

MEMORANDUM

March 5, 2025

TO: Public Safety (PS) Committee
FROM: Logan Anbinder, Legislative Analyst
SUBJECT: **Briefing - Safety and Security of Judicial Facilities**
PURPOSE: Receive briefing and hold discussion

Expected Attendees:

- Hon. James A. Bonifant, Administrative Judge, Montgomery County Circuit Court
- Hon. Debra L. Dwyer, Associate Judge, Montgomery County Circuit Court
- Maxwell Uy, Sheriff, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office (MCSO)
- Christopher Feldenzer, Asst. Sheriff for Administration, MCSO
- Keena Jones, Asst. Sheriff for Operations, MCSO
- Robert Lehman, Chief Deputy, MCSO
- Chad Aloï, Division Commander, Court Services Division, MCSO
- James Johnson, Division Commander, Administrative Services Division, MCSO
- Tim Sheridan, Court Administrator, Montgomery County Circuit Court
- Greg Ossont, Deputy Director, Department of General Services
- Stephen Nichols, Deputy Director, Engineering & Central Services, District Court of Maryland
- Stephen Barlow, Security Manager, District Court of Maryland

Overview

In December 2024, the State Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities released its report and corresponding recommendations. These recommendations focused on three main areas:

- (1) adequate security personnel,
- (2) secure parking, and
- (3) secure public spaces.

The purpose of this briefing is to provide the Public Safety Committee with an opportunity to review and discuss the Task Force's recommendations with regards to the County's judicial facilities.

Summary of Task Force Recommendations

In 2024, the General Assembly enacted, and Governor Moore signed, the Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson Judicial Security Act. One provision of this act was the creation of a state task force that was charged with (1) identifying minimum requirements for courthouse safety, (2) developing a legislative proposal to ensure that the requirements identified can be met, and (3) identifying physical security deficiencies in courthouses and developing a plan to address these deficiencies. The Task Force identified three main areas of focus: adequate security personnel, secure parking, and secure public spaces.

Adequate Security Personnel

The Task Force recommended minimum acceptable standards for security personnel based on national best practices, which include:

- At least one court security officer (CSO) present in the courtroom whenever a court proceeding is being held
- A second CSO assigned to court proceedings in which:
 - An in-custody participant is present,
 - There is a proceeding that may result in a participant being remanded to custody, and/or
 - The presiding officer or security personnel have reason to believe that additional security may be necessary
- An additional “roving” CSO on each floor with one or more courtrooms or judicial chambers

Additionally, all CSOs and other armed personnel should meet the requirements for a Special Police Officer (SPO) as approved by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission, or for a sworn law enforcement officer as required by the hiring authority, with additional court-specific training.

This standard is currently met by the District Court. The standard is not currently being met in more than half of the State’s circuit courts, including the Montgomery County Circuit Court or the other three largest jurisdictions. The Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO), which is responsible for providing security in the circuit court, estimates that in order to meet this proposed recommendation, the office would need to significantly increase staffing, with attendant increased costs for training, equipment, and workspace. MCSO is an accredited law enforcement agency through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), a process designed to ensure that the agency is adhering to contemporary best practices for policies and procedures.

Additionally, in the District Court, the Task Force recommended converting contract bailiffs to full-time employee status.

Entry & Parking

The Task Force noted that best practice is to provide secure, attached, underground parking for all judicial officers, and recommended that all new or expanded facilities include secure, attached parking, ideally underground, for every judicial officer. Since this is not feasible for most existing facilities, the

Task Force recommended that each jurisdiction that does not have secure attached parking work with the Administrative Office of the Courts to implement measures such as enclosure of the parking area, quick-lift gate systems, video intercom systems, lighting, call box and key card systems, and security personnel escorts of judicial officers to and from the area.

Secure Public Spaces

To maintain safe public areas of judicial facilities, the Task Force recommended hardening facilities with reinforced glass, including level 4 bulletproof glass in vulnerable areas, installing video surveillance in all public areas and hallways, securing courtroom furniture to the floor to the extent possible, and reinforcing the judicial officer’s bench with bullet proof materials and locating it a safe distance from trial tables and the witness stand. Additionally, the Task Force recommended that judicial officers not be required to enter public areas of the courthouse in connection with ordinary duties, and, if necessary to do so, that they be accompanied or monitored by security personnel. Finally, the Task Force emphasized the importance of proper security screening.

Legislative Proposals

In support of the above recommendations, the Task Force issued a number of proposals for legislation. To meet the adequate personnel standards, the Task Force recommended a State mandate to provide adequate personnel, supported by transitional State funding. The Task Force did not recommend retrofitting courthouses that lack secure attached parking, but did recommend that the State provide two separate non-lapsing funds, each phased in over the same five-year period, for one-time expenses related to parking- and public area-related recommended security improvements, respectively.

MCPD and Rockville PD Calls for Service

To better understand the role of external law enforcement organizations in maintaining judicial safety, Council staff conducted an analysis of calls for service to the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) and the Rockville Police Department from each of the two court buildings in Rockville over the past four full calendar years.¹

Table 1: Courthouse Calls for Service by Calendar Year

	Location		Responding Dept.		Total
	Circuit Court	District Court	MCPD	Rockville PD	
2021	26	46	26	46	72
2022	22	63	32	53	85
2023	28	67	35	60	95
2024	18	83	29	72	101

Each year from 2021 through 2024, the number of calls for service to MCPD and Rockville PD has increased, driven by an increased number of calls to the District Court building. Notably, calendar years 2021 and 2022 correspond with the court system’s phased coronavirus reopening plan, which limited the

¹ This analysis excludes TRU (telephone reporting unit) calls, which do not require an in-person officer response.

number of matters brought before the courts in those years and likely resulted in a reduced number of people visiting the court buildings.

