

Courthouse Screening and Controlled Access

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- a. The provision of safety and security in the Clark County Courthouse (Courthouse) is a critical aspect of an efficient and effective court operation. Consistent with Wis. Stat. 59.27(3) and Wis. SCR 68, the Sheriff shall attend to the Circuit Court and establish an appropriate level of security that minimizes the opportunity for physical violence and/or injury to employees, the public, and anyone conducting business in the facility that is used for the operation of the Circuit Court. The safety of litigants, jurors, staff and all who visit the courthouse is a key priority.
- b. The Courthouse must provide a calm, safe, neutral environment for the resolution of disputes. These disputes can generate an emotional response or disruptive outbursts presenting potential dangers. These procedures are intended to provide staff with the directions and guidelines necessary to ensure the safety and security of all who enter the Courthouse.
- c. Except as noted in the Screening Exceptions section of this policy, all individuals entering the Courthouse shall be subject to this security and screening policy at all times.
- d. Clark County does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to its services, programs, activities, and people with disabilities shall be reasonably accommodated to facilitate their participation.

2. PURPOSE

- a. The purpose of the Courthouse screening and controlled access program is to prevent weapons from entering the Courthouse. This policy establishes a procedure for weapons/contraband screening of persons entering the Courthouse by Clark County Sheriff Office (Office) personnel. Access to the Courthouse during public hours shall at all times be controlled by the Office via security check points.

3. SCOPE

- a. All individuals, unless specified in the Screening Exceptions section of this policy, entering the Courthouse during public hours shall be subject to security screening by Office personnel using a combination of walk-through, handheld, and/or package screening devices. Firearms, edged weapons, and personal protection devices are subject to the provisions of the Weapons section of policy.
- b. If not otherwise specified in this policy, the Office shall establish screening procedures that balance the need for security with access to public facilities including the productivity and functional needs of County employees, third party vendors, and the public doing business at this facility.
- c. This policy does not apply to access to the Clark County Jail (Jail).
- d. This policy is subject to change with or without notice by the Office.

4. ACCESS AND SCREENING

- a. The Courthouse will implement a screening station located at the Northwest 1st floor doors to the Courthouse along 6th Street (Secured Entrance). The Secured Entrance will be staffed by the Courthouse Security Officer or designee.
- b. All people entering the Secured Entrance will be screened unless otherwise posted.
- c. To access the Jail, individuals can enter at the East 1st floor doors along 6th Street and will be subject to screening.
- d. Unless otherwise stated, access to the Courthouse shall be as follows:
 - i. Employees and individuals with key card access shall enter the Courthouse

Monday through Friday between 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM using the Secured Entrance.

- ii. Public can only enter the Courthouse Monday through Friday between 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM using the Secured Entrance (these hours shall be considered Courthouse Hours). Unless otherwise posted and set forth in this policy, the Courthouse is closed to the public at any time the Secured Entrance is not staffed by Office personnel.
 - iii. Individuals with disabilities can enter the Courthouse using the South 5th floor doors to the Courthouse along 5th Street.
- e. For access to the Courthouse outside the stated hours, individuals can enter the Courthouse using the East street level doors to the Jail along 6th Street unless otherwise posted. Once inside, individuals shall continue to the 3rd floor for screening and access to the Courthouse. Individuals may be required to present identification to Office personnel to enter the Courthouse. Individuals may be required to complete an access log at the discretion of the Sheriff.
 - f. If, for any reason, an individual enters the Courthouse by means not stated above, the individual shall be screened (i.e. screening at Secured Entrance) before accessing the Courthouse or the individual may be removed from the Courthouse.
 - g. To exit the Courthouse, individuals shall exit using the doors that were used to enter the Courthouse including the doors at the Secured Entrance from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM. To exit the Courthouse outside the stated hours, individuals shall exit using the East street level doors to the Jail along 6th Street. This exit is accessible from inside the Courthouse by using the 3rd floor door by the Office. For individuals with disabilities, exiting the Courthouse using the South 5th floor doors to the Courthouse along 5th Street will be made available as needed. Exiting the Courthouse using other doors is authorized only during an emergency.
 - h. No individual shall allow another individual in or out of any door or by any means not stated above.
 - i. All individuals in the Courthouse may be subject to additional unannounced searches/screening with reasonable suspicion at any time as determined by authorized Office personnel.
 - j. The Sheriff reserves the right to modify the access to the Courthouse with advanced notice.

5. PARKING

- a. South parking lot on 5th Street: This lot is reserved for the following:
 - i. Handicapped/disabled individuals
 - ii. Law enforcement
 - iii. District Attorney, Court Commissioner(s), and Judge(s)
 - iv. Employees with County-issued permits
- b. Northwest parking lot on 6th Street: This lot is reserved for the public at reserved spaces and employees.
- c. Northeast parking lot on 6th Street: This lot is reserved for the public, employees, and county-owned vehicles.
- d. East parking lot by the Jail on 6th Street: This lot is reserved for parking as determined by the Sheriff.

