenance personnel;
- Exact locations of utility, telecommunications, electrical, HVAC, boiler, and maintenance rooms;
- Court facility blueprints and floor plans;
- Roster containing names, addresses, telephone and pager numbers of all sheriff and/or police officials responsible for courthouse security;
- Evacuation procedures, including designated areas of refuge for judicial officers, staff, employees, and the general public;
- Security personnel assignments regarding protection of areas of refuge;
- Photographs (aerial, exterior, and interior) of the courthouse and adjacent grounds;
- Copies of the courthouse OEP;
- Local court policy and procedural guidelines;
- Videos of courthouse interior and exterior;
- State, city, and county maps;
- Descriptions and locations of security systems;
- Key control registers;
- Copies of interagency/jurisdiction agreements and memoranda of understanding;
- Courthouse facility assessments; and
- Emergency medical center locations.

Judicial Personnel Information

Information should be maintained for each member of the judiciary including, home address and telephone number, names of spouse and children, spouse's place of employment and school(s) attended by children. In keeping with current Unified Court System practice, this data will only be collected with the permission of the judge or designated member of the court staff. Judges are reminded to avoid giving personal information to telephone solicitors, internet web and chat sites, or to any other source that could make this sensitive information public.

EXECUTION OF CONTINGENCY PLANS

The sheriff is primarily responsible for the protection of personnel and property at the courthouse. They have primary responsibility for all security functions involving the courts and will be in direct control in regard to specific assignments for operational personnel.

To maintain order during the execution of the contingency plan, it is important that all participants are aware of their duties and responsibilities. Below is a suggested breakdown of the role various agencies may play:

Primary Agencies

- **Sheriff and/or Police Officials** - Direct control of all forces committed to proper execution of this plan including delegating assignments appropriate to the situation and the apprehension of suspects;
- **FBI and other Federal Law Enforcement** - Furnish investigative support and incident response teams, apprehend suspects, and provide intelligence information on situational aspects affecting the operation;
- **State and Local Law Enforcement** - Support assignments as determined by the sheriff and/or police officials, provide personnel to secure and control areas adjacent to the operation site and apprehend suspects under their jurisdictional authority;
- **Emergency Response Personnel** - First responders in providing medical care and treatment. Sheriff and/or police officials should determine levels of security and safety prior to organized response. Serve as technical advisors to sheriff and/or police officials on biological and chemical agents; and
- **Military Assistance** - As determined by sheriff and/or police officials and governed by situational conditions, provide support services in the areas of tactical considerations, special equipment considerations, and personnel reinforcements.

Roles of Other Agencies

- **District Attorney** - legal assistance, guidance, and specific information;
- **Courthouse Property/Facility Management** - knowledge of building electrical, mechanical, plumbing, construction, and design features;
- **Other Federal Agencies** - support services as required by primary agencies;

- **State and Local Agencies** - support services as required by primary agencies; and
- **Telecommunication and Utility Companies** - support services as required.

CONTINGENCY PLANS BASED ON SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

Suspicious Packages



Bombs can enter the courthouse in several ways, including in the mail, in deliveries, or carried in by individuals. Most mail bombs may be set to explode when opened. Staff should be instructed to report all suspicious packages. A mail-screening program should be developed to detect mail bombs, including consideration of technologies that can detect the presence of nitrate molecules. In the courthouse, security staff should search the facility regularly for packages and bags, which may contain explosive devices, especially in sensitive areas, such as public lobbies, communications centers, and power sources.

In the courthouse, security staff should search the facility regularly for packages and bags, which may contain explosive devices, especially in sensitive areas, such as public lobbies, communication centers, and power sources.

Assessing the contents of a suspicious package with a fluoroscope requires that each x-ray image be evaluated and classified in one of four categories:

- **No Threat** - Defined as no identifying monitor image (shape, density, and/or color) that could be part of a weapon or improvised explosive device;
- **Contraband Item** - Defined as a suspicious or confirmed monitor image (shape, density, and/or color) indicating an item has been pre-identified as contraband;
- **Possible Threat** - Defined as a suspicious monitor image (shape, density, and/or color) that indicates a likelihood of weapons or an improvised explosive device; and
- **Obvious Threat** - Defined as a confirmed monitor image (shape, density, and/or color) that indicates the presence of weapons or an improvised explosive device. Shipped items that cannot be screened through a fluoroscope should require an agency contact to verify the shipping contents before the item is allowed into the courthouse. Items that either meet threat profiles or are still deemed suspicious may require the sheriff and/or police department to implement the courthouse bomb-threat response plan.

Response Procedures for Suspicious Packages:

- ♦ Depending on the threat classification, possible or obvious, the court security officer will either immediately notify the sheriff or secure the area and immediately notify the sheriff.
- ♦ The court security officer(s) discovering the suspicious item will directly communicate all known information to responding sheriff's personnel.
- ♦ Court security officers will ensure that any suspicious item is not moved from the location in which it was found. This is true for those items found inside and outside the courthouse environs, as motion may cause detonation.
- ♦ Court security officers will not discuss any aspect surrounding the discovery of a suspicious package or response actions with anyone including other court security officers except as authorized in performance of official duties or as directed by the sheriff or his/her designee.
- ♦ Once a suspicious package is discovered, all cellular telephone and radio traffic/communications in the area will cease.
- ♦ Responding sheriff's personnel will determine the number and extent to which other courthouse personnel will be notified of the suspicious package.
- ♦ In attempts to confirm a suspicious package's contents, the recipient and sender should be identified, if possible, and contacted by the sheriff. If the suspicious item has not been tampered with, and the recipient and sender are aware the package is being delivered and can verify package contents, one has eliminated the likelihood of an explosive device.
- ♦ Sheriff's personnel should utilize the expertise of resident officers and agents i.e., other law enforcement, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and where available;
- ♦ The sheriff or his/her designee will determine whether and when it is necessary to call in the local bomb squad.
- ♦ The sheriff or a designee will determine whether to request assistance from building management. If requested, their personnel will provide support to the sheriff in technical, mechanical, custodial, and advisory capacities. Building management

officials will be responsible for ensuring that their personnel, including contract employees, keep all communications regarding sheriff activities secure.

- ♦ In the event no assistance is requested of building management, the sheriff or a designee will keep building officials informed of incident events as they transpire.
- ♦ If a decision is made to evacuate the courthouse, the Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) and local court safety and security committee's contingency plan will be used. Sheriff's personnel responsible for court and judicial security should be prepared to initiate evacuation procedures for court personnel if the sheriff or his/her designee determines it is in the best interests of safety and security to do so. Court security officers will not discuss with any member of the public or media, the decision to or not to evacuate.
- ♦ Court security officers will conduct a comprehensive security sweep of court floors to ensure all persons have safely been evacuated from the building. Other than pre-identified judicial officers (including court designated floor monitors), all court officials/employees will be directed to exit the building via emergency exits. Court security personnel will assist any member of the court staff or judge requiring assistance in exiting the courthouse. During evacuations, court security officers are also responsible for maintaining security, providing assistance, and giving direction to the public.

When a decision has been made to contact the bomb squad, the sheriff and court security officer (as directed by the sheriff) will be responsible for the following:

- ♦ Providing all known information (who, what, why, when, where, and how) to the bomb squad upon their arrival;
- ♦ Obtaining confirmation from responding emergency and bomb squad personnel on what they expect and require for support;
- ♦ Maintaining a constant presence (appropriate/safe distances from the suspicious package) while responding authorities are on-site;
- ♦ Being involved and consulted prior to any decision being made on taking action as to the removal of the device;

Sheriff's personnel should strongly discourage any attempt to open a suspicious package on-site. If there is no other choice, measures must be taken to:

- Advise and prepare courthouse occupants for any resulting noise and/or shock;
- Determine need for partial i.e., offices and floors above, below, or adjacent to the suspicious package, or entire courthouse evacuation;
- Consider advantages (would potential damage levels be lowered?) and disadvantages (would moving the package cause it to detonate?) in moving the package to a more suitable, and preferably off-site location;
- If the package cannot be moved, decide whether or not to reinforce areas (potential detonation and resulting blast effect must be taken into account) and cover equipment adjacent to the package; and
- Preserve evidence for subsequent crime scene investigation.

The sheriff's office will be responsible for obtaining copies of all other agency reports generated as a result of their involvement in responding to a suspicious package. After-action reports and case files (including other agency reports) should be reviewed by the sheriff or his/her designee.

COURTHOUSE PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BOMB AND IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE (IED) THREATS



All courthouse staff should be trained in the procedures for handling a bomb threat. The incident report form displayed on pages 45-49 can be used to help staff gather important information if they receive a threatening telephone call.

All courthouse staff should be trained in the procedures for handling a bomb threat.

The following table provides an example of a set of contingency plan procedures to undertake if a bomb threat is received.

Bomb Threat Response Plan

RECEIPT OF THE THREAT

Persons likely to receive bomb threats should keep the security incident report form in an accessible location.

Obtaining accurate information is vital to deciding upon an appropriate response. The most frequent receipt of bomb threats is via telephone. Persons likely to receive such calls should be briefed and trained in the following procedures:

- Note caller ID or if number was blocked;
- Try to keep the caller on the line long enough to have the call traced and obtain further information;
- Write down the exact words the used. Ask for the exact location of the improvised explosive device(IED), device type, what it looks like, and time of detonation;
- Attempt to determine the sex, age, and mental attitude of the caller – ask why they have placed the IED; and
- Note any accent or peculiarity in speech pattern that may help identify the caller, as well as any background noise that may provide a clue to the caller's identity and location.

THREAT EVALUATION

This stage involves assessing the credibility of the message and making the appropriate response. The following are general points of consideration that should be taken into account when conducting the evaluation:

- Information ascertained from caller;
- Threat scope;
- Types of court cases being heard;
- Threat and risk assessments;
- Pre-identified vulnerabilities;
- Prior incident activity and response;
- Expert opinion gathered during or previous to the situation at hand;
- Area(s) of refuge; and
- Results of the preliminary search.