Potential Discussion Questions

The Committee may wish to discuss the following:

- Whether the Task Force’s recommendations align with discussants’ experiences as judicial security professionals in their respective court buildings.
- Additional technology and/or physical barriers, if any, that would be useful in promoting safety in and around the court buildings, especially in light of ongoing staffing challenges.
- General information regarding discussants’ experiences with types of judicial safety threats and challenges.

This packet contains:

Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities Report & Recommendations

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TASK FORCE TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF JUDICIAL FACILITIES
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS

DECEMBER 2024



Supreme Court of Maryland

Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal Building
361 Rowe Boulevard
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Matthew J. Fader
Chief Justice

(410) 260-3725

December 30, 2024

The Honorable William C. Ferguson IV
President
Maryland State Senate
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker
Maryland House of Delegates
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Final Report of the Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities

Dear President Ferguson and Speaker Jones:

In the wake of the murder of Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson, the Maryland General Assembly enacted, and Governor Moore signed, the Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson Judicial Security Act, *Senate Bill 575 – Court Personnel – Protection of Personal Information*, Md. Code Ann., Cts. & Jud. Proc. §§ 3-2301–3-2304; 3-2401–3-2407. Among other provisions, the Act created the *Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities*.

The Act charged the Task Force to (1) identify minimum requirement for courthouse, (2) develop a legislative proposal to ensure that the requirements identified can be met, and (3) identify physical security deficiencies that currently exist in courthouses and develop a plan to address these deficiencies. As required by the Act, and in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the Task Force is pleased to present its findings and recommendations. The enclosed report was approved unanimously by the Task Force membership.

Please note that this Report includes sensitive and confidential information. A redacted version will be provided publicly.

I know you share the goal of ensuring that Maryland's judicial facilities are safe and secure for all who enter them. I appreciate your attention to this important issue.

Very truly yours,

Matthew J. Fader
Chief Justice

The Honorable William Ferguson IV
The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
December 30, 2024
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ENCLOSURE

CC:

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable Guy J. Guzzone, Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
The Honorable Luke H. Clippinger, Chair, House Judiciary Committee
The Honorable Benjamin S. Barnes, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable John P. Morrissey, Chief Judge, District Court of Maryland
The Honorable Audrey J. S. Carrión, Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Judges
The Honorable Fred S. Hecker, Vice-Chair, Conference of Circuit Court Judges
The Honorable E. Gregory Wells, Chief Judge, Appellate Court of Maryland
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the wake of the murder of Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson, the Maryland General Assembly enacted the Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson Judicial Security Act. In addition to provisions protecting the personally identifiable information of judicial officers,¹ the Act created this Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities. As required by the Act, this Report identifies minimum requirements for courthouse safety in identified areas, current deficiencies in those areas, and recommended legislative proposals to ensure the minimum requirements can be met.

The Report addresses three main areas of focus: adequate security personnel, secure parking, and secure public spaces.

Adequate Security Personnel

The Task Force identified minimum standards for providing **adequate security personnel** in courthouses and courtrooms, including that at least one qualified Court Security Officer (“CSO”) be present in every courtroom in which a judicial proceeding is occurring, with a second CSO present whenever the proceeding involves an individual who is in or may be taken into custody or where there is reason to believe additional security may be necessary. This standard is focused on meeting the security needs of everyone who enters a judicial facility.

That standard is currently being met by the District Court of Maryland and both appellate courts in all of their facilities. It is also being met in some of the State’s circuit courts but is not being met in more than half of those circuit courts, including all of the four largest jurisdictions. Many courtrooms in the State do not have CSOs present even during family law proceedings. Unlike the District Court and the appellate courthouses, security in circuit courthouses is provided by the Sheriff of each county and Baltimore City, with funding appropriated annually by each jurisdiction’s legislative body.

To meet the minimum standard for adequate security personnel in courtrooms, the Task Force recommends that the General Assembly adopt the recommended standard and require each jurisdiction to meet it. To provide sufficient time for Sheriffs to hire the necessary personnel, the Task Force recommends that the standard be phased in as follows: (1) require that the standard be met for FY2027 in courtrooms hearing criminal, family, and juvenile matters; and (2) require that the standard be met for FY2029 in all courtrooms (extending to civil non-family and Orphans’ Court matters). To provide support for local

¹ For the purposes of this report, judicial officers include current or retired: (1) justices and judges of courts established under Article IV of the Maryland Constitution; (2) magistrates appointed by a circuit court of the State; and (3) commissioners of the District Court of Maryland. *See* Md. Code Ann., Cts. & Jud. Proc. § 3-2301(e) (2020 Repl.; 2024 Supp.).

jurisdictions during the transition period, the Task Force recommends that the General Assembly provide funding support over a five-year period, beginning in FY2027 and diminishing each year until being phased out entirely in FY2032.

Secure Parking

The Task Force identified minimum standards for providing **secure parking** for judicial officers. The best practice is to provide secure parking for judicial officers that is attached to the courthouse and provides secure entry directly into the courthouse. In the absence of secure attached parking, the Task Force identified minimum standards for appropriate security in other circumstances, including by enclosing and restricting access to areas where judicial officers park, especially through stone fencing; providing video intercom systems; adding lighting, call boxes, and keycard systems; and ensuring that security personnel are available to escort to and from parking areas.

Fewer than a third of the courthouses in the State provide secure attached parking.

The Task Force recognizes that it would be cost prohibitive and impracticable to retrofit most existing courthouses with attached secure parking. The Task Force recommends that any new courthouses be constructed with secure attached parking for judicial officers. For all existing facilities that do not meet that standard, the Task Force recommends that each court determine how best to meet the alternative minimum standards identified above. The Task Force estimates the cost of coming into compliance with those standards as \$15,549,413. The Task Force recommends that the General Assembly appropriate 20% of that amount annually for five years into a non-lapsing fund, to be used exclusively for grants to cover the cost of meeting the applicable standards. The grant program would be administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Secure Public Spaces

The Task Force identified minimum standards for providing secure public spaces. Some of those standards, such as universal screening of individuals entering court facilities, are policy matters that can largely be implemented directly by the Judiciary and, in the circuit courts, its security partners. Another, which concerns having CSOs available to provide security in public areas of the courthouses, is addressed by the recommendations concerning adequate security personnel. The Task Force also identified minimum standards concerning the hardening of courthouses to ensure the security of all individuals who enter public areas of court facilities, including: reinforced and bullet resistant windows and doors; fixed barriers between public and staff; and reinforced courtroom furniture & judges' benches.

