


# MONROE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## General Order

<b>CHAPTER:</b> 061		<b>TITLE:</b> Court Security
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> October 26, 2007	<b>NO. PAGES:</b> 4	<b>REVIEWED/REVISED:</b> November 29, 2022
 <b>Sheriff of Monroe County</b>		

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines and procedures for Court Security.

### II. DISCUSSION

This directive shall apply to all personnel. The Sheriff is responsible for providing security to the various Circuit and County Courts located in Monroe County, Florida. Courtrooms are located in Key West for District 1, in Marathon for District 4, and in Plantation Key for District 7. In District 1, 4 and 7, Court Security is the responsibility of the Courthouse Commander. The Courthouse Commander answers directly to the Major, Bureau of Law Enforcement. Courtrooms are staffed by deputies, who are qualified to perform the duties of Court Security.

### III. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

#### A. Administration

1. A copy of the security directive shall be available to all Judges, Judges Secretaries, Commanders and Deputies immediately upon assignment.
2. Weapons shall only be worn in the Courtroom by members in uniform. Unless in uniform, weapons carried by members of this Office shall be kept in the weapons lock-boxes available at each courthouse. Such lock-boxes shall be located in areas having limited access by the public.
3. The Courthouse Commander shall maintain liaison with the Court Administrator at least once quarterly to ensure adequate security of the courthouses in Monroe County are being maintained. If any incidents occur, a report will be sent to the Sheriff and court administrator.
4. The Courthouse Commander shall prepare and keep current a physical security plan for the protection of the courthouse/courtrooms in Districts 1, 4, and 7. The plan shall address the following subjects:
  - a. Perimeter lighting (exterior)
  - b. Perimeter Doors
  - c. Windows
  - d. Interior Doors
  - e. Interior Lighting - Halls
  - f. Interior Lighting - Rooms
  - g. Alarms (duress and intrusion)

- h. Communications
  - i. Evacuation Plan
  - j. Fire Detection - Smoke Detectors
  - k. Fire Protection - Hydrants, Hoses and Extinguisher
  - l. Parking Lots
  - m. Auxiliary Power
5. The Courthouse Commander shall prepare a written manual, governing courthouse/courtroom security in Districts 1, 4 and 7; which shall contain procedures for the following elements: (such manual shall not be in conflict with the Office Operations Manual).
- a. The Physical Security Plan
  - b. Security Operations
  - c. Special Operations Plan
  - d. Hostage Situation Response Plans
  - e. High Risk Trial Plans
  - f. Emergency Procedures for Medical, Fire, Bombs, and Disasters

## **B. Physical Facilities**

1. Prisoners shall be brought into the courthouse through controlled and secured doors under escort by Corrections or Court Security personnel with restrictive public access.
2. When not in the courtroom, but remaining in the courthouse, prisoners shall be kept in the facility designed for the temporary holding of prisoners.
3. The following timing sequence shall be followed for governing the movement of people in the courtroom:
  - a. General public shall be admitted to the courtroom first
  - b. Second, the prisoner shall be brought into the courtroom
  - c. Third, the judge enters the courtroom
  - d. Fourth, the jury (if any) enters the courtroom
  - e. In clearing the courtroom, the above procedure is followed in reverse or as deemed necessary by the Courthouse Sergeant for safety and security issues.
4. Key Control – the Court Administrator is the sole authority in the issuing and collecting of keys to the courthouses.

The Sergeant of the courthouse is responsible to issue and collect courthouse keys to new and former employees assigned to Court Security. In the event that additional keys are needed, the Court Supervisor will coordinate their issuing with the Court Administrator's Office.