<p>FACILITY SEARCH</p>	<p>To search a building before or after it is evacuated is a matter that should be governed by the situation at hand. It is at this stage that the value of information gathered during receipt of the actual bomb threat becomes important. If the information received indicates a definite location, a search can be conducted without evacuation, provided that time is not a factor. Some, or all, court staff should be directed to perform a cursory search of their work area and offices prior to any decision to evacuate the building.</p> <p>Court staff can be of invaluable assistance to emergency responders who may be unfamiliar with the facility and its design layout. Employees should report all out-of-place items immediately.</p>
<p>FACILITY EVACUATION</p> <p><i>The Threat Assessment and Evaluation Process Plays An Integral Part In Considering and Determining Facility Evacuation.</i></p>	<p>Essentially, there are three alternatives available when deciding if the court facility should be evacuated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ignore the threat; ▪ Evacuate immediately; and ▪ Search and evacuate if warranted. <p>Searching the courthouse and then evacuating it, if warranted, is the most desired approach. However, a general rule to follow if you do not have an established bomb threat response plan is to evacuate. Unfortunately, this action is usually the exact effect a hoax bomber desires.</p> <p>As stated, an evacuation may occur before or after a search has been conducted. However, a search of some type i.e., cursory, general, or inclusive is strongly recommended prior to allowing court staff and the public to resume their regular activities.</p>

<p>REMOVAL and RENDER SAFE</p>	<p>During this stage, only properly trained Explosives Ordinance Disposal personnel should be involved. IED's are limited only by the imagination of their designers and should never be touched or moved by untrained persons.</p> <p>Court security staff and court employees should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who to contact; ▪ How to make contact; ▪ What information they will need to provide concerning the bomb threat/IED; and ▪ How long it will take them to get to the courthouse.
<p>GENERAL</p> <p><i>When a local court safety and security committee is developing a bomb threat response plan they should address and incorporate several other elements:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gather telephone contact/notification information for management and command elements to ensure that officials are available to make critical decisions throughout the incident; ▪ Determine what factors will dictate either immediate evacuation, ignoring the threat, or initiating a search and evacuating the courthouse if/when the threat is confirmed; ▪ Identify search personnel and/or floor monitors/wardens; ▪ Establish search protocols; ▪ Consider the possibility of secondary or diversionary devices; ▪ Consider if the threat is a diversion in and of itself; ▪ Establish policies and procedures if/when a device has been located; and ▪ Establish policies for handling employee, public, and news media inquiries.

Conducting Vehicle Searches in Bomb Threat Situations
Inspecting Vehicles for IED's
<p>Conduct an external search:</p> <p>Check the area around the vehicle. Look for tape, wire, string or fuses. Look for marks on the ground indicating unusual activity. Look for signs of forced entry. Look inside the vehicle through the window for devices, packages, or other suspicious items.</p> <p>Locked Vehicles - <i>Check Below:</i> NOTE – Using a mirror to inspect the undercarriage of the vehicle is recommended.</p>

Conducting Vehicle Searches in Bomb Threat Situations

Inspecting Vehicles for IED's

Look for loose wires;
Inspect top/sides of tires;
Inspect exhaust pipe for inserted objects; and
Look for pieces of dirt, rust, or other material that may have been dislodged.

Unlocked Vehicles - *Check Inside:*

Look inside the vehicle through the windows and open a door other than the driver's;
Inspect vehicle interior in a logical sequence. Start at the floor and work up;
Check under floor mats;
Check under front and back seats; and
Check door panels for signs of tampering.

Conducting Room Searches for IED's:

Courtroom Searches for IED's

- Stop, look, and listen;
- Divide room by height for search;
- Search room by height and assigned area - overlap for thorough coverage;
- Also search internal public areas – rest rooms, elevators, lobby, stairwells, and office reception areas;
- Search internal court staff areas - utilize employee familiarity in locating/clearing out-of-place items; and
- Search outside areas - landscaping, trash receptacles, vehicles, abandoned items, signs, windows, doorways, and building facade, etc.

Evacuations

The following items should be included in a contingency plan to deal with evacuations:

- Emergency telephone numbers for fire, police, medical, utilities, and relief agencies;
- Building floor plans;
- List of judges, court staff, and agencies to be notified in case of emergency;
- List of persons responsible for evacuating and accounting for personnel. Assign floor monitors to each floor. Pre-assign an assembly point and require all floor monitors to report in to ensure the entire court facility has been evacuated. The assembly point should be far enough away in case of explosion or vehicle traffic. Make sure physically challenged persons can get out of the building;
- A signal that will be used to notify persons when it is appropriate to return to the building;
- Procedures for evacuating jurors and prisoners;
- Procedures for maintaining the security and integrity of evidence;
- A checklist of areas to be secured and persons responsible for safes, vaults, treasurer's office, clerk's office, record rooms, and weapons vaults;
- Coordination and communication plan for use with other law enforcement agencies; and

- ♦ Instructions for building personnel to remove personal effects and to follow evacuation orders in an orderly manner.

Demonstrations and Protests

Public demonstrations and protests are a constitutionally protected right. Court security efforts must be balanced and concentrated in order to both respect this right and simultaneously provide for courthouse security. In the event of a planned demonstration or protest, personnel responsible for court security must assess, determine, and respond to a number of different situations—prior planning is essential when doing so. Efforts should be made to identify the protest organizer or leader in an attempt to determine the protest objective, and thereafter to negotiate an agreement on the details of the demonstration or protest with agitators and disturbances.

Although demonstrations often do not require intervention by court security officers, the following incidents may occur during a demonstration that would require such intervention:

- ♦ Need to arrest large numbers of individuals;
- ♦ Medical emergencies;
- ♦ Vandalism;
- ♦ Assaults against judges, court staff, and/or court security personnel;
- ♦ Interfering with courthouse operations including juror intimidation;
- ♦ Attempts to barricade courthouse entrances and exits; and
- ♦ Civil disobedience.

A contingency plan aimed at preparing for and dealing with demonstrations and protests should include:

- ♦ Intelligence pertaining to the leadership of the demonstration;
- ♦ Expected number of demonstrators and purported cause of the demonstration;
- ♦ Court security and law enforcement staffing requirements;
- ♦ Inter-agency jurisdictional agreements;
- ♦ Rules of engagement for court security officer conduct,
- ♦ Protest assembly locations;
- ♦ Court orders;
- ♦ Arrest procedures, locations, and holding facilities;
- ♦ Medical facilities;
- ♦ Chemical munitions deployment and protocol; and
- ♦ Occupant emergency plans.

Hostage Situations



It is recommended that local court safety and security committees organize hostage situation exercises in cooperation with the sheriff's office and other local law enforcement as needed. These exercises should be conducted at the courthouse. Their intent is to allow the sheriff and emergency responders to practice procedures that they will use and to familiarize them with the design and layout of the court facility.

Upon activation of any duress/panic alarm, an appropriate number of law enforcement and security personnel will be immediately dispatched to investigate and conduct a preliminary assessment. If it is determined that the alarm is real and a hostage situation exists, the following will be carried out by responding security personnel:

It is recommended that local court safety and security committees organize hostage situation exercises in cooperation with the sheriff's office and other local law enforcement as needed.

- Immediately establish a security perimeter for the affected area. The perimeter should extend in scope to provide for all entrances/exit points i.e., stairwells, doors, elevators, windows, that the hostage taker(s) have access to.
- If not equipped initially, perimeter personnel should be outfitted with communications and other essential equipment as soon as practicable.
- Request the assistance of those agencies and officials responsible for tactical responses and hostage negotiations.
- Court security personnel can expect to be used as technical advisors for the duration of the incident. Consequently, it is incumbent upon and the responsibility of all personnel to continually familiarize themselves with their areas of responsibility and the layout of all courthouse space. These areas of responsibility include, but are not limited to:
 1. Keeping apprised and current as to the content of the courts' calendars;
 2. Ability to access background information;
 3. A proficient understanding of the general design and layout of the courthouse and any other court facilities; and
 4. A proficient understanding as to the type, location, and operation of all courthouse security systems.
- If necessary, provide for and organize the systematic evacuation of courtrooms, chambers, and other areas within the courthouse. When the court shares a facility with other agencies, provision should also be made for the evacuation of those non-judicial branch personnel affected by any decision to evacuate the building.
- The sheriff may designate call signs or codes to responding personnel. This will provide personnel with a means to confirm identity upon being challenged and/or

replaced by responding tactical units. The designated command post is responsible for notifying other agency personnel of these assigned call signs.

- ♦ Court security personnel assigned to security perimeters are to remain on post until replaced by responding tactical units. When replaced, court security personnel should be prepared to establish and maintain an outer security perimeter as directed by the tactical unit and to provide a tactical debriefing.
- ♦ All materials contained within the courthouse contingency plan should be made readily available to responding authorities.

Contingency Plans for Prisoner Escapes

A contingency plan to respond to prisoner escape(s) or attempted escape(s) should include:

- ♦ Sheriff and/or law enforcement response instructions;
- ♦ Securing entrances and exits;
- ♦ Systematic utilization of courthouse security systems;
- ♦ Search and arrest procedures;
- ♦ Investigation and evidence procedures;
- ♦ Witness interview and prisoner interrogation procedures;
- ♦ Notification procedures for other law enforcement agencies;
- ♦ Judicial and courthouse employee notification procedures;
- ♦ Public announcements and media news releases;
- ♦ Community alert advisories; and
- ♦ Determination and procedures for courthouse evacuation.

Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) Incidents

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is the lead agency for dealing with Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) incidents and has therefore prepared incident contingency plans for each of these situations. The FBI should be contacted immediately in the event of a NBC incident.