6. SCREENING EXCEPTIONS

- a. The employees/individuals stated below are not required to pass through the Secured Entrance or be screened while entering or at the Courthouse:
 1. Sworn, active law enforcement personnel shall be permitted to carry firearms in the Courthouse and will have key card access to all entry doors. Law enforcement officers are subject to the following:

- a. Firearms may be carried only when an officer is on duty and performing official duties. All such officers shall wear a visible badge including name and department, or equivalent, except officers engaged in undercover activities may provide weapon screening staff with other evidence of their law enforcement status.
 - b. Any officer with proper ID, who is on duty and here for the performance of official duties, will not be required to be screened. All others shall be screened. Any questions regarding the legitimacy of law enforcement I.D. or credentials shall be the discretion of the Courthouse Security Officer.
 - c. Law enforcement, fire department, and fire rescue personnel responding to a dispatched call for assistance will have immediate and unrestricted access to the Courthouse.
 - d. Law enforcement personnel who are authorized to carry firearms in the Courthouse are encouraged to have such firearms in a level 3 holster or other holster that is designed to prevent unwanted acquisition of the firearm.
 - e. Any law enforcement officer, who does not have official business to perform in the Courthouse, is not on duty, does not have proper ID, or an adequate holster described above should leave their firearm in a secure location outside of the Courthouse.
 - f. If a law enforcement officer who does not have official business to perform in the Courthouse, is not on duty, or does not have proper ID brings a firearm or other prohibited item to the Courthouse, they shall be asked to return the weapon or weapons to their vehicle and secure it. After securing their weapon, the off-duty officer should then proceed through weapons screening and be screened for any additional weapons or contraband.
2. During Courthouse hours, Fire and EMS personnel responding to Courthouse emergencies will be met by Court Security Officers and/or Office personnel at designated doors. Responding personnel are not required to pass through screening. If EMS is required at the Jail, responders will park by the Jail entrance on 6th Street or the sally-port area.
 3. During Courthouse hours, the District Attorney, Circuit Court Judge(s), and Court Commissioner(s) will have electronic key card access to the Courthouse. They are not required to pass through the screening process. If these individuals enter the Courthouse during Courthouse hours through the Secured Entrance, they will be required to be screened.
 4. Clark County transport officers working in their official capacity are not required to pass through the screening process.
 5. Clark County Maintenance employees will have unrestricted key card access to the Courthouse when working in their official capacity. Contractors who are providing maintenance to the Courthouse may have unrestricted access to the Courthouse at Courthouse Security discretion.
 6. If impaneled juries leave the Courthouse at any time during Courthouse hours, special arrangements will be made for screening upon their return. Any questions should be directed to the Courthouse Security

Officer or their designee.

7. SCREENING PROCEDURE

- a. Immediately upon entering the Courthouse, individuals will be met by Office personnel assigned to Courthouse security and will be subject to the following:
 - i. If an individual has any prohibited item in their possession, they must return it to their vehicle before proceeding through the screening process or the item will be confiscated and will not be returned to the individual.
 - ii. All packages, parcels, purses, and briefcases shall be placed either on the screening table or on the x-ray conveyor without being opened. The screening deputy may open and visibly inspect any item. If deemed necessary, it shall also be subject to screening by a hand-held screening device. Visual searches shall be as non-invasive as possible. Screening officers shall limit their search to finding prohibited items.
 - iii. All metal objects (i.e. loose change, keys, watch, pen(s), belts, jewelry, etc.) shall be placed in the provided container to be retrieved after passing through the screening device.
 - iv. Individuals wearing items or clothing with excessive metal (i.e. bib overalls, coveralls, non-removable belts) may be denied access to the Courthouse if the clothing activates the scanning device. The aforementioned items may be removed and placed through the x-ray scanning device.
 - v. Should an individual refuse to allow any package, parcel, purse, or briefcase to be examined or refuses to proceed through the screening device (except for medical reasons as outlined below), the individual may be allowed to terminate the screening process, collect his/her property, and exit the Courthouse.
 - vi. If an individual passes through the screening device and activates the alarm, he/she may be given the opportunity to ascertain whether any metal object may have been overlooked. However, should the individual decide to terminate the screening process, and collect his/her belongings, he/she shall be allowed to do so.
 - vii. An individual who has activated the alarm and still desires entry to the Courthouse shall be asked to re-examine their person for additional metal objects and deposit any found into the provided container. They shall then pass through the screening device again. Should the alarm be activated again, the individual shall be screened using a hand-held screening device and/or a pat down will be conducted
 - viii. Should contraband be discovered, the item(s) shall be confiscated. Proper disposition shall then be made of the contraband as well as the individual transporting it. Should it become necessary, during such an incident, other individuals desire to enter the Courthouse may be instructed to wait outside and the entrance shall be secured by Office personnel until such time as the situation has been resolved. Custodial arrest may occur as the law permits.
 - ix. Should an individual indicate that passing through the screening device would create a potential health hazard (i.e. pacemaker or other valid medical condition), the screening officer may require verification of said condition. The individual shall be allowed to bypass the screening device and may be subject to a pat-down search.
 - x. If by use of the x-ray imaging machine any item appears to contain a dangerous weapon or explosive, the conveyor shall be stopped and the item retained in the machine until deputies can safely retrieve the item. Dangerous weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, knives of any size, illegal weapons, and electronic weapons.