The District Court of Maryland, following incidents including gunfire and a Molotov cocktail directed at court facilities, has been engaged in an ongoing program to harden its courthouses for several years. Several circuit courts have also made progress in that regard. However, substantial deficiencies remain, especially in the areas of ballistic glass and ballistic film.

The Task Force estimates that the cost of coming into compliance with the identified standards as \$41,557,625. The Task Force recommends that the General Assembly appropriate 20% of that amount annually for five years into a non-lapsing fund, to be used exclusively for grants to cover the cost of meeting the applicable standards. The grant program would be administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

I. Summary of Urgent Need to Ensure Safety of Judicial Facilities

On October 19, 2023, Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson was murdered by a man whose family law case Judge Wilkinson had heard earlier that day. Upset by Judge Wilkinson's custody ruling, the assailant went to the judge's home and shot him dead in his driveway while Judge Wilkinson's wife and one of his children were inside. Other high-profile attacks on judicial officers include: (1) in January 2024, a defendant leapt over a defense table and judge's bench in a Las Vegas courtroom to attack a Nevada state court judge; (2) in June 2022, retired Wisconsin state court Judge John Roemer was gunned down by an individual who had appeared in his court in a criminal case in 2005; (3) in July 2020, a disgruntled litigant targeted United States District Court Judge Esther Salas at her home in New Jersey, murdering Judge Salas's son Daniel and shooting her husband Mark; and (4) in November 2015, Texas state court Judge Julie Kocurek was shot multiple times but survived an assassination attempt at the driveway of her home by an assailant who had appeared before her in court. Although not as recent, Washington County also experienced an earlier attack on a judicial officer. In 1989, a pipe bomb in a package exploded in the apartment of Judge John Corderman in Hagerstown. Judge Corderman sustained shrapnel wounds to his right hand and abdomen and partial hearing loss.

Although all but one of these high-profile attacks all occurred outside of judicial facilities, the risks to the security of judicial facilities has been increasing as well. In November 2021, a gunman fired numerous rounds into the lobby of the District Court courthouse in Essex. Although the attack occurred at night, two District Court Commissioners were present. In February 2024, a gunman fired a round that hit the District Court courthouse in Towson. Two Commissioners were present. Just this month, a disgruntled litigant violently assaulted a Commissioner outside of a District Court building in Baltimore City. And in April 2022, an assailant hurled a Molotov Cocktail at the District Court courthouse in Catonsville. Security officers also regularly find weapons on individuals entering court facilities, including handguns, knives, and smaller blades.

In one of the most devastating crimes in modern Maryland history, in June 2018 a gunman attacked the Annapolis offices of *The Capital Gazette* newspaper killing five

journalists. The same day, the gunman sent a threatening letter to a judge of the Appellate Court of Maryland. His purported motive for the shooting was, in part, due to an opinion written by that judge. Before he decided to carry out these murders, the gunman had planned to target the Courts of Appeal building.

The State has an obligation to ensure the security of court facilities for the safety of everyone who enters court facilities. Judicial officers are at the greatest risk because of the decisions they make. They are not, however, the only possible targets of violence in court facilities. Nor is the possibility of violence limited to criminal cases, as emotions can run high in all types of matters. Indeed, state court systems have found, based on data they collected, that family law cases are among the most likely to lead to violence against judges, attorneys, and litigants.

In the wake of Judge Wilkinson's assassination, the General Assembly authorized this Task Force to study and make recommendations concerning three specific areas in which the State has work to do to meet minimum acceptable security standards: adequate security personnel in judicial facilities, secure parking for judicial officers, and secure public spaces. The legislation creating the Task Force mandated that the Task Force report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly on or before January 1, 2025.

The Task Force began its work in June 2024. Given the short amount of time the Task Force had to make its initial report and recommendations to the General Assembly, the Judiciary tasked an internal security task force with doing advance work to inform the efforts of the Task Force. Two efforts of that internal task force were particularly important in informing the Task Force's work. First, working with groups like the National Center for State Courts, the internal task force's Best Practices workgroup investigated nationwide standards for security at judicial facilities, including both best practices and minimum acceptable standards. Second, the Court Security workgroup oversaw a thorough assessment of security needs of all court facilities in the State. The workgroup developed a standardized protocol for assessing security in all court locations, oversaw the assessment process, analyzed and compared courthouse needs, determined priorities, and supported the implementation of court security review.

II. The Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities

Prompted by Judge Wilkinson's murder, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 575/House Bill 664, the Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson Judicial Security Act, during the 2024 legislative session. The House and Senate voted almost unanimously to pass the bill. Governor Wes Moore signed the Act into law on May 9, 2024 as Chapters 414 and 415 of the 2024 Laws of Maryland.

The Act addresses security concerns in three ways. First, it authorizes judicial officers and certain family members to request that government and private entities remove or refrain from publishing personally identifiable information on the internet or social

media networks. Second, it creates an address confidentiality program to shield personally identifiable information of protected individuals beyond the internet and social media networks. Third, it formed and authorized the work of the Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities.

The membership of the Task Force is identified at the front of this report. It includes members of all four levels of the Judiciary; a member of each chamber of the General Assembly; executive branch leadership from the Maryland State Police, Department of General Services, Department of Budget and Management, and Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; county leadership; sheriffs; chiefs of police; a clerk of court; Judiciary security leadership; and representatives of the Maryland Association of Counties, the Maryland State Bar Association; the Public Defender; the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association, and the Conference of Orphans' Court Judges.