COURT BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANS

A court business continuity plan provides policy, responsibilities, procedures, and planning guidance for ensuring the ability of the court to continue its essential functions when the use of the courthouse is threatened or diminished. It should be put into effect, if needed, within 12 hours of the interruption of business at the courthouse. These plans focus on actions that must be initiated in the several days after an incident to ensure continued operations. The plan also provides for sustained operations, which could be 30 to 60 days, or greater, in the event of an emergency affecting courthouse operations. It recognizes that full restoration and reconstitution of the court's activities may take weeks or months.

Plan Objectives

The objectives of a business continuity plan, not in order of priority, include:

- ♦ Facilitate the continuous performance of the court's essential functions during an emergency;
- ♦ Provide for the safety and well-being of court employees;
- ♦ Protect essential facilities, equipment, records, and other assets;
- ♦ Identify technological processes that require special detailed planning;
- ♦ Identify key leaders and supporting staff that will be relocated;
- ♦ Ensure alternate facilities and other sites that can support minimum essential court operations;
- ♦ Mitigate disruptions to operations;
- ♦ Reduce physical damage and losses;
- ♦ Achieve a timely and orderly recovery from an emergency and resumption of full service; and
- ♦ Train all key personnel responsible for the execution of this plan and train all personnel on actions to be taken in the event this plan is executed.

A sudden emergency, such as an explosion, fire, or aggrieved litigant/prisoner incident, may require the evacuation of a courthouse with little or no advance notice.

A business continuity plan is not an evacuation plan; rather, it is a deliberate and pre-planned movement of selected staff to an alternate court business site. The following is an example of how a court's business continuity plan could work:

- ♦ Following an incident so severe that the courthouse is unusable, or if such an event appears imminent, the presiding judge, in coordination with law enforcement, county government, and emergency government will activate the plan;
- ♦ Following the decision to activate the plan, the presiding judge or designee will ensure that all judges and court managers are notified and execute their respective internal notification plans.
- ♦ Court personnel who are not selected to relocate may be directed to remain at home pending further instructions.

KEY COMPONENTS OF CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANS

Succession Planning

Local court safety and security committees should set forth the responsibilities, requirements, and standards for the succession of all judges and court administrative staff. As a starting point the committee should describe factors such as precedence and seniority in the succession process.

Succession planning prepares a court for situations where judges and administrative staff will temporarily assume the official duties of another individual, serving in an acting capacity in the event of vacancy, absence, or incapacity. That is, in the event of a vacancy in a judicial or administrative position or the absence of the incumbent in such a supervisory position, another individual serving in an acting capacity will temporarily assume the duties of the position. Local court safety and security committees should develop succession plans incorporating the majority of the recommendations listed below:

- ♦ Succession plans should be documented;
- ♦ Succession plans require the approval of the President Judge;
- ♦ Succession plans should designate by position title, not by name of individuals, and be kept current and available;
- ♦ Authority should be delegated to more than one individual to allow multiple absences among those designated while providing uninterrupted leadership;
- ♦ The succession plan should be to be reviewed, updated, and re-signed on an annual basis. In addition, any changes in office staffing or structure that affect the succession plan should be incorporated into the plan at the earliest possible opportunity; and
- ♦ Documents outlining the succession plan should be considered confidential.

Planning for Alternate Site Operations

Every local court safety and security should have identified an alternate site to conduct court operations. The next step is organizing the judges and court staff by functional areas in the event that relocation is required. Local court safety and security committees may use the following framework to structure and organize their plan for alternate site operations.

1. **Critical Functions Team** – the committee should designate the first individuals from the court to arrive at the alternate court site. These individuals are critical to

site relocation process and must be prepared to respond immediately in an emergency situation.

2. **Essential Functions Team** – this team is composed of the **minimum** number of judges and court staff needed to perform the essential functions of the court. Members of this must be knowledgeable about the continuity of business plan and be capable of performing all essential functions. Essential functions include the operation and maintenance of:

- ♦ Information systems;
- ♦ Databases;
- ♦ Vital records;
- ♦ Court succession plan; and
- ♦ Essential functions staff plan.

3. **Logistical Support Team** - members of this team are responsible for critical logistical support at the alternate court site facility, including the setup and support of computer systems and communications systems.

Alternate Court Site Operations

The performance of essential functions is the key focus for operations at the alternate court site. It is important to establish priorities prior to an emergency to enable relocated staff to perform essential functions. To make certain that essential functions can be operational as rapidly as possible, the local court safety and security committee should identify essential functions and prioritize those that must be continued under any and all circumstances.

Alternate court site operations should begin within 12 hours of any emergency. It is expected that the working hours of most relocated judges and court staff will be similar to normal non-emergency periods. However, certain members of the court staff may need to be prepared to support a 24-hour-per-day, seven-day-per-week operation until the emergency situation normalizes.

Communication Planning

The ability of the court to communicate with court staff and the public is critical in the event of a natural or man-made emergency. Should the court be required to implement its continuity of operations plan, it will be imperative that local, county, and state officials and agencies be notified. Equally important is that internal communications plans have been developed to provide for the notification of all court staff.

Local court safety and security committees should plan to use a combination of any of the following to establish internal and external communication:

- ♦ Land-line telephones;
- ♦ Cellular telephones;
- ♦ Court and AOPC websites;
- ♦ E-mail or other electronic notification systems; and
- ♦ Radio and television broadcast outlets.

After a major disaster, normal communications may be destroyed or severely disrupted; therefore, only limited and incomplete information may be expected from the disaster area until communications can be restored. Local court safety and security committees should pay special attention to the possibility that in an emergency many normal communication systems may not be available.

Providing Information to the Public

The period immediately following a major emergency is critical for both the court and the public. The objective is to provide consistent, timely, and easy-to-understand information. Local court safety and security committees should plan to:

- ♦ Provide current information on the status of court processes including jury duty, bail hearings, trials, court locations, and hours of operation;
- ♦ Maintain confidence that court will continue to carry out essential functions and services after life-safety issues have been normalized;
- ♦ Inform the public on the execution of emergency preparedness activities; and
- ♦ Provide accurate information.

In addition to the components listed above, local court safety and security committees should work to assure that plans for recovery actions are also in place. These include but are not limited to:

- ♦ Critical technical systems and data are secured, with some systems built for duplication;
- ♦ Primary facilities secured and potential back-up facilities prepared;
- ♦ Ability to re-route voice and data for continuing operations;
- ♦ Communication lines with employees and public maintained; and
- ♦ Facilities and systems repairs completed.

Chapter 10: Courts of Common Pleas Security Classification System



The classification system that follows sets forth a series of actions that local safety and security committees should, in the case of Level One Standards, and may, for Level Two and Three Standards, undertake to improve safety and security at their courthouse. The Pennsylvania Judicial Council's Committee on Judicial Safety and Preparedness developed the standards.

The Level One standards are those that are, in the main, low cost relative to the significant improvement they provide for any court facility. Level Two and Three standards are those that may require increased spending for both capital and personnel.

The classification system that follows sets forth a series of actions that local safety and security committees should, in the case of Level One Standards, and may, for Level Two and Three Standards, undertake to improve safety and security at their courthouse.

MINIMUM COURT FACILITY SECURITY STANDARDS

Level One Standards

- ♦ Adequate security personnel based on size and level of risk;
- ♦ Updated operations and emergency procedures (e.g., patrol and inspection of court facility, bomb threats, alternative business locations, mail inspection);
- ♦ Perimeter safety plan (**may** include the following):
 - ♦ Magnetometer/hand screening;
 - ♦ Baggage screening;
 - ♦ Single point of access/controlled point of access; and
 - ♦ Parking lot safety plan.
- ♦ Duress alarm system for judges and staff;
- ♦ Identification badges for authorized personnel;
- ♦ Creation of a safety and security committee;
- ♦ Controlled access to chambers and county offices (including after hours and handling terminated employees);
- ♦ Weapons policy (evidence, contraband), authorized firearms policy;
- ♦ Appropriate signage (notices and evacuation routes); and
- ♦ Employee orientation programs for safety and emergency preparedness, including:
 - ♦ New employees; and
 - ♦ In-service employees.

Level Two Standards

- ♦ All Level One Standards;
- ♦ Perimeter safety plan (**must** include the following):

- ♦ Magnetometer/hand screening;
- ♦ Baggage screening; and
- ♦ Single point of access/controlled point of access for the public.
- ♦ Regularly scheduled emergency/disaster drills;
- ♦ Approved business continuity plan including data and record protection;
- ♦ Judge's bench reinforced with bullet resistant material; and
- ♦ CCTV (technology).

Level Three Standards

- ♦ All Level One and Two Standards;
- ♦ Separate public, private, and prisoner circulation areas;
- ♦ Court facility patrolled at all times;
- ♦ Controlled access and monitored parking facility; and
- ♦ Closed circuit television (CCTV) monitoring system, manned at all times (viewing no more than ten video screens).

Chapter 11: Magisterial District Judge Courts Cost Risk Matrix



The cost/risk matrix provides a valuable tool for magisterial district judge courts as they begin to make safety and security improvements. The matrix allows magisterial district judge courts to assess the relative expense of a variety of security and safety improvements balanced against the reduction in risk that the improvement provides.

The cost/risk matrix provides a valuable tool for magisterial district judge courts as they begin to make safety and security improvements.

The magisterial district judge court cost risk matrix and the security classification system for common pleas courts are related approaches intended to achieve similar results. The essential differences are that:

- Procedural issues and the number of stakeholders involved are greater for common pleas courts; and
- Facility issues dominate magisterial district judge court office safety and security.