- xi. If any item appears to contain some other unauthorized object or if further inspection is necessary to determine if it contains an unauthorized object, screening staff are authorized to open the item to make an assessment.
- xii. In the rare instance a pat-down search needs to be conducted, every effort shall be made to have this done by the same sex. Corrections personnel can be contacted to assist in this pat-down search.
- xiii. In the event of a power failure or other mechanical failure to the screening equipment, a modified procedure will be performed by Courthouse security personnel to include "wanding" and a visual inspection of belongings. A pat down search may also be conducted if Courthouse screening personnel has concerns.
- xiv. T.V. cameras and other equipment used by media outlets will not be put through the x-ray imaging machine but will be visually inspected. All media personnel and all other media equipment will be screened using standard operating procedures.

8. WEAPONS

- a. The provisions of this section may be modified or suspended to accommodate the lawful activities of participants in judicial matters (i.e. exhibits for court). Authorization to bring items restricted by this policy into the Courthouse shall be evaluated and granted/denied on a case-by-case basis by the Office. The Office shall establish a procedure to accommodate such requests and the safe handling of restricted items while within the Courthouse, Courthouse grounds, and/or parking lot.
- b. Firearms, Edged Weapons and Other Weapons
 - i. Any unauthorized person who is attempting to enter the Courthouse or is present on the Courthouse grounds or parking lot with a firearm, offensive weapon, dangerous weapon, knife of any size, or explosive device shall be denied access to the Courthouse and may be subject for arrest.
 - ii. Courthouse security officers and officers escorting inmates to court shall be authorized to carry weapons in the Courthouse, Courthouse grounds, and parking lot.
 - iii. Corrections Officers are authorized to carry a Taser and pepper spray within the Courthouse when working in their official capacity.
 - iv. Probation Agents are authorized to carry pepper spray within the Courthouse when working in their official capacity.
 - v. Uniformed law enforcement personnel or law enforcement personnel with valid official identification shall be authorized to carry weapons in the Courthouse, Courthouse grounds, and parking lot.
 - 1. Law enforcement personnel involved as a party in a civil proceeding which is not related to his/her employment as a peace officer shall be subject to the provisions in this section.
- c. Personal Protection Devices
 - i. The provisions above shall also apply to the possession of a chemical control agent, electronic control device, or other personal protection device.
 - ii. Unauthorized individuals shall be instructed to secure the chemical control agent, electronic control device, or other personal protection device prior to access to the Courthouse.
- d. Prohibited Items
 - i. Subject to the provisions in this section, the following items are prohibited from the Courthouse:
 - 1. Legal firearms, including pellet and BB guns
 - 2. Facsimile weapons

3. Martial arts weapons
 4. Batons
 5. Brass knuckles
 6. Alcohol
 7. Gun case or holder (empty)
 8. Ammunition
 9. Explosives
 10. Legal knives or edged instruments
 11. Stun Guns
 12. Chemical Mace
 13. Non-working electronic devices
 14. Razor blades
 15. Heavy metal items such as locks, chains, handcuffs, large keys
 16. Animals other than authorized service animals
 17. Combustible gases or flammable liquids
 18. Any item which could be construed as a potential weapon by the Courthouse security officer.
 19. Any item deemed a security threat.
 20. Items such as bicycles and skateboards which are deemed a nuisance will not be permitted in the courthouse.
- ii. The Office shall not either store or voucher any items to be reclaimed later.
- e. Exemptions
- i. Employees may bring in an item that is otherwise unauthorized with the approval of Courthouse Security Officer. They may not bring illegal items into the Courthouse.
 - ii. If an attorney or litigant in a case attempts to bring in an item that is otherwise illegal, a dangerous weapon, or unauthorized, stating the item is necessary to a court proceeding, the Courthouse Security Officer shall temporarily deny entry and further investigate.
 - iii. Attorneys or litigants should contact Office prior to these proceedings so special arrangements can be made to safely and efficiently process these items.
 - iv. Municipal clerks or designee will be authorized to bring in election results within their sealed containers and bags. These officials must identify themselves to Courthouse Security upon entry to the Courthouse. Items related to these election results will not be x-rayed unless authorized by the Courthouse Security Officer. These officials will be screened according to this policy.