The General Assembly specifically charged the Task Force to:

- i. Identify minimum requirements for courthouse safety, including:
 1. the minimum number of security officers that should be present in each type of judicial proceeding in a circuit court or in the District Court;
 2. the minimum qualifications for security officers;
 3. minimum standards for secure entry and exit of judicial officers from court facilities, including for secure parking and, if such parking is not connected to the courthouse, secure transit between parking and the courthouse; and
 4. minimum standards for safe public areas of courthouses, including for the protection of judicial officers who are required to enter public areas of the courthouse in the performance of their public duties;
- ii. Develop a legislative proposal to ensure that the requirements identified above can be met; and
- iii. Identify physical security deficiencies that currently exist in courthouses and develop a plan to address these deficiencies.

Pursuant to § 4 of the Act, the Task Force was created effective June 1, 2024. The full Task Force met [six times](#) between July and December 2024. The Task Force also formed three subcommittees to address three different areas of analysis, each of which met multiple times: Standards, Costs/Resources, and Proposed Solutions. The work of each subcommittee built on the one before it. The reports of the respective committees are attached to this Report in Appendix B.

III. Summary of Courthouse Funding & Security Personnel

The Judiciary's funding and security structure presents challenges in ensuring appropriate levels of security at all judicial facilities. Specifically, there are 26 different entities responsible for providing security at various judicial facilities, including (1) the District Court of Maryland at District Court courthouses, (2) the Security Administration Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts at appellate and administrative facilities, and (3) the 24 elected sheriffs in each county and Baltimore City for their respective circuit courts. Additionally, Maryland courthouses range in age from three years old to more than 200 years old. As a result, specific court needs can vary widely across different facilities.

Appellate Courts. The Supreme Court of Maryland and the Appellate Court of Maryland are both housed in the Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal building in Annapolis, which was built in 1972. These courts and their security are funded centrally through the Judiciary budget and are protected by Judiciary Special Police Officers from the Security Administrative Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Circuit Courts. Circuit courts are housed in individual courthouses in each county. These courts are funded primarily by county budgets. Security is also funded by county budgets and is provided by the Sheriffs of each county and Baltimore City. The newest courthouse is the Circuit Court for Howard County, which opened in 2022. At least portions of three courthouses are more than 200 years old (Anne Arundel County, St. Mary's County, Talbot County). In addition to judges in the circuit courts, magistrates are judicial officers who operate in circuit courthouses. Magistrates make findings of fact, conclusions of law and recommendations for court orders in certain contentious family law and juvenile matters including divorce, custody, visitation, child support, juvenile delinquency, and child welfare.

District Courts. The District Court of Maryland is a statewide unified court system that is broken into twelve Districts. There is at least one courthouse in each county. This court and its security are funded centrally through the Judiciary budget and are protected by bailiffs hired by the District Court and, in some cases, supplemented by contracted security. In addition to judges in the District Court, court commissioners are judicial officers who operate in courthouses or standalone facilities. Commissioners handle interim peace, protective and extreme risk protective order hearings, make public defender application determinations, process requests for criminal charges, and conduct initial appearances for individuals who have been arrested. Commissioners operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The District Court operates in 33 courthouses statewide. The buildings range in age from four to 120 years old.

Orphans' Court. The Orphans' Court is Maryland's probate court and presides over the administration of estates. Three Orphans' Court judges sit in Baltimore City and all but three of Maryland's counties. Most Orphans' Courts sit in the county circuit court facilities, but a couple are housed in non-Judiciary facilities. Orphans' Courts range from

sitting five days a week in large jurisdictions to a half-day a week in smaller jurisdictions. Orphans' Courts are funded by county budgets with security provided by Sheriffs.

ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Minimum Acceptable Standards

The Act required the Task Force to identify minimum acceptable security standards in three categories: (a) personnel (minimum acceptable numbers and minimum acceptable qualifications for security personnel); (b) secure parking for judicial officers; and (c) safety in public areas. The Task Force did so through research and consultation with national experts on security of judicial facilities, including the National Center for State Courts, see Appendix E.

A. Minimum Acceptable Standards for Personnel

Numbers. National best practice for courtroom security calls for at least two Court Security Officers (“CSOs”) in every courtroom where a proceeding is occurring. The minimal acceptable standard is:

- At least one CSO present in the courtroom whenever there is any court proceeding being held. A second CSO shall be assigned: (1) when there is an in-custody participant present or in any proceeding that may result in a participant being remanded to custody; and (2) when the presiding officer or security personnel have reason to believe that additional security may be necessary. Judges and magistrates should not enter a courtroom for a proceeding without a CSO present.
- On every floor of a court facility with one or more courtrooms or judicial chambers, at least one additional CSO should be dedicated as a “rover” to ensure security in the public area and to assist, as needed, with unanticipated needs in the courtroom.

Qualifications. In addition to numbers, it is critical that security personnel be qualified and able to handle security needs that may arise. The minimum acceptable qualifications for security officers include: All CSOs and other armed personnel shall meet the requirements for a Special Police Officer (“SPO”), see [link](#) and Appendix C, or a sworn law enforcement officer as may be required by the hiring authority, with additional court-specific training (including on behavioral health matters that may manifest in individuals in court facilities).

B. Minimum Acceptable Entry & Parking Standards

Minimum standards for secure entry and exit of judicial officers from court facilities, including for secure parking and, if such parking is not connected to the courthouse, secure transit between parking and the courthouse:

- Best practice is to provide secure, attached, underground parking for all judicial officers. That practice is not feasible for most existing judicial facilities. As a result, where that is not available, a custom, practicable response is needed.