The following are provided as examples of how the cost/risk matrix can be used to help magisterial district judge courts and local court safety and security committees determine the feasibility of a range of security improvements:

- Video arraignments and central booking for nighttime operations;
- Security personnel, including law enforcement and constables, present for non-criminal proceedings such as landlord/tenant actions and civil trespass and assumpsit cases;
- A single point of entry for the public;
- Duress alarms, fixed or wireless, that can be easily accessed by staff as well as the magisterial district judge, located in the staff area and on the bench in the courtroom;
- Video monitoring and surveillance in the courtroom as well as the public areas, easily viewed through a monitoring system by the staff or, if cost permissible, by an outside agency;
- Separation between the staff and the public, with an emphasis on shatterproof glass at the transaction counter and restricted access to staff areas and the courtroom, such as by a walled-off secured section that would be accessed only by a buzzer;

- A door between the courtroom and the magisterial district judge's chambers;
- Weapons screening for magisterial district judge offices, through hand held or walk through magnetometers and x-ray machines manned by trained security personnel who can physically remove any type of weapon from an individual should it be detected;
- A means to secure defendants for criminal proceedings, such as a holding cell, a handcuff rail, or a chair secured to the floor of the facility; and
- A dignified appearance in the courtroom and the public area, with secured furniture so that it could not be used as a potential weapon.

Risk reduction legend:

HIGH
MODERATE
LOW

District Justice Security Matrix: Updated with Cost Approximations

SECURITY ZONE	COST and RISK REDUCTION	NOTE
PARKING		
Adequate lighting	\$3-10,000.00	Wall pacs and poles
Camera/video monitoring	\$ 2,000.00	Clerical duty
Security guard	\$23,000.00	Per year, w/ benefits
Motion detector	\$100.00	Supply and install
Controlled access	?	Gates
WEAPONS		
Screening ¹	\$ 7,000.00	Plus operator
Lockers/check-in ²	\$ 600.00	Supply and install
Warning signs	\$ 100.00	Supply and install
ENTRANCES AND EXITS		
After-hours intrusion alarm	\$ 2,000.00	Supply and install
After-hours deadbolt lock	\$ 100.00	
Security guard (business hours)	\$ 23,000.00	Plus benefits
Video monitoring (business hours) ³	\$ 2,000.00	Clerical duty
Landscaping, outdoor maintenance	\$ 1,000.00	?
EXTERIOR WINDOWS		
Locking device	\$ 100.00	Supply and install
Alarm	\$ 300.00	Motion detector
Treated glass	\$ 100.00	Per window
Wire mesh	\$ 150.00	Per window
Metal bars	\$ 100.00	Per window
PUBLIC AREA		
Shatterproof glass in transaction area ⁴	\$ 20.00	Per sq.foot, supply and install with frame
Procedures for separating parties ⁵	N/A	
Full view of waiting area:		

¹ Assuming a free-standing (not handheld) magnetometer

² Statutorily mandated

³ Cost may vary significantly with type of system

⁴ Wide transaction counter

⁵ At least one separate conference room

SECURITY ZONE	COST and RISK REDUCTION	NOTE
Bubble mirrors;peepholes;entry buzzer	\$ 200.00	
Camera	\$ 500.00	With existing system
Signage	\$ 100.00	
Secured furniture	\$ 50.00	One chair
Professional/dignified appearance ⁶	\$ 250.00	Base, pole and flag
STAFF AREA		
Buzzer controlled or locked door	\$ 100.00	
Enclosed with walls of appropriate height	\$ 28.00	Per lineal foot
Emergency staff exit ⁷	\$ 500.00	
DEFENDANTS IN CUSTODY		
Designated parking for law enforcement	\$ 200.00	Striped areas
Holding cell or locked room	\$ 2,000.00	
Scheduling procedures ⁸	N/A	
Handcuff railing	\$ 50.00	Supply and install
COURTROOM AND CHAMBERS		
Security personnel	\$ 25,000.00	Per year, w/ benefits
Video conferencing	\$ 2500.00	Supply and install
Physical barrier between bench and litigants	\$ 1,000.00	Rail
Locked door between courtroom and chambers	\$ 250.00	
DURESS ALARMS		
In staff work area	\$ 4,000.00 per building, supply and install	
At transaction counter		
In courtroom and chambers		

⁶ State flag, Commonwealth seal (awareness of weapons of opportunity)

⁷ Not necessarily to the outside; ability to escape danger

⁸ Minimizing defendant traffic / overlap

Chapter 12: Threats to Judicial Officers



Every threat, also referred to as inappropriate communication (IC), made against a judicial officer should be assessed. County sheriff's offices are the primary law enforcement agency in Pennsylvania for investigating threats against members of the judiciary residing within their jurisdiction. The sheriff may

collaborate with police departments and other local, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies during investigations. Protocols for investigations should be discussed with these agencies prior to incidents, and mutual aid or joint-power agreements should be reached as necessary. It is recommended that the local court safety and security committee urge the adoption of a courthouse protocol concerning procedures to be followed when threats are received.

Every threat, also referred to as inappropriate communication (IC), made against a judicial officer should be assessed.

ASSESSING THE THREAT

Upon receipt of an implied or direct threat against a member of the judiciary, a threat assessment should be made to determine the potential risk. Threat assessments and investigations are separate activities (although they may be performed by one individual). Certain individuals who may have cases pending in differing parts of the court system often make threats repeatedly. It is critical that these threats be tracked, as their cumulative nature directly impacts the decision to proceed from assessment to investigation.

Threat assessments differ from risk assessments in that risk assessments are primarily based on site-specific threats i.e., crime statistics, space design, layout, environment, and opportunity. Conversely, threat assessments are based on the assessed totality of:

1. Corroborated information and intelligence;
2. Investigations; and
3. Individual and group threat source profiles.

Threat propensity levels are subsequently determined through comprehensive analysis of these factors. To determine the risk associated with a specific threat, an assessment must be made of the suspect's intent, motive, opportunity, and ability. Intent is a purposeful course of action. Motive is the emotion, desire, psychological need, or similar impulse acting as an incitement to take action. Opportunity is required for the threat to be acted upon. Ability is having the resources and freedom to take action.

Each element should be assessed independently, then in combination with one another. For example, some suspects may be highly motivated but incapable of instigating an attack because they are imprisoned. Other suspects can lack coherent motivation, but truly intend harm. Of most concern are those suspects with strong intent, powerful motive, ample or created opportunities, and considerable ability.

Threat source profiles can assist in conducting a threat analysis and subsequent assessment. The diversity of background information included in these profiles should provide support for assessed correlation between past, present, and anticipated threat incidents. For example, arrest and sentencing anniversary dates may trigger an incident.

The following tables present information on the characteristics of violent offenders. This information was gathered from data provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Potential Violent Offender Profile

White Male	25-40 years of age	Loner
Exhibits Delusions of Grandeur	Experienced Prior Successes	Experienced Recent Setbacks
Has Violent Fantasies	Angry / Paranoid	History of Violence
Religious / Political Expounding	Blames Others For Failures	Abuses Drugs / Alcohol
Unstable Work History	Overt Obsessions	Physical Actions
Low Self-Esteem	Occupation-Based Self-Esteem	Seeks to Control by Intimidation
Perceived / Actual Job Stress	Misperception of Others	Resists Change / New ideas
Prolongs Grievances	Empathy for Violent Persons	Exhibits Suicidal Tendencies
Marital / Financial Problems	Misinterprets Acts of Kindness	Overly-Sensitive to Criticism

The U.S. Marshals Service uses the following rating levels for threat assessments:

LOW THREAT RATING - Indicates a slight probability of risk. It is unlikely that an adverse action will occur.

MODERATE THREAT RATING - An identified and specific threat source has been determined. It is likely that an adverse action will occur without the implementation of recommended agency counter-measures.

HIGH THREAT RATING - An identified and specific threat source has been determined. Adverse action is expected and appropriate agency counter-measures and response plans are being implemented.

The following table describes a number of clues embedded in inappropriate communication that can assist in assessing the risk present. The method of threat delivery is solely the choice of the suspect. Consequently, that choice may give insight into the suspect's intent.

How was the inappropriate communication (IC) delivered?	Risk Risk Level	Assessment and imminence of action
Written	Generally Low Risk	With the rare exception of mail bombs, suspects who write keep themselves a safe distance from the people that they are threatening, thereby suggesting a lack of intent to carry out the threat at this time.

How was the inappropriate communication (IC) delivered?	Risk Risk Level	Assessment and imminence of action
Telephone	Generally Low Risk	Suspects who telephone threats also keep themselves a safe distance from those they are threatening.
Verbal	High Risk Potential	Suspects who deliver IC's in person, either to the target or some known court or law enforcement official, place themselves at some risk of arrest, thus suggesting they intend to carry out the threat at this time.
Suspicious Activity	High Risk Potential	Suspects who engage in suspicious activity, such as stalking, vandalism, unscheduled appearance, or approaching the individual they are threatening, place themselves at some risk of arrest, thus suggesting an intent to carry out the threat at this time.
Informants	Generally Low Risk Informant Credibility Elevates the Risk	Informant threats are out of the control of the suspect. In every informant threat, the credibility and motive of the informant should be assessed first.
Is the individual making the threat known to the judge or court employee?	Risk	Suspects also choose whether or not to reveal their identity. Judicial threateners are not seeking notoriety or infamy. Instead, they are contemplating a crime and thinking like a criminal, want to escape.
Anonymous	High Risk Potential	Those who preserve their anonymity pose a higher risk than do those who reveal themselves.
Known	Generally Low Risk	Suspects who reveal their identity generally are expressing anger or outrage or are simply, "letting off steam."
Who is the focus of the communication?		Has the individual making the threat made it against an individual (not necessarily by name)?