9. DELIVERIES AND PACKAGE SCREENING

- a. Persons making deliveries may enter the Courthouse through the Secured Entrance.
- b. Deliveries shall be dropped off and placed in a designated area unless otherwise authorized by Courthouse Security. Courthouse Security may sign for deliveries as needed.
- c. Delivery personnel and packages may be subject to security screening.
- d. Courthouse Security will contact the department about deliveries as time permits. Departments are responsible to pick up and sign for their items.
- e. Deliveries too large for entry through the Secured Entrance shall be directed to Maintenance personnel to make arrangements for the delivery. Such deliveries shall be arranged for delivery/pick-up using the Maintenance garage along 6th Street. Deliveries may be subject to screening including, but not limited to, screening delivery personnel or opening/inspecting sealed packages.

10. SPECIAL PROCEDURES / CIRCUMSTANCES

- a. People with Disabilities
 - i. In general, individuals who enter the Courthouse must proceed through a Magnetometer if available. Therefore, Courthouse Security may ask individuals who present using a wheelchair or an assistive device (such as a scooter or crutches, etc.) or an auxiliary aid (such as an oxygen tank) if they are able to walk through the magnetometer without assistance.
 - ii. When individuals respond that cannot walk through a magnetometer without assistance or that they are unsure whether they can, then Courthouse Security shall conduct a search using a hand held screening device. If the use of a hand held screening device is impractical or fails, then Courthouse Security shall conduct a pat down search.
 - iii. Deputies will deny access to anyone who does not permit a search. Deputies will visually inspect service animals. Deputies will decline to be responsible for an animal while the person who presented with the animal participates in Courthouse activities.
 - iv. All individuals who enter the Courthouse, including individuals with disabilities, will be asked to empty their pockets. Deputies will inspect assistive devices and auxiliary aids for concealed weapons. Deputies will also be aware that assistive devices and auxiliary aids themselves could be used as weapons. If the person does not permit a search, access to the Courthouse may be denied.
- b. Strollers and Child Carriers
 - i. Deputies will not lift or carry children. Adults with either strollers or child carriers will be screened by standard procedures. Children in this equipment will either walk through or be carried through by the person accompanying the child. If the person with the child refuses to remove a child from the stroller or carrier, access may be denied.
- c. Jury Selection
 - i. Once through the screening process, Courthouse Security will direct potential jurors to the jury selection room near the Circuit Court.

11. PUBLIC AND AFTER HOURS USE

- a. Afterhours access/use of the Courthouse by the public or an external entity/ organization will only be authorized by the Administrative Coordinator and the Office. This provision does not apply to Clark County governing body meetings and employees. All individuals entering after hours shall enter using the East street level doors for the Jail entrance along 6th Street unless otherwise posted. Clark County Dispatch will have control of this entrance and will allow the public access to the Courthouse once authorized by Office personnel.
- b. Requests for afterhours access/use as stated above shall be made by completing and submitting the After Hours Request Form to the Administrative Coordinator for review/action. Permission will be granted on a case by case basis. The Administrative Coordinator shall notify the Office of any afterhours access/use that is granted.
- c. Courthouse Security shall staff the Secured Entrance for all Clark County Board of Supervisors meetings that are held after Courthouse hours. All persons are required to enter at the Secured Entrance and are subject to the screening process.

12. SECURITY CAMERAS

- a. The interior and exterior of the Courthouse will be subject to 24/7/365 video surveillance through security cameras.
- b. The Sheriff is the custodian of Courthouse surveillance video. If access to

surveillance video is desired, requests shall be made to the Office. Access to surveillance video will be granted at the discretion of the Sheriff or designee and, if the request involves a personnel matter, the Personnel Manager. Requests will be processed with the assistance of Clark County Information Technology.

13. SIGNAGE

- a. The goal of a security system is to deter incidents. Proper signage indicating security measures and general guidance shall be installed in the Courthouse. Topics for such signage include, but is not limited to, screening expectations/processes; maps/directories; prohibited items; and use of security cameras.

14. PUBLIC NOTICE

- a. A notice that outlines Courthouse screening policy shall be posted and made available.

15. VIOLATION

- a. Violation of this policy may result in arrest, removal from the Courthouse, or, in the event of a personnel matter, disciplinary action.