- All new or expanded judicial facilities should incorporate secure, attached (ideally underground) parking for every judicial officer.
- For existing facilities, security measures should be implemented to surveil and prevent unauthorized access to judicial parking areas and provide safe transit between parking areas and the courthouse through physical measures or security personnel. Each jurisdiction that does not have secure attached parking for judicial officers should constitute a security committee to work in coordination with the Administrative Office of the Courts to assess the viability of meeting acceptable standards through additional measures, which may include:
 - Enclosing and otherwise restricting access to parking areas, especially through stone fencing
 - Quick-lift gate systems
 - Video intercom systems
 - Lighting
 - Call box and key card systems, and
 - Ensuring security personnel are available to escort judicial officers to and from parking areas.

C. Minimum Standards for Safe Public Areas

Minimum standards for safe public areas of courthouses, including for the protection of judicial officers who are required to enter public areas of the courthouse in the performance of their public duties:

- As noted above, in addition to CSO presence in courtrooms, at least one CSO should be present on every floor of a court facility with one or more courtrooms or judicial chambers dedicated as a “rover” to ensure security in the public area and to assist, as needed, from one courtroom to the next.
- Hardening facilities
 - All glass panels used in entrance areas should be minimally reinforced with ballistic film. Level 4 bullet proof glass should be considered in areas deemed highly vulnerable including first floor and vulnerable upper floor windows in courtrooms.
 - Video surveillance should be installed in all public areas and hallways. This should be monitored by the security command center at all times while the courthouse is open.
 - Courtroom furniture should, to the extent possible, be secured to the floor. The judicial officer’s bench should be reinforced with bullet proof materials, raised, and a safe distance back from trial tables and the witness stand.

- Panic or duress alarms, relayed to law enforcement for immediate response, should be installed at the judicial officer’s bench and chambers, the clerk’s seat, and the jury room, if any.
- Mobility of Judicial Officers
 - Judicial officers should not have to enter public areas of the courthouses in connection with ordinary duties or, if they do, should have security available to monitor and, where appropriate, provide an escort.
 - A judicial officer should have a direct path to evacuate from the bench that may be secured after escape.
- Everyone, including judicial officers, elected officials, court staff, attorneys, and police officers, entering a court building should be properly screened before access to any judicial facility. Judicial officers and court employees should gain access into the courthouse through separate and restricted entrances for use by designated personnel or, where the building does not permit a separate entrance, through a separate security line once inside.²

II. Assessment of Deficiencies Identified Based on Minimum Standards

Many judicial facilities around the State are not meeting the minimum acceptable standards in one or more ways.

A. Personnel

Appellate Courts. The appellate courts are located in one courthouse and have sufficient security personnel to meet applicable standards. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Anticipated Costs: None.

Circuit Courts. A majority of circuit courts are not meeting the minimum acceptable standards for security personnel. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Task Force attempted to estimate the number of security personnel that would be necessary in each jurisdiction to cover courtroom and rover needs based on a county-by-county statistical analysis of courtroom usage in the State, see Appendix D. To arrive at the number of security personnel each jurisdiction would need to have on staff to meet those needs, the Task Force applied a

² The Maryland State Bar Association has advocated for permitting attorney access to court facilities through security lines that are separate from the general public. That was outside the scope of the Task Force’s responsibilities and will be addressed separately by the Judiciary.

multiplier of 1.5 to the number of personnel who would be needed on an average day to account for vacation, sick leave, need fluctuation, etc. Based on that analysis, and on a survey of Sheriffs concerning their existing personnel, the Task Force estimates that there is a shortage [REDACTED].

Notably, the Task Force was not able to determine the degree to which the issue in each jurisdiction was a lack of PINs for court security or PINs remaining unfilled. The Task Force recognizes that Sheriff's Offices, like other law enforcement entities in the State and elsewhere, are experiencing difficulty in hiring qualified individuals. As a result, addressing existing security deficiencies will involve not only ensuring there are sufficient PINs available, and sufficient funding available to cover those PINs, but ensuring that Sheriff's will be able to hire and train qualified individuals to fill those PINs.

Anticipated Costs: \$34,055,248 to 36,820,236 annually to hire additional CSOs to meet minimum acceptable standards for personnel in courtrooms and public areas of the courthouse.

District Court. The District Court is currently meeting the minimum adequate standards for courtroom personnel for court proceedings. The District Court lacks sufficient security for commissioners in certain facilities, especially those who sit outside of courthouse facilities. [REDACTED]

The District Court has had difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified bailiffs. This results in staffing vacancies even if a particular District Court location has enough allocated CSOs. Recruitment is particularly difficult because bailiffs are hired on a contractual basis, rather than as full time employees, and therefore do not qualify for State pension benefits. As a result, the District Court has had to hire private security contractors, who do not meet CSO or SPO standards, to supplement the security provided by bailiffs at some locations. Costs and recommendations below contemplate converting bailiffs to full-time employee status.

Anticipated Costs: \$12,347,203 annually to cover conversion.

Orphans' Court. Orphans' Court proceedings in some jurisdictions, [REDACTED] occur outside of the courthouse. In those cases, private security contractors may be required to provide security.

Anticipated Costs: \$33,945 annually to retain private security contractors.

B. Parking

Appellate Courts. The courthouse occupied by the appellate courts provides secured attached parking to all judicial officers. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Anticipated Costs: None.

Circuit Courts. Parking shortfalls vary widely across the State. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Task Force does not recommend attempting to retrofit courthouses that lack secure attached parking. That would be infeasible. However, based on the Judiciary's assessment of the current circumstances at individual courthouses, improvements can be made to provide more appropriate security at existing parking areas, [REDACTED] as well as ensuring that sufficient security personnel are available to monitor parking areas and transit to and from them, as well as to provide escorts where appropriate.

Anticipated Costs: \$5,757,663 for necessary upgrades to parking where secure attached parking is not available.

District Court. District Court facilities suffer similar practical deficiencies as the circuit courts, with similar opportunities to provide improvements that, while short of recommended standards, will provide more appropriate security. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Anticipated Costs: \$9,701,750 for necessary upgrades to parking where secure attached parking is not available.