How was the inappropriate communication (IC) delivered?	Risk Risk Level	Assessment and imminence of action
Direct	Moderate	The statement, "I am going to kill you" is a direct threat, even though there is no name associated with either the "I" or "You." Direct threats are so common they have no strong association with either high or low risk situations.
Veiled-Made against a target	High Risk Potential	The statement, "I'm going to make somebody pay for this," is a veiled-target threat, since it is clear the suspect intends to cause the harm, but not clear who will be harmed. These statements suggest intense frustration with the system of justice and are frequently expressed while the suspect is in the courthouse and, hence, better able to pose a risk.
Veiled-Made saying someone will do something.	Generally Low Risk	The statement, "Somebody's going to make that judge pay" is a veiled-suspect threat because the suspect is saying someone else will cause the harm to a specific target.
What is the immediacy of the risk?		Placing conditions on when or if the harm will occur strongly suggests that the suspect does not intend to cause any harm unless certain conditions are met.
Immediate	Moderate	An immediate threat of harm has no conditions or demands placed upon it.
Deferred By Condition	Generally Low Risk	A deferred-by-condition threat of harm puts a condition on the action, such as, "If you find me guilty, I'll kill you." This suggests the suspect is putting the responsibility on the judge for the next step, thus showing he intends no harm until the condition may be met.
Deferred By Time	Generally Low Risk	A deferred-by-time threat of harm injects a time element delaying action, such as, "When I get out of jail in 10 years, I'm going to kill you." In effect, the suspect is saying she cannot do anything now, but will at some future date.

What is the suspect's motivation?		Knowing what prompted the inappropriate communication helps determine how motivated the suspect is.
Case Related	Indeterminate	Most IC's are related to a particular case.
Hidden Motive	High Risk Potential	When the suspect chooses not to reveal what his/her motivation is, it suggests an effort to hide the suspect's identity and cover tracks, both indications of preparations to commit a crime.
Habitual	Generally Low Risk	A significant but small percentage of IC's come from habitual threateners who have neither the intent nor motive to cause harm.
Irrational	High Risk Potential	Irrational suspects are often highly motivated and less inhibited in carrying out attacks.
Ideological	High Risk Potential	Suspects motivated by some ideology, particularly those whose ideology brought them into court, pose a slightly higher risk than others do.
Is the suspect presently incarcerated?		Knowing if the suspect is incarcerated or not gives insight into the suspect's ability to cause harm.
Incarcerated	Generally Low Risk	Although incarcerated suspects have been known to pose a risk, their in-custody status increases control over their actions.
Not Incarcerated	Indeterminate	Knowing that a suspect is not incarcerated suggests that he/she has the ability, but reveals nothing of motive or intent.

Is the suspect affiliated with a group?		Group affiliation suggests that the risk of harm may come from more than one source. It also suggests stronger ideological or criminal motivation.
Group Member	High Risk Potential	Suspects who belong to a group can be more motivated because of the group's support. They also have others to assist them.
No Group	Affiliation Indeterminate	Most IC's come from lone individuals.
Where was the threat or inappropriate communication received?		Knowing where the inappropriate communication was received can give insight into how much information the suspect has on the individual that they are threatening.
Courthouse	Indeterminate	Judicial officials are public officials; it is relatively easy to find information about them.
Residence or Other Location	High Risk Potential	Although many judicial officials make no effort to protect their privacy, delivering an inappropriate communication to the official's residence or some other location strongly suggests stalking or research on the target.

When conducting a threat assessment, the following factors should be considered:

- ♦ Identify and define the threat - Who? What? Why;
- ♦ Research the threat - Where? When? How;
- ♦ Accumulate and corroborate all available information and intelligence obtained from principals, witnesses, informants, and sources;
- ♦ Prepare or review existing threat source profile;
- ♦ Review findings and form a preliminary synopsis;
- ♦ Consult with colleagues;
- ♦ Use positive and negative responses in revising the preliminary synopsis; and
- ♦ Prepare and present the final threat assessment report. The final threat assessment report should include at a minimum:
 - ♦ An assigned case number;
 - ♦ Name of individual(s) who prepared assessment;
 - ♦ Name of individual(s) who requested threat assessment;
 - ♦ Subject(s) of threat;

- ♦ List of those to be notified of the threat assessment;
- ♦ Date assessment completed;
- ♦ Threat rating – undetermined, low, moderate, or high;
- ♦ Synopsis of assessment preparation;
- ♦ Case overview;
- ♦ Situational summary;
- ♦ Case history, if any;
- ♦ Threat source profile;
- ♦ Statement of the threat assessed and summary of findings; and
- ♦ Policies and procedures for agencies and/or personnel to use in responding to and counteracting the identified threat.

The report should also include a bibliography and footnotes if opinions/comments from more than one individual are incorporated and a listing of sources contacted during the analysis process.

INITIATING A THREAT INVESTIGATION

The U.S. Marshals Service has developed a set of criteria or thresholds to use when deciding whether to move from the assessment phase to an active investigation. The most frequent outcome of a threat assessment, after measuring the threat and case circumstances, is that there is low risk to the person being threatened. Still the assessment should be corroborated. The importance of corroboration cannot be overstated. It is necessary to reduce the probability of erroneous information and intelligence adversely affecting the final assessment.

The following criteria can be used to determine whether or not to open a threat investigation:

- ♦ **The judge or other member of the court staff requires immediate protection** - the inappropriate communication itself is one considered so immediate or threatening that immediate protection is required until the threat source has been reduced or eliminated;
- ♦ **A direct and explicit threat has been received and the district attorney indicates a willingness to prosecute the offender** - at this point the threat investigation will develop into a criminal threat investigation. **NOTE:** As long as there remains the potential of criminal prosecution against the threat source the suspect should be considered a potential risk; or
- ♦ **The threat analysis and assessment of the inappropriate communication indicates a moderate or high-threat rating** - the assessment supports the operational necessity to open an investigation.

If it is decided that a threat investigation is necessary based on the assessed risks, the goal should be to defuse the risk of harm to the judge or member of the court staff. Investigations also may be undertaken with the intent to prosecute, or as a means of gathering additional information in the event of prosecution. The sheriff's office, upon receiving information regarding a threat, may take the following steps:

- ♦ Define the threat and how it affects agency operations;
- ♦ Collect, collate, and analyze data;
- ♦ Investigate;
- ♦ Prepare preliminary assessment;
- ♦ Corroborate;
- ♦ Confirm that the assessment is supported; and
- ♦ Complete assessment report.

Threat Investigation Techniques and Responses

Watch and Wait - Instead of the threat investigator confronting the suspect, the investigator closely monitors the situation for any additional threatening action(s). Threat investigators should consider and assess the reasons behind desired and unwanted outcomes that result from confrontations with the suspect.

Security Briefings - Provided to judges and court staff to deter, prevent, detect, and respond to criminal and threatening actions.

Psychiatric or Psychological Professionals - Cooperating Assistance - If the suspect is known to be under psychiatric care (custodial or non-custodial), the attending psychiatrist or psychologist can be contacted to ascertain the suspect's case-relevant mental condition, and determine suspect's treatment and/or prognosis. Patient/client privilege and privacy laws may limit the amount of information you can obtain without a subpoena. However, by law, mental health professionals must disclose threat information discerned from the suspect. **NOTE:** Suspect treatment should be given due consideration by threat investigators. A number of prior threat investigations have disclosed that the onset of the inappropriate communication was preceded by a change or reduction in the suspect's use of medications. Once the suspect's medications were appropriately readjusted, the inappropriate communications stopped, and the threat was negated.

Interpersonal Communication - The process of interpersonal communication should be recognized and effectively used by the threat investigator during all suspect interviews. This encompasses not only what can be detected from the suspect, but also what messages the investigator might want to convey.

Effective listening skills will assist investigators in evaluating messages and understanding and retaining information. The final dimension of listening requires self-determination of whether a suspect's words should be interpreted at face value or with deeper meaning and intent.

Suspect empathy is the ability to experience the world from the suspect’s perspective. Suspect empathy has three dimensions:

- ♦ Perspective-taking;
- ♦ Emotional or sympathetic involvement; and
- ♦ Concern, feigned or real, for the person.

When properly used, these techniques build trust (a necessary element to self-disclosure) that will likely influence the suspect to go along with a threat investigator’s desires and/or directives.

The following tables identify reasons and alternatives to a suspect’s confession:

Reasons for Self-Disclosure or Confession

Catharsis	Self-Clarification	Self-Validation	Reciprocity
Impression Formation	Physical Health	Social Control	Manipulation
Elevated Trust	Relationship Support	Understanding	Conflict Resolution

Alternatives to Self-Disclosure or Confession

Lying	Evasive Behavior	Equivocal Language	Remaining Silent
Deception	Blaming Others	Suspicious Behavior	Refusal to Answer

Mental Health Commitment - Under Pennsylvania law, persons under mental health commitments or holds can be committed or held for up to 72 hours. A preliminary psychiatric evaluation will be conducted, and the person may either be released or held, via court order, for further evaluation and/or commitment.

Arrest(s) - Decisions must be made concerning the point at which threat investigators are to arrest suspects. During any investigation, there may be times when the decision to arrest or not to arrest will be made solely at the discretion of the threat investigator. All arrests should be made in adherence to agency policy and procedures.

Restraining Orders - Threat investigators need to determine the case-specific information required to draft an appropriate restraining order. A few examples of these types of considerations include, but are not limited to: duration, locations, provisions, limitations, prohibitions, and enforcement of the order.

Target Transfer - The target transfer, or diversionary technique, transfers suspect focus from the judge or member of the court staff to the threat investigator.

Refocus to Support Groups - Request active support from the suspect’s spouse, family, church, peers, and counselors in an attempt to effectively transfer suspect focus away from the judge or member of the court staff. **NOTE:** Threat investigators need to assess any probability of the suspect’s becoming agitated or embarrassed, to the point of violent action, before this technique is used.

Caution Notice - As determined by the threat investigator, a caution notice is prepared and disseminated to sheriff's personnel, court security officers, police departments, judge or court staff, his/her family and/or staff.

Long-Term Monitoring: - Suspect anonymity and means of opportunity are effectively diminished through continual threat investigator-initiated official contacts. Long-term monitoring allows the threat investigator to gather additional intelligence and information, observe patterns of behavior and influences, and as the situation requires, update and reassess suspect's threat potential.

Residential Surveys – Safety at the home is assessed.