## **C. Security**

1. Prior to any session of court, after recesses, and again at adjournment, a search of the courtroom for contraband shall be made by the Deputy. During any recesses, the courtroom shall be securely locked or kept under direct supervision of the Deputies.
2. Public access to the courtrooms during normal business hours shall be restricted to one point of entry and exit in the main lobby. All persons entering the courthouse courtroom area shall pass through a magnetometer and carried items will pass through an x-ray screening machine.
3. In all high-risk trials, the Deputy shall search all hand-carried articles into the courtroom. This should be done at the courtroom entrance prior to the person entering. It is advisable for the Deputy to be assisted in conducting such searches. Contraband items will be removed and the

appropriate action, depending on the item shall be taken. If applicable the item may be returned to the person at the end of court session. This shall also be done upon the request of the Judge or at the discretion of the Deputy.

4. The Sheriff's policy is that all in-custody prisoners be kept handcuffed and in leg irons in the courtroom during non-jury trials unless and until the Judge orders their removal. For jury trials, there shall be no restraints unless ordered by the Judge. This policy is applicable to all prisoners - male, female, juvenile and handicapped (unless the handicapped prisoner cannot physically be cuffed.)
5. Every 2 years, the Courthouse Commander shall have a security survey conducted of the courthouses located in Key West, Marathon and Plantation Key according to the following format:
  - a. Background
    - 1) Survey team - names
    - 2) Dates survey conducted
    - 3) Summary of previous surveys and studies and preliminary assessment of security threats
  - b. The Facility
    - 1) Description
    - 2) Office responsible for security
    - 3) Tenant agencies
    - 4) Summary of incidents - last five (5) years
  - c. Detailed Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations.
  - d. Appendices
    - 1) Courtroom sketches
    - 2) Security equipment inventory - location
  - e. Such survey will require a thorough on-site examination and analysis that:
    - 1) Determines the nature and degree of the threat, the exact kind and degree of protective measures used, the precise kind of security measures that are needed and
    - 2) Recommends action needed to establish the appropriate level of security

#### **D. Equipment**

1. All courtrooms county-wide are equipped with duress alarms which are designed to signal;
  - a. District 1 - notifies the Court Security Station at the entrance to the courthouse and the Key West Police Department.
  - b. Districts 4 & 7 - notifies an alarm contractor who contacts Sheriff's Office Communications.
  - c. The duress alarms are located at the Judge's bench, the Judge's chambers and at the Judge's secretary desk.
  - d. Deputies shall test all duress alarms prior to court convening.
2. All courtrooms county-wide are equipped with emergency lighting sources in case of power failure.
3. The Deputy in each courtroom shall at all times have available leg irons for restraining purposes. Such shall be kept secure and stored out of sight in the courtroom.
4. All courtrooms are equipped with telephones accessible to the Judge. Deputies shall carry two-way radios during court sessions.

5. All deputies shall keep at their disposal a magnetometer for use during court sessions.
6. Each courthouse/courtroom deputy shall be equipped with the following:
  - a. Handcuffs
  - b. Handguns
  - c. Two-way radios
  - d. Taser
7. The following equipment will be readily available in a secure location in each courtroom:
  - a. Collapsible baton
  - b. O.C. spray
8. The following equipment is available in all three courthouses/courtroom security.
  - a. Telephones and duress alarms
  - b. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and fire extinguisher
  - c. Should a more difficult situation arise requiring additional security measures, each courtroom has available the force of the Sheriff's resources to maintain control. Should a serious problem erupt, Road Patrol shall be directed to the courtroom/courthouse in need. Road Patrol may use any other assets available to control the situation:
    - 1) Shotguns and handguns;
    - 2) Tear gas and O.C. Spray; and
    - 3) Riot helmets, shields and batons;
  - d. Each corrections facility has available leg irons, which, in emergency, can be brought to the court house.
  - e. Should a medical emergency develop, the Deputy shall summon EMS to respond. Until EMS arrives, the Deputy shall administer First-Aid and/or Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation according to his/her training. First-Aid kits are available in all courtrooms.
  - f. Photographic equipment is available from the District Stations or Headquarters upon request. Specific plans and equipment availability shall be maintained by the District Commander. The Deputies shall be responsible for reviewing such plans and knowing the types, qualities, conditions, and location of such equipment. Included in the plans shall be a list, which records dates of acquisition and shelf life for such materials having one.