C. Public Areas

Secure public areas of courthouses are essential to provide security for all individuals who enter court facilities. In newer courthouses, public spaces should ordinarily be utilized primarily by members of the public, including lawyers and litigants, and some court staff. In older courthouses that lack separate secured passageways, public areas may also be used by all staff, including judicial officers, and for prisoner transport to and from courtrooms and holding areas. Securing public areas of courthouses involves securing possible entry points, controlling access within the courthouse, ensuring that weapons do not enter the courthouse, providing for video monitoring, and ensuring adequate security personnel are located throughout the building.

Appellate Courts. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Anticipated Costs: None.

Circuit Courts. The largest deficiencies in this area are associated with the installation of ballistic-resistant materials. Where facilities have such materials but they are one grade below standard, the Task Force does not recommend replacing them. Where facilities do not have such materials or they are more than one grade below standard, the Task Force recommends replacement.

Anticipated Costs: \$21,721,050

District Court. Comments here are identical to those for circuit courts.

Anticipated Costs: \$19,128,075

* * *

Summary of Anticipated One-Time Costs

One-Time Costs - Parking and Public Areas		
Parking		
Circuit Courts	District Courts	Appellate Courts
\$5,757,663	\$9,701,750	\$0
Public Areas		
Circuit Courts	District Courts	Appellate Courts
\$21,721,050	\$19,128,075	\$0
One-Time Cost Totals		
Circuit Courts	District Courts	Appellate Courts
\$27,478,713	\$29,538,325	\$0

Grand Total One-Time Costs: **\$50,308,538**

III. Recommendations & Legislative Proposals to Meet Requirements

A. Personnel

Circuit Courts. Task Force identified at least four possible paths to ensuring that circuit courts are able to meet the identified minimum adequate security standards for courtroom security:

- A State assumption of responsibility for security at all circuit court facilities.
- A State mandate to provide adequate personnel, with permanent State funding support, either in all jurisdictions, in jurisdictions that are not meeting minimums, or in jurisdictions that need help.
- A State mandate to provide adequate personnel, with transitional State funding. This is the path the Task Force recommends below.
- A State mandate to provide adequate personnel, with no State funding.

The Task Force does not recommend a State assumption of responsibility for security at circuit court facilities. That would constitute a radical restructuring of responsibility that the Task Force believes should be considered only if other efforts to meet standards are unsuccessful.

The other three options all involve a State mandate to meet the minimum acceptable standards identified by the Task Force. The Task Force does not believe there are viable incentive structures that would be likely to result in all jurisdictions meeting those standards in the absence of a mandate. To ensure progress toward meeting standards while allowing sufficient time to authorize appropriate positions and recruit and train personnel, the Task Force recommends that the mandate require that minimum standards for personnel in courtrooms be met for all criminal, family, and juvenile matters by FY2027, and that the minimum standards be met for personnel in all courtrooms and in public areas of courthouses by FY2029.

With respect to State funding support, the Task Force does not recommend that the State undertake a permanent obligation to fund or supplement funding for security personnel in all circuit courts.³ Providing such security has long been a local function. In many jurisdictions, the same sheriff's offices that provide courthouse security also perform additional functions, including serving as the primary law enforcement agency in some counties, performing incarcerated individual transport, serving warrants and other legal process, performing evictions, and securing detention facilities. Long-term state funding of courthouse security personnel, some of whom also carry out those other functions, would

³ The Task Force understands that some local jurisdictions may need ongoing State assistance to meet standards. The Task Force has not developed a recommendation concerning whether or how that should be provided beyond the recommended support identified below that would be available more broadly.

risk blurring lines of responsibility and alter the relationship between the State and local jurisdictions in ways that the Task Force believes should be considered only if other efforts to meet standards are unsuccessful.

However, the Task Force also does not recommend that the State's mandate to provide appropriate security come without any transitional funding support. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Although the Task Force believes this is ultimately the responsibility of local jurisdictions, based on the current structure of circuit courts in the State, the Task Force recommends that the State provide transitional funding to support the local jurisdictions in ramping up to meet the standards.

To accomplish that goal, the Task Force recommends that the State appropriate funds that can be distributed to local jurisdictions over the course of a five-year period to assist in meeting the standards. The funds would be allocated in diminishing amounts each year, beginning in FY2027, until they are entirely phased out after FY2031. Although there are different ways and amounts that might be appropriate to achieve that goal, the Task Force recommends considering the following:

- Each jurisdiction's minimum number of personnel to meet applicable mandate should be calculated as set forth above for FY2027 and FY2028;⁴
- Each jurisdiction's minimum number of personnel to meet applicable mandate should be calculated as set forth above for FY2029, FY2030, and FY2031;⁵
- For each year, the State would not provide any funding support to meet the first half of the total obligation;
- In FY2027, the State would provide funding totaling 80% of funding to meet that year's mandate that exceeds the 50% threshold (i.e., 40% of the total cost to meet the mandate);
- In FY2028, the State would provide funding totaling 60% of funding to meet that year's mandate that exceeds the 50% threshold (i.e., 30% of the total cost to meet the mandate);
- In FY2029, the State would provide funding totaling 60% of funding to meet that year's mandate (higher than the prior year's mandate, which is why the

⁴ The minimum number to meet the mandate for FY27 and FY28 would be the number of CSOs required to ensure at least one CSO in every courtroom hearing criminal, family, and juvenile matters and an additional CSO in each criminal courtroom.

⁵ The minimum number to meet the mandate for FY29, FY30, and FY31 would be the number of CSOs required to ensure at least one CSO in every courtroom hearing any matter, an additional CSO in each criminal courtroom, and rovers in public areas as noted.

percentage would remain the same) that exceeds the 50% threshold (i.e., 30% of the total cost to meet the mandate);

- In FY2030, the State would provide funding totaling 40% of funding to meet that year’s mandate that exceeds the 50% threshold (i.e., 20% of the total cost to meet the mandate);
- In FY2031, the State would provide funding totaling 20% of funding to meet that year’s mandate that exceeds the 50% threshold (i.e., 10% of the total cost to meet the mandate);
- Each year, to be eligible to receive any funding assistance, local jurisdictions would be required to meet minimum progress requirements toward satisfying the mandate.