Officially advise Law Enforcement and/or Emergency Contacts: Specific (primary place of residence) law enforcement contact information should be listed for each judicial officer in the sheriff's judicial personnel profile manual. Each of the respective law enforcement agencies should be pre-contacted and requested to provide the following upon being advised of a threat: increased marked squad presence, 911 emergency dispatch notification and response, officer briefings, mutual aid, and assistance.

Criminal Statistical Summary - Conducted within a three-block radius of courthouses and judicial residences. Provides crime rates and activity information to assist the threat investigator in assessing any connection of criminal acts to inappropriate communications. Further, criminal statistics assist security personnel in determining whether crime is increasing to the extent, e.g. atypical to urban, suburban, or rural site locations, where efforts require enhanced law enforcement and security intervention.

The U.S. Secret Services has identified several conditions regarding a suspect that indicate to a greater risk of violence against a judge, including:

- ♦ A history of emergency psychiatric admission(s) and/or extremely bizarre behavior;
- ♦ Claims of a personal relationship with the judge;
- ♦ Lack of concern for self-protection;
- ♦ Concern on the part of significant others for subject's behavior;
- ♦ Fixed ideas, obsessions, or compulsions;
- ♦ Extreme or seemingly senseless but focused hostility;
- ♦ Repeated threats of violence and/or past offenses of violent behavior;
- ♦ Episodic or binge drinking and/or alcoholic blackouts;
- ♦ Involvement with violent groups;
- ♦ History of unemployment and/or situational stress;
- ♦ Lack of permanent residence –(nomadic lifestyle);
- ♦ Absence of social supports, family, church, or friends;
- ♦ Paranoid feelings on being cheated, abused, and concerned with world issues; and
- ♦ Collecting and preoccupation with weapons.

The following table identifies types of suspects, potential methods of threat or violence, and possible motives for these actions:

Courthouse Dimensions of Threat Space

From: “Behavioral Science and the Secret Service; Toward the Prevention of Assassination,”
Committee of the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences

AGENT	MEANS	MOTIVE
Insider (employee, contractor, visitor) Protester/Demonstrator Anarchist Vandal(s) Criminal(s) Prisoner(s) Organized Crime Dangerous/Deranged Individuals Pre-Identified Threat Source Domestic Terrorists International Terrorists Unknown Individual(s) Gangs (street, prison, motorcycle, skinhead, militant)	Conventional Arms: Firearms Edged Weapons Improvised Explosive Devices Incendiary Devices Unconventional Arms: Nuclear Device Biological Agent Chemical Agent Military Weapons LAWs Rockets RF Weapons Cyber Intrusion Threat of Attack: Bomb Scare NBC Hoax Symbolic Dates and Anniversaries Inappropriate Communications Prior Terrorist Acts Threat Type: Hostage Situation Shooting Bombing Knifing Physical/Assaults Vandalism	Act of Opportunity Act of Recognition Employee/Public Threat Conception Escalated Monetary Gain Diversionary Tactic Aid and Abet Prisoner Escape(s) Undermine Confidence in Government/Court System Revenge / Malice Domestic/Sexual Abuse Political Manipulation Terrorism Ideology Occupational Related Personal Adversity Self-Importance

A recommended listing of sections to incorporate within protective service detail operational plans and summaries include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ♦ Department and security detail chain of command;
- ♦ Personnel information;
- ♦ Assignments, duties, and responsibilities;
- ♦ Contact names and numbers;
- ♦ Sheriff's and police department's contact names and numbers;
- ♦ Threat intelligence;
- ♦ Media and general public issues;
- ♦ Emergency evacuation sites and procedures;
- ♦ Arrest considerations; and
- ♦ Closing and after-action reports.

Chapter 13: Court Security Personnel



This chapter includes information on post assignments, performance standards, and general and threat specific training outlines for court security officers.

Throughout this manual, the term “Court Security Officer” is used to identify those persons responsible for carrying out various aspects of a court’s security plan. Sheriffs’ offices have primary responsibility for court security; however, individual practices throughout the Commonwealth may call for these responsibilities to be carried out by persons with varying job titles including: Deputy Sheriff, Tipstaff, Court Crier, Security Guard, and possibly others.

Regardless of the person’s job title, it is critical that they know this function is their responsibility, and they are fully trained in its execution.

Regardless of the person’s job title, it is critical that they know this function is their responsibility, and they are fully trained.

COURT SECURITY OFFICER POST ASSIGNMENTS

Court security officers may be assigned to fixed or roving posts to thoroughly maintain security. The following list contains example of both fixed post and roving post assignments:

Fixed Post Assignments

- Security screening systems;
- Courtrooms;
- During jury deliberations;
- Courthouse communication center;
- Parking garage/ramp/lot security booth;
- Authorized protective service assignments;
- Courthouse perimeter areas;
- Courthouse lobbies;
- Judicial chambers;
- High-threat/High-profile trials; and
- After hours or specific case escort.

Roving Post Assignments

Courthouse Perimeter -A thorough search of the courthouse exterior, including all common areas, parking lots, landscaping, dumpsters, and package delivery areas. Emergency exit and employee entrance doors should always be secured. All variances from standard security practices i.e. doors left ajar, equipment malfunctioning, suspicious containers/packages, protests, should be directly reported to the court security officer supervisor for documentation and, as determined from situational aspects, immediate notification to the sheriff.

Courthouse Floors - A thorough search of each floor of the courthouse, including those floors housing non-court agencies. Judicial chambers including stairwells, corridors, windows, and bathrooms are to be searched and secured per policy and procedures. All variances from standard security practices will be directly reported to the court security supervisor for documentation and, as determined from situational aspects, immediate notification to the sheriff.

Garage Area - A thorough search of the courthouse garage area, to include all common areas, doors, stairwells, and elevator bays. Employee entrance and judicial elevator doors should always be secured. Court security officers will maintain a visible position near the garage entrance when not actually engaged in garage roving duties. All variances from standard security practices will be directly reported to the court security supervisor for documentation and, as determined from situational aspects, immediate notification to the sheriff.

Miscellaneous - Items discovered during roving patrols that can be easily corrected by the reporting court security officer should be done immediately. Court security supervisors will report all mechanical problems, unlocked utility closets, penthouse and roof access doors, and system malfunctions, to the attention of the sheriff. Court security officers will challenge suspicious persons detected in secure or sensitive areas. Contractors not displaying recognized temporary building identification should also be challenged. All variances from standard security practices will be directly reported to the court security supervisor for documentation and immediate, as determined from situational aspects, notification to the sheriff.

Chapter 14: Courthouse Building and Remodeling

Security Considerations

RENOVATION, REMODELING, & NEW CONSTRUCTION

It is important to note that security is but one of the significant design issues involved when considering structural changes to a courthouse. The purpose of this chapter is to assist courts and counties as they undertake efforts to improve court security through physical changes to the courthouse. The following factors should be considered when assessing the most appropriate approach to renovating a courthouse:

- ♦ Existing structural or physical features that will not allow significant change;
- ♦ Historical features;
- ♦ Area and size of the court floors;
- ♦ Multiple entries due to the facility's urban location;
- ♦ Accessibility; and
- ♦ Feasibility.

The Courthouse Security Design Process

The design process for renovation or building should involve the judiciary, sheriff, court personnel, county property management, and architectural, engineering, and security consultants familiar with the issues. The design process will generally proceed with the following tasks:

- ♦ Setting goals and objectives;
- ♦ Survey of existing facilities;
- ♦ Development of space, function, and security needs;
- ♦ Design options;
- ♦ Implementation of desired option; and
- ♦ Construction and/or renovation.

The following factors should be considered in the design of the modern courthouse.

Compliance - The facility should comply with applicable Pennsylvania state laws, building codes, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), and with Pennsylvania Supreme Court and Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts rules.

Functionality – The facility should be easy for the public to access, designed for efficient court operations, and flexible for future needs. It should be intuitive in layout, allowing the public to easily find the services they need.

Security - Design includes single securable entry and provides separate and controlled access for judges and staff. There are no blind spots. Facility zoning separates judicial, public, jury, and prisoner circulation. Duress buttons are well placed or wireless. There is

direct, secure prisoner delivery to the courtrooms. There are special victim/witness waiting areas, multiple waiting areas for separation of conflicting parties, and adequate conference rooms for parties and lawyers.

Test of Time - The courthouse should be constructed of durable materials of sufficient quality to convey the importance of the activities that take place within the courthouse. Courtrooms should be designed as generalized litigation spaces rather than over-specialized.

Technology - The design should include provisions for:

- ♦ High-tech courtrooms;
- ♦ Automation of record keeping and other court functions;
- ♦ Infrastructure for new technologies even if they are not going to be implemented immediately; and
- ♦ Automated court reporting.

Flexibility - Court design should provide courtrooms with equal access for all judges. Courtrooms and court related spaces can be designed for multiple uses. Use modular workstations to create a flexible office layout. Standardize judicial quarters.

Judicial Image - Courthouse design should consider appropriate ceiling height and room volumes and spaces to provide traditional dignity in courtrooms while reducing excessive formality. The design should accommodate appropriate courtroom sight lines and heights of judicial positions, encouraging judicial process and protocol. Courtrooms intended for use in family cases and cases involving children should have specialized design to match the sensitive nature of the proceedings.

Environmental - The design should include acoustical control, lighting appropriate to tasks, and ventilation appropriate to the expected occupancy of the courthouse.

Accessibility – There should be equal access to all positions in courtrooms/courthouse.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design



Space design and layout of court facilities from a security point of view is the best accomplished following the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). As it applies to courthouses, CPTED uses building design features that deter inappropriate conduct, while at the same time encouraging the legitimate uses of the courthouse. This balanced approach reflects the need to improve court security while conveying an image of openness and accessibility. CPTED has three overlapping concepts: natural access control, natural surveillance, and territorial reinforcement.

