

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

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ACTING ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR
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Directive # 15-06

[Questions or comments may be directed to
609-984-8241 or 609-633-3902.]

**To: ASSIGNMENT JUDGES
 PRESIDING JUDGES-MUNICIPAL COURTS**

From: PHILIP S. CARCHMAN, J.A.D.

Subj: STATEWIDE MUNICIPAL COURT SECURITY POLICY

Date: AUGUST 7, 2006

Background

The Supreme Court adopted a Statewide Municipal Court Security Policy ("Policy") on July 6, 2006. This directive promulgates that Policy.

The Policy was developed by the Conferences of Presiding Judges-Municipal Courts and the Municipal Division Managers and endorsed by the Administrative Council and the Judicial Council. The Policy requires every New Jersey municipal court (1) to create a local municipal court security committee and (2) to develop a local municipal court security plan. Each municipal court is required to submit its plan to the Assignment Judge for review. Each such plan must address the series of security measures enumerated in the attached "New Jersey Municipal Court Schedule of Protection."

Statewide Municipal Court Security Policy

The Statewide Municipal Court Security Policy requires the following:

- A. Each municipal court must adopt a detailed Municipal Court Security Plan, the preparation of which will be coordinated by the municipal court judge and court administrator in consultation with the local law enforcement authority (municipal police or, if there is no municipal police

- department, the State police) and the appropriate municipal officials. That plan, at a minimum, must address each component of the "New Jersey Municipal Court Schedule of Protection" (attached).
- B. Each Municipal Court Security Plan must be submitted to the Assignment Judge of the vicinage for review. Upon request, the Municipal Division Manager of the vicinage, in conjunction with the Court Access Services Unit in the Administrative Office of the Courts, will provide technical assistance to the municipal court where needed. The Municipal Division Manager should advise the municipal court of any security deficiencies observed during visits to the court. The court, in turn, should advise the municipality of the deficiencies. **The Municipal Court Security Plan must be submitted to the Assignment Judge within six months of the date of this Directive, that is, by Monday, February 5, 2007.**
- C. Each court's Municipal Court Security Plan must provide for the establishment of a Municipal Court Security Committee to help implement the plan and review municipal court security on a continuing basis, including an annual risk assessment. The local committee should include representation from the municipal court, the municipal government, the law enforcement authority and other local agencies such as fire, medical and the county bar association, as well as representation from the vicinage Municipal Division Manager's Office.
- D. Municipal Court staff must report all security, safety or workplace violence incidents to the Municipal Court Director or Municipal Court Administrator immediately. The Municipal Court Director/Administrator will complete and submit a Judiciary Security Incident Report Form (attached) to the vicinage Municipal Division Manager. The Municipal Division Manager must submit the report to the vicinage Workplace Violence Liaison, who, in turn, will forward it to the Trial Court Administrator (TCA) and to the Court Access Services Unit in the Administrative Office of the Courts. The statewide policy requires that such reports reach the TCA and the Court Access Services Unit within 48 hours of the incident. Local law enforcement should also advise the Municipal Court Director or Municipal Court Administrator of any such incidents to ensure that all such incidents are included in the incident reporting database.

Considerations When Preparing a Local Municipal Court Security Plan

The municipal courts have a wide range of security needs, depending on the size, location, demographics, building, and facilities of each municipal court. Addressing security

issues requires the cooperation and interaction of the municipal court judge, the municipal court staff, the local security provider (municipal police or State Police), and the municipal governing body.

A local court security plan must take into account three basic components of security: (1) architectural (facility features or modifications); (2) technological (equipment and devices); and (3) operational (security personnel, policy and procedures). These security components are addressed in detail in the 2001 Model Court Security Plan, which was provided to each municipal court on a confidential basis. In assessing the municipal court's security needs, the municipality and the judge should reach out to the local security provider for that court. They also may consult with the county sheriff, who has experience providing security for the Superior Court, for expertise and guidance on specific equipment and procedures.

The goal is to have a security plan that meets the specific needs of the court and that can be implemented by the municipality. A thorough risk assessment should be conducted as a prerequisite to completing the final local court security plan. In developing the local security plan, five areas of security should be considered, starting from outside the building and working inward:

1. Perimeter (parking lots to physical security of the building exterior);
2. Access control (control/monitoring of entrances, exits, and weapons screening);
3. Circulation control (appropriate separation of public, prisoners, judges and staff);
4. Courtroom security (order, control of prisoners, etc.); and
5. Emergency procedures

The Municipal Court's daily operating practices also should be assessed to identify activities, such as money-handling and bank deposits, for which preventative countermeasures should be developed.

Implementation

Each Assignment Judge should immediately formally transmit a copy of this Directive to each Municipal Court in his or her vicinage, informing the court of the requirement to submit a local Municipal Court Security Plan to the Assignment Judge and the date by which to do so. Simultaneously, the Administrative Director of the Courts will communicate with the governing body of each municipality in the state advising them of the Supreme Court's

adoption of the Statewide Municipal Court Security Policy so that each governing body is aware of the need to provide support for the local Municipal Court Security Plan.