Estimated costs based on current estimates of the full cost of hiring CSOs are:⁶

YEAR		1	2	3	4	5
FY		2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
State Obligation	Funding %	80%	60%	60%	40%	20%
	Funding Amount	\$27,244,198	\$20,433,149	\$22,092,142	\$14,728,094	\$7,364,047
Local Obligation	Funding %	20%	40%	40%	60%	80%
	Funding Amount	\$6,811,050	\$13,622,099	\$14,728,094	\$22,092,142	\$29,456,189

One possible mechanism for assessing eligibility for and distributing the funds would be through the Administrative Office of the Courts. State and local jurisdictions may also be able to pursue grant funding to offset increased costs. The Maryland State Bar Association has offered to assist with grant writing endeavors.

District Court. The Task Force has no legislative proposals for hiring additional bailiffs for District Court judicial proceedings other than through the Judiciary budget. Adequate positions currently exist for the number of positions that are needed. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Additional bailiffs in other locations should be phased in over the five-year period beginning in FY2027.

To address ongoing difficulties in hiring bailiffs, the Task Force recommends re-classifying bailiffs from contractual employees to full-time PINs. As contractual employees, bailiffs are entitled to some leave and have the option to purchase health

⁶ See Appendix D for a jurisdiction specific breakdown of the five-year funding schedule.

insurance, but are not entitled to participate in the State retirement system. A complicating factor is that some bailiffs are retired Maryland State Police officers or other State law enforcement, with accompanying pension restrictions. The Task Force recommends converting these employees to full-time positions over the five-year period FY 2027-FY 2032 to improve recruitment and retention. The present annual cost of that transition would be \$12,347,203.

Orphans' Court. For those Orphans' Court judges that preside over cases in a building outside a circuit courthouse, security should be provided using private security contractors.

B. Parking

Unlike recurring personnel costs, the expenses to provide minimally adequate secure parking for judicial officers are one-time expenses. The Task Force recommends that the State provide funding for reasonable improvements identified above, to be phased in over the same five-year period, FY2027 to FY2031, by way of a non-lapsing fund to be administrated by the Administrative Office of the Courts through (1) grants to individual circuit courts and (2) transfer to the District Court as needed. The Task Force recommends that the State contribute 20% of the total estimated amount each year to the non-lapsing fund.⁷ The funds would be restricted to be used only for this purpose.

Mechanically, for circuit courts, the Task Force recommends that each circuit court create a security task force to determine which of the recommended parking-related security measures could be undertaken at each individual courthouse. Once determined, each court could apply for a grant to implement the security measures. Because it is expected that each jurisdiction may want to provide similar security improvements for other local officials connected to court operations (e.g., Sheriffs, State's Attorneys, etc.), local jurisdictions should be expected to bear an equitable percentage of the total cost of improvements. For the District Court, amounts would be transferred as appropriate.

C. Public Areas

Funding related to security personnel needed for public areas of courthouses is addressed above. With respect to infrastructure needs, similar to Parking, the Task Force recommends creation and funding of a non-lapsing fund to be phased in over the same five-year period, covering FY2027 through FY2031, to be administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts through (1) grants to individual circuit courts and (2) transfer to the District Court as needed. The Task Force recommends that the State contribute 20% of the

⁷ The total estimated amount of expenses related to parking is \$15,459,413. That would be divided into equal increments of \$3,091,883 per year for five years.

total estimated amount each year to the non-lapsing fund.⁸ The funds would be restricted to be used only for this purpose.

Mechanically, circuit courts, through their respective security tasks forces, would apply for grants to provide necessary upgrades. Grants could also be allocated to assist with security in new construction over the same period. For the District Court, the Chief Judge of the District Court should implement the improvement of the physical plant of these courthouses based on severity of need.

CONCLUSION

Securing Maryland's judicial facilities is of the utmost importance. Our facilities need funding to reach minimum security standards. The Task Force requests and recommends State funding allocated to address issues with security personnel, parking security, and hardening public areas.

⁸ The total estimated amount of expenses related to parking is \$41,557,625. That would be divided into equal increments of \$8,311,525 per year for five years.

APPENDIX A: S.B. 575/H.B. 664

APPENDIX B: Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities Committee Reports

APPENDIX C: Special Police Officer Requirements

APPENDIX D: Sheriff Need Analysis

APPENDIX E: Report of the National Center for State Courts: “Steps to Best Practices for Court Building Security”

APPENDIX A:
S.B. 575/H.B. 664

SENATE BILL 575

D1, D3, E1

4lr1931
CF HB 664

By: **Senator Corderman (By Request – Maryland Judicial Conference) and Senators Smith, West, ~~and McKay~~ McKay, Carter, Kelly, Charles, James, Folden, Muse, and Waldstreicher**

Introduced and read first time: January 25, 2024
Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments
Senate action: Adopted
Read second time: February 3, 2024

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Court Personnel – Protection of Personal Information**
3 **(Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson Judicial Security Act)**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing a certain protected individual or the Office of Information
5 Privacy in the Administrative Office of the Courts to request that a governmental
6 entity or person not publish personal information of the individual on the Internet,
7 social media, or social networks or that the governmental entity or person remove
8 the information from any existing publication; specifying certain procedures for the
9 protection of personal information of a protected individual; authorizing certain
10 relief for a violation of this Act; establishing a criminal penalty for publicly posting
11 personal information of a protected individual under certain circumstances;
12 establishing the Judicial Address Confidentiality Program; establishing the Task
13 Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities; and generally relating to court
14 personnel and the protection of personal information.