Space design and layout of court facilities from a security point of view is best accomplished following the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

- ♦ Access control - uses people, electrical and mechanical devices, and natural measures to create a perception of risk to potential offenders and deny them access to restricted areas of the courthouse. These measures are balanced by procedures and designs that guide the court's users in an understandable, efficient, and safe manner.
- ♦ Surveillance - involves the location and use of physical features, electrical and mechanical devices, activities, and people to maximize visibility. It is intended to create a risk of detection for potential offenders and a perception of safety for the public and court staff.
- ♦ Territoriality - delineates and allows the easy identification of certain areas as semi-private and private.

Applying CPTED Principles

Courtroom Security - may be provided with architectural barriers, technology, and operational methods. Architecturally, security is provided through the clear separation of circulation routes for participants in the proceedings and the elimination of spaces where a weapon or bomb might be placed. The public should enter the courtroom from the public zone, prisoners should enter through a secure zone, and judges and court staff should enter through a restricted or private zone. Technologically, the courtroom can be made more secure through the use of magnetometers at the entrance of the courthouse (or entrance to a specific courtroom) and duress alarms connected to security stations to transmit an audio or visual depiction of the action occurring in the courtroom.

Judge's Bench - The front panel of the judge's desk should be made of bullet-absorptive materials. Care should be taken not to use steel-plated, bullet-resistant materials, as this may cause bullets to ricochet through the courtroom. The judge's bench should have a concealed, silent, positive-action duress alarm that will directly alert the courthouse security station or an employee trained in emergency notification procedures. The use of wireless duress alarms should also be considered. While care should be taken to avoid placement of the alarm where it could be accidentally activated, the alarm should be within easy reach of the judge and its activation should be as inconspicuous as possible. The button should also activate an audio or, preferably, video system within the courtroom, which transmits to the security station. This will enable security personnel to determine what is occurring in the courtroom and plan an appropriate response.

Clerk's Station: -The court clerk's station may have the same duress alarm/intercom system as the judge, providing direct linkage with central security through a foot- or knee-activated button under the work surface.

Court Reporter's Station - As a court reporter could be sitting near a potentially hostile and violent witness, the court reporter's station should allow for an easy escape.

Jury Box - The jury box should incorporate a modesty panel and shelf area to provide some distance from trial participants. A court security officer may be stationed between the jury box and the spectators to prevent any communication or intimidation.

Attorneys Tables - The tables should not have drawers or concealed recesses where a weapon or bomb may be placed.

The Court Security Officer's Station (if applicable)- The court security officer must have access to a duress button, which is connected to the main security office.

PLACEMENT OF SECURITY EQUIPMENT

Architectural space design and system integration proposals for security screening must revolve around the required association between security personnel/equipment and operational policies and procedures relating to judicial security. A proper design layout also recognizes and acknowledges the absolute necessity of providing security screening personnel with unobstructed sight lines of persons entering the screening area. This surveillance arrangement affords personnel an opportunity to observe, assess, and appropriately respond to suspicious persons exhibiting threatening behavioral characteristics. As screening equipment and conditions vary, it is not possible to determine exactly where personnel will be positioned. It is far more beneficial to generally state screening objectives and position responsibilities that should provide sufficient information as well as desired flexibility in finalizing a system design.

Magnetometers (walk-thru metal detectors) detect all metal objects, subject to programmed sensitivity levels, that persons attempt to pass through the detector frame. Most do not indicate where the metal object is located other than on the person and/or article being screened. A hand-held metal detector must be used in combination with the magnetometer in order to determine the exact location of the metal object in question. Consequently, a discreet area of sufficient size must be conveniently located in which to screen persons for such items. To facilitate the screening process by eliminating alarms on commonly carried items, persons are directed to place all metal objects on an adjacent counter-top area. For each magnetometer, the counter-top area should be a minimum of 36 inches wide in order to adequately provide for this routine and continuous procedure. Placement of the magnetometer(s) may be dictated by surrounding areas, or the location of a second magnetometer that may interfere with its sensitivity readings. It may be necessary to slightly reposition or even relocate the magnetometer(s) altogether if this is the case. In attempts to eliminate this problem, it is recommended that preliminary site tests be conducted on all proposed magnetometer locations.

Fluoroscopes (package inspection devices) are used to detect firearms, weapons, explosives, and contraband in packages, boxes, and personal items. Fluoroscope conveyor belts require specific attention during architectural design to address the need for aesthetic attachments or tables to prevent multiple screened items from amassing at the end of the belt and falling to the floor. The main responsibility for security screening personnel is to ensure all visitors, employees (as determined by security committee), and belongings are screened prior to entering the building. Personnel must be able to verbally and visually instruct persons on

screening procedures. For each screening system, a total of two officers will be routinely assigned.

ADDITIONAL SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

- ♦ Will mail screening also be conducted at a separate remote location?
- ♦ Is there an adequately sized area for persons to exit the building without interfering with screening operations?
- ♦ What sensitivity levels will be programmed for the magnetometers?
- ♦ What type and number of courthouse signs are required to advise persons of screening policies and procedures? Where should these and other courthouse signs or directories be located?
- ♦ Will weapons and/or contraband be seized and confiscated? Will weapons and/or contraband be held and secured (gun lockers and lock boxes) at the screening point?
- ♦ Because weapons may be detected at screening stations, will armed personnel be assigned to security screening? Or will they be available on a response basis?

STANDARDS FOR HISTORIC REHABILITATION

A guide to sensitive treatment of historic buildings is available in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, a chapter of a larger technical reference publication issued by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior entitled *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment Historic Properties*. These standards are used by every State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in reviewing the impact of work on historic buildings, and as guidance in the recognition of significant features and the determination of sensitive treatment to respect and retain such features.

The standards define rehabilitation as “the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.” The standards focus on ten major areas ranging from use and historic character, to retention and replication of features, to impacts of additions and new construction. When considering the intent of the definition, it is important to recognize the broad interpretation of such words as “utility,” “alteration,” “contemporary,” and “preserving.” Together they promote treatments which will continue the usefulness of the property, with sympathetic changes, to provide for a use which will satisfy the demands of today while retaining those qualities which are important to its past.

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation’s official list of properties deemed worthy of preservation. The Register is maintained by the National Park Service in the U.S. Department of the Interior and is administered by a SHPO in each state. The National Register recognizes properties that have local, state, or national significance. Properties may be listed on the Register because of their association with significant persons and events, because of their architectural or engineering significance, or because they contain important information about our history or prehistory. Their preservation may be encouraged through certain federal tax benefits and state and federal grant funds. An environmental review process also protects properties that may be affected by state projects or federally funded or

licensed undertakings. National Register listing often changes the way communities perceive their historic properties and gives credibility to efforts to preserve them. Listing, however, does not interfere with a private property owner's right to alter, manage, or dispose of the property.

Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts Physical Security Checklist

Court Facility	
Date Facility Constructed:	
Date of Site Visit	
Team Members	

	Yes	No
Perimeter (e.g., fences and gates)		
1. Is the perimeter of the courthouse grounds clearly defined by a fence, wall, or other type of physical barrier?	_____	_____
2. Does the barrier limit or control vehicle or pedestrian access to the courthouse?	_____	_____
3. Comments: _____		

Lights		
1. Is the entire perimeter lighted?	_____	_____
2. Are light fixtures suitable for outside use (i.e., are they weather- and tamper-resistant)?	_____	_____
3. Is the exterior of the building (particularly entry points) sufficiently lighted to discourage unlawful entry attempts or placement of explosives against the walls?	_____	_____
4. Are public areas (including parking spaces and walkways) sufficiently lighted to discourage attacks against persons or vehicles?	_____	_____
5. Comments: _____		

	Yes	No
Parking Areas		
1. Is a reserved parking lot on courthouse grounds?	_____	_____
2. Is the reserved area closed or locked during nonbusiness hours?	_____	_____
3. Are parking spaces reserved by name?	_____	_____
4. Are parking spaces reserved by number?	_____	_____
5. Is there direct access for judges from the garage to nonpublic elevators or restricted corridors?	_____	_____
6. Can unattended vehicles park near or next to the courthouse?	_____	_____
7. Comments: _____		

Landscaping		
1. Do landscape features provide places for potential intruders to hide?	_____	_____
2. Are there items such as bricks, stones, or wooden fence pickets which could be used by intruders as weapons, missiles, or tools?	_____	_____
3. Does landscaping (bollards, benches, site elevation, or declination) impede a vehicle from being driven into the building?	_____	_____
4. Are jersey-type barricades used to block access to certain exterior areas?	_____	_____
5. Comments: _____		

	Yes	No
Doors, Windows, and other Openings		
1. Are all exterior doors at least 1¾-inch solid core wood, metal clad, or metal?	_____	_____
2. Are all hinge pins internally located, welded, or otherwise treated to prevent easy removal?	_____	_____
3. Are exterior locks designed or exterior doorframes built so that the door cannot be forced by spreading the frame?	_____	_____
4. Are all unused doors permanently locked?	_____	_____
5. Are windows that could be used for entry protected with:		
a. locking devices	_____	_____
b. metal bars	_____	_____
c. mesh	_____	_____
d. intrusion alarms	_____	_____
e. other (specify): _____	_____	_____
6. Are windows on the ground floor made of tempered glass or ballistic plastic?	_____	_____
7. Is the roof accessible by means of:		
a. fire escape	_____	_____
b. another building	_____	_____
c. a pole or tree	_____	_____
d. other (specify): _____	_____	_____
8. Are openings to the building (e.g., tunnels, utility and sewer manholes, culverts, and service ports) properly secured?	_____	_____
9. Do judges and court officers have a private entrance to the building?	_____	_____
10. Is there security screening at that private entrance?	_____	_____
11. Comments: _____		

	Yes	No
Ceilings and Walls		

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Do all walls extend to the ceiling? | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Are drop or removable ceilings used in the courthouse? | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Comments: _____ | | |
-

Alarms		
---------------	--	--

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. Does the courthouse have an intrusion alarm system? | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Is the system regularly tested? | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Where does the alarm system terminate? | | |
| a. sheriff's office | _____ | _____ |
| b. local law enforcement office | _____ | _____ |
| c. commercial controls station | _____ | _____ |
| d. other (specify): _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Comments: _____ | | |
-