Questions regarding this Directive may be directed to Robert W. Smith, Assistant Director, Municipal Court Services, at (609) 984-8241 or Ernest Comer, Chief, Court Access Services, at (609) 633-3902.

P.S.C.

attachments

cc: Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz
Theodore J. Fetter, Deputy Administrative Director
AOC Directors and Assistant Directors
Trial Court Administrators
Municipal Division Managers
Gerald A. Williams, Administrator
Ernest J. Comer, Chief, Court Access Services
Arlene M. Bonville, Court Access Services
Carol A. Welsch, Municipal Court Services
Steven D. Bonville, Special Assistant
Francis W. Hoeber, Special Assistant

NEW JERSEY MUNICIPAL COURT SCHEDULE OF PROTECTION

- Armed law enforcement officer assigned to the courtroom.
- Weapons screening before entry into the courtroom.
- Duress alarm (silent) at the bench and at the payment window to summon law enforcement.
- Emergency egress route from the courtroom for the judge and court staff.
- Emergency response plans for all types of incidents (bomb threats, hostage, natural disasters, etc.).
- Immediate response force identified to respond to municipal court emergencies.
- Ballistic shielding in the judge's bench.
- Ballistic shielding and bullet-proof glass for payment window.
- Window protection or coverings to prevent line of sight into the courtroom.
- Controlled light switches for the courtroom.



NEW JERSEY JUDICIARY Incident Report Form

CHECK ONE: WORKPLACE VIOLENCE SECURITY

Fill Out If: you are a judiciary employee / manager or sheriff's officer.
When: you witness, are involved in, or are informed of a security incident such as a threat, assault, display or use of a weapon, escape from custody, theft, disorderly conduct, or disruptive behavior.
Where: in or around the courthouse, judiciary facility or other location where judicial programs operate, including parking areas, field locations and during official travel.
File Report: with immediate supervisor / manager, or Workplace Violence Liaison. **THIS IS A CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENT.**

COURT / AGENCY / VICINAGE DATE OF INCIDENT TIME OF INCIDENT AM PM DAY OF THE WEEK

LOCATION / ADDRESS OF INCIDENT: STREET ADDRESS CITY

COURT HOUSE ANNEX COUNTY LEASED PARKING AREA STATE LEASED / OWNED OTHER COUNTY OWNED OTHER _____

COURT / AGENCY WHERE INCIDENT OCCURRED

CRIMINAL DIV. SPECIAL CIVIL COURT ADMIN. FAMILY DIV. MUNICIPAL COURT SUPREME COURT CIVIL DIV. TAX COURT

APPELLATE DIV. SHERIFF'S OFFICE PROBATION AOC SUPERIOR COURT CLERK'S OFFICE OTHER _____

AREA INCIDENT OCCURRED

ENTRANCE # _____ SCREENING POINT # _____ WAITING AREA # _____ PUBLIC HALLWAY # _____ ELEVATOR # _____ COURTROOM # _____ RESTRICTED AREA # _____

CHAMBERS # _____ CONFERENCE RM # _____ STAIRWELL # _____ OFFICE # _____ HOLDING CELL # _____ OTHER _____

TYPE OF INCIDENT

ASSAULT VERBAL THREAT MAIL THREAT DAMAGE / VANDALISM ESCAPE FROM CUSTODY DISORDERLY PHONE THREAT

BOMB THREAT THEFT FIRE ALARM OTHER (be specific) _____

WAS THERE AN EVACUATION? YES NO

INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED - Indicate: Subject (S) or Victim/Target (V)

DEFENDANT	___	___	WITNESS	___	___	SHERIFF'S OFFICER	___	___	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____
PLAINTIFF	___	___	ATTORNEY	___	___	TROOPER / GUARD	___	___	_____
RELATIVE	___	___	JUROR	___	___	JUDICIARY EMPLOYEE	___	___	_____
SPECTATOR	___	___	JUDGE	___	___	<input type="checkbox"/> CURRENT <input type="checkbox"/> FORMER	___	___	_____

SECURITY VULNERABILITY INDICATED? (TO BE COMPLETED BY SHERIFF / AOC) SUBJECT ARRESTED / DETAINED?

YES NO YES NO

WEAPON USED, FOUND, DISPLAYED? IF YES, PLEASE DESCRIBE

YES NO _____

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

REPORT SUBMITTED BY:

PRINT NAME: _____	DATE	PHONE NUMBER
SIGNATURE: _____		

MUNICIPAL DIVISION MANAGER (IF APPLICABLE)

PRINT NAME: _____	DATE	COUNTY
SIGNATURE: _____		

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE LIAISON

PRINT NAME: _____	DATE	PHONE NUMBER
SIGNATURE: _____		

STOP! HAVE ALL QUESTIONS ON THIS FORM BEEN ANSWERED? YES NO