Attic, Basements, Crawl Spaces, and Air Conditioning and Heating Ducts		
---	--	--

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. Are doors to basements, utility rooms, boiler rooms, crawl spaces, and attics locked when not in use? | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Are crawl spaces secured from unauthorized entry? | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Are air-conditioning and heating vent openings in public areas secure from tampering? | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Comments: _____ | | |
-

	Yes	No
Elevators		
1. Are private elevators provided for judges?	_____	_____
2. Are certain elevators used exclusively to move prisoners?	_____	_____
3. Are prisoner elevators marked "Not for Public Use"?	_____	_____
4. Are prisoner elevators controlled by key?	_____	_____
5. Are prisoner elevators programmed to bypass floors?	_____	_____
6. Comments: _____		

Public Area (waiting areas, rest rooms, and hallways)		
1. Are waiting rooms next to courtrooms?	_____	_____
2. Is the number of waiting rooms sufficient to separate parties to a case?	_____	_____
3. Are drop or removable ceilings used in waiting rooms?	_____	_____
4. Are public rest rooms routinely searched?	_____	_____
5. Are rest rooms next to courtrooms?	_____	_____
6. Are drop or removable ceilings used in rest rooms?	_____	_____
7. Do any trash receptacles allow easy concealment of contraband?	_____	_____
8. Are directions (directories and floor plans, if appropriate) clearly posted in all public areas?	_____	_____
9. Comments: _____		

	Yes	No
Offices Handling Money		
1. Does the cashier's window have security features?	_____	_____
2. Who escorts the employee carrying money to the bank?		
a. sheriff	_____	_____
b. local police	_____	_____
c. state police	_____	_____
d. no one	_____	_____
e. other (specify): _____	_____	_____
3. Is the bank deposit made at varying times each day?	_____	_____
4. Comments: _____		

Courthouse Procedures

1. Is there a procedure for routine daily inspection of the courthouse?	_____	_____
2. Is the court facility patrolled 24 hours a day, seven days a week?	_____	_____
3. Are tenants given periodic instruction about the various emergency procedures?	_____	_____
4. Are periodic fire and evacuation drills held?	_____	_____
5. Are public, private, and prisoner circulation patterns separated and well defined?	_____	_____
6. Is there a routine inspection of packages and shipments entering the courthouse?	_____	_____
7. Is there a policy concerning personal package deliveries made to the courthouse?	_____	_____
8. Does the court have an emergency management/continuity of operations plan (COOP)?	_____	_____
9. Does the court have a safety and security committee?	_____	_____

Yes

No

10. Comments: _____

Courtrooms: Location

1. Do spaces above, below, and next to the courtroom present a security hazard?

2. Comments: _____

Courtrooms: Doors, Windows, and Other Openings

1. Are all unused doors secured?

2. Are there separate entrances into the courtroom for:

a. judges

b. in-custody defendants

c. spectators

3. Is the prisoner entry door far enough from the public seating area to prevent passing contraband?

4. Are all windows draped to obscure vision (particularly of the bench) from outside?

5. Comments: _____

Courtrooms: Lights

1. Is there emergency lighting?

2. Comments: _____

	Yes	No
Courtrooms: Furnishings		
1. Is the main area or well separated from the spectators by a barrier?	_____	_____
2. Is there a physical barrier between the well and the judge's bench?	_____	_____
3. Is the judge's bench closed at both ends to restrict access from the well?	_____	_____
4. Are potential weapons, such as drinking glasses, water carafes, and ashtrays, kept out of the defendant's reach?	_____	_____
5. Comments: _____		

Courtrooms: Security Devices		
1. Is the bench reinforced to make it bullet resistant?	_____	_____
2. Is there a duress alarm in the courtroom?	_____	_____
a. Does the duress alarm also indicate location?	_____	_____
3. Are duress alarm buttons installed at:		
a. the bench	_____	_____
b. clerk's station	_____	_____
c. bailiff's station	_____	_____
d. chambers	_____	_____
e. judge's secretary's desk	_____	_____
f. other (specify): _____	_____	_____
4. Does the courtroom have a telephone?	_____	_____
5. Does the courtroom have a public address system?	_____	_____
6. Does the courthouse have a public address system?	_____	_____
7. Comments: _____		

	Yes	No
Courtrooms: Security Procedures		

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. Is there a policy for firearms to be carried into the courtroom by: | | |
| a. bailiffs | _____ | _____ |
| b. law enforcement officer witnesses | _____ | _____ |
| c. law enforcement officer spectators | _____ | _____ |
| d. other (specify): _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Are bailiffs armed in the courtroom? | _____ | _____ |
| 3. How many bailiffs provide court security on a daily basis? | | |
| a. Fixed post _____ | | |
| b. Roving post _____ | | |
| 4. Courthouse security is provided by: (check all that apply) | | |
| a. Sheriff _____ | | |
| b. Private Security Agency _____ | | |
| c. Other (specify) _____ | | |
| 5. Are there procedures for the emergency evacuation from the courtroom of: | | |
| a. prisoners | _____ | _____ |
| b. judges | _____ | _____ |
| c. jurors | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Is there a policy to secure weapons and other contraband offered as evidence? | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Comments: _____ | | |

Judges' Chambers and Related Offices		
---	--	--

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. Is visitor access controlled by clerks, bailiffs, or secretaries? | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Do these chambers have more than one means of entry and exit? | _____ | _____ |

	Yes	No
3. Are the chambers routinely locked when the judge is not present?	_____	_____
4. Are outside views, particularly of judges' desks, obscured?	_____	_____
5. Do chambers have duress alarms?	_____	_____
6. Comments: _____		

Witness Waiting Room

1. Are witness waiting rooms provided?	_____	_____
2. Is it possible to separate prosecution and defense witnesses?	_____	_____
3. Is public access to waiting rooms restricted?	_____	_____
4. Comments: _____		

Jury Deliberation Room

1. Is the jury deliberation room next to the courtroom or accessible through a controlled passage?	_____	_____
2. Are the windows draped?	_____	_____
3. Are rest rooms provided as an integral part of the deliberation area?	_____	_____
4. Is the deliberation room routinely searched for contraband before occupancy?	_____	_____
5. Is the deliberation room locked when unoccupied?	_____	_____
6. Comments: _____		

	Yes	No
Data Processing and Court Records		
1. Is a back-up record made for electronic court records each day?	_____	_____
2. Is electronic court data stored off-site?	_____	_____
3. Has a "black bag" containing valuable court documents, orders, and computer information been assembled?	_____	_____
4. Is the door to the location in which computer servers are located locked at all times except for authorized users?	_____	_____
5. Is the fire suppression system for the computer server location zoned (if sprinkler type) or chemical?	_____	_____
6. Comments: _____		

In the event of a courthouse emergency, the following questions are being asked by the AOPC to provide the county with on-going operation of the Common Pleas Criminal Court Case Management System (CPCMS)

Name, title, and phone number of the County contact who would coordinate activities.

Names, titles, phone numbers, and contact information for the user(s) who would need immediate remote access. Also provide the names, titles, phone numbers, and contact information for the user(s) who would need long term remote access.

IMMEDIATE ACCESS USERS

LONG TERM REMOTE ACCESS USERS

Are computer(s) and printer(s) available for use? If so, what is the operating system on each of the computers?

If relocation were required what is that location's address and phone number?

Is there access to a dial-up or broadband (ISDN, DSL, or Cable Modem) at your court facility or remote location? If so, please specify type available.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Approach	1
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Courthouse Security - Deter, Detect, Prevent.....	5
What Must Be Done.....	5
Chapter 3: Routine Security Procedures	10
Security Screening	10
Chapter 4: Safety and Security Procedures for Court Proceedings.....	18
Role of Court Security Officers	18
Less-than-lethal weapons for court security officers	19
Courtroom Design.....	19
Safety of Jurors, Witnesses, and the Public	20
Trial Risk Identification.....	24
Operational Plan.....	25
Performance Guidelines for Assigned Court Security Officers.....	27
Command Post and Communications.....	27
Chapter 5: Security Issues for Courthouse Offices	28
Areas of Responsibility.....	28
Preparing Staff for Safety and Security Improvements	29
Maintaining Safety and Security at the Courthouse	31
Emergency and Security Situations – People, Property, and Information.....	32

Placement of Weapons of Opportunity in the Courtroom	33
Occupant Emergency Plans	40
Chapter 6: Security Incident Reporting	42
Report Every Threat.....	42
Distribution of the Security Incident Fact Sheet.....	43
Chapter 7: Court Facility Assessments	49
The Purpose of Court Facility Assessments	49
The Role of Facility Assessments.....	49
Chapter 8: Security of Exhibits.....	59
Storage of Exhibits during Trial	59
Managing and Disposing of Exhibits.....	59
Security of Firearms as Exhibits	60
Security of Non-Firearm Weapons as Exhibits	65
Security of Other Sensitive Exhibits.....	66
Contingency Safety and Security Plans	67
Execution of Contingency Plans.....	69
Contingency Plans Based on Specific Situations.....	70
Courthouse Procedures for Dealing with Bomb and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Threats.....	73
Court Business Continuity Plans	80
Key Components of Continuity of Operations Plans.....	82
Chapter 10: Courts of Common Pleas Security Classification System	85
MINIMUM COURT FACILITY SECURITY STANDARDS	85

Chapter 11: Magisterial District Judge Courts Cost Risk Matrix	87
Chapter 12: Threats to Judicial Officers	89
Assessing the Threat	89
Initiating a Threat Investigation.....	95
Chapter 13: Court Security Personnel	101
Court Security Officer Post Assignments.....	101
Chapter 14: Courthouse Building and Remodeling Security Considerations	103
Renovation, Remodeling, & New Construction	103
Placement of Security Equipment.....	106
Additional Security Considerations	107
Standards for Historic Rehabilitation.....	107