15 BY adding to
16 Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings
17 Section 3–2301 through 3–2304 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 23. Protected
18 Individuals – Protected Information”; and 3–2401 through 3–2407 to be under
19 the new subtitle “Subtitle 24. Protected Individuals – Judicial Address
20 Confidentiality Program”
21 Annotated Code of Maryland
22 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
 2 Article – Real Property
 3 Section 3–114
 4 Annotated Code of Maryland
 5 (2023 Replacement Volume)

6 Preamble

7 WHEREAS, Judge Andrew F. Wilkinson was appointed to the Circuit Court for
 8 Washington County in January 2020, and served the Maryland Judiciary and the citizens
 9 of this State with distinction until his untimely death on October 19, 2023; and

10 WHEREAS, On October 19, 2023, Judge Wilkinson calmly and even-handedly
 11 presided over a divorce and custody case involving extensive testimony of abuse inflicted
 12 on one of the litigants and her children; and

13 WHEREAS, Judge Wilkinson should have been able to peacefully return home to his
 14 family in Hagerstown after having appropriately met his professional obligations; and

15 WHEREAS, Judge Wilkinson left the courthouse after issuing his ruling and was
 16 shot and killed in the driveway of his personal residence by the abusive litigant over whose
 17 case he had just presided; and

18 WHEREAS, Protecting the safety and security of judicial officers throughout
 19 Maryland and the United States has become an issue of critical importance due to threats,
 20 assaults, and murders of judicial officers and their family members; and

21 WHEREAS, The National Center for State Courts reports Judge Wilkinson’s murder
 22 as the third targeted shooting of a state court judge in the last 3 years; and

23 WHEREAS, The United States Congress passed the Daniel Aderl Judicial Security
 24 and Privacy Act in 2020, after an aggrieved litigant murdered U.S. District Judge Esther
 25 Salas’s only son at her personal residence; and

26 WHEREAS, The General Assembly acknowledges these increasing threats to
 27 judicial officers and seeks to ensure the protection, safety, and security of judicial officers
 28 and their families throughout Maryland; now, therefore,

29 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
 30 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

31 **Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

32 **SUBTITLE 23. PROTECTED INDIVIDUALS – PROTECTED INFORMATION.**

33 **3–2301.**

1 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
2 INDICATED.

3 (B) "GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 10-1501 OF
4 THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.

5 (C) "OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY" MEANS THE OFFICE OF
6 INFORMATION PRIVACY IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS.

7 (D) (1) "PERSONAL INFORMATION" MEANS:

8 (I) A HOME ADDRESS;

9 (II) A HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER;

10 (III) A MOBILE TELEPHONE NUMBER;

11 (IV) A PERSONAL E-MAIL ADDRESS;

12 (V) A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER;

13 (VI) A DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER;

14 (VII) A FEDERAL TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER;

15 (VIII) A BANK ACCOUNT NUMBER;

16 (IX) A CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD NUMBER;

17 (X) A LICENSE PLATE NUMBER OR UNIQUE IDENTIFIER OF A
18 VEHICLE;

19 (XI) A BIRTH OR MARITAL RECORD;

20 (XII) A CHILD'S NAME;

21 (XIII) A SCHOOL OR DAYCARE;

22 (XIV) A PLACE OF WORSHIP; OR

23 (XV) A PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED
24 IN SUBSECTION (E)(6) OF THIS SECTION.

25 (2) "PERSONAL INFORMATION" DOES NOT INCLUDE:

1 (I) INFORMATION THAT HAS BEEN PUBLICLY DISCLOSED WITH
2 THE CONSENT OF THE PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL; OR

3 (II) INFORMATION THAT IS RELEVANT TO AND DISPLAYED AS
4 PART OF A NEWS STORY, COMMENTARY, AN EDITORIAL, OR ANY OTHER SPEECH ON
5 MATTERS OF PUBLIC CONCERN.

6 (E) "PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL" MEANS:

7 (1) A CURRENT OR RETIRED JUSTICE OR JUDGE OF A COURT
8 ESTABLISHED UNDER ARTICLE IV OF THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION;

9 (2) A CURRENT OR RETIRED JUSTICE OR JUDGE OF A FEDERAL
10 COURT, INCLUDING A U.S. BANKRUPTCY COURT, DOMICILED IN THE STATE;

11 (3) A CURRENT OR RETIRED MAGISTRATE APPOINTED BY A CIRCUIT
12 COURT OF THE STATE;

13 (4) A CURRENT OR RETIRED UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE
14 DOMICILED IN THE STATE;

15 (5) A CURRENT OR RETIRED COMMISSIONER OF THE DISTRICT
16 COURT OF MARYLAND; OR

17 (6) A SPOUSE, A CHILD, OR A DEPENDENT WHO RESIDES IN THE SAME
18 HOUSEHOLD AS AN INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED IN ITEMS (1) THROUGH (5) OF THIS
19 SUBSECTION.

20 (F) "PUBLISH" MEANS TO POST OR OTHERWISE MAKE AVAILABLE TO THE
21 GENERAL PUBLIC ON THE INTERNET, SOCIAL MEDIA, OR SOCIAL NETWORKS.

22 3-2302.

23 (A) A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL, OR THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY
24 ON BEHALF OF A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL, MAY REQUEST THAT A GOVERNMENTAL
25 ENTITY:

26 (1) NOT PUBLISH THE PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONAL
27 INFORMATION; OR

28 (2) REMOVE THE PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONAL
29 INFORMATION FROM ANY EXISTING PUBLICATION.

1 (B) A REQUEST MADE UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL:

2 (1) BE IN WRITING;

3 (2) BE SENT BY CERTIFIED MAIL OR BY E-MAIL;

4 (3) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION,
5 PROVIDE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO CONFIRM THAT THE REQUESTER IS A
6 PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL; AND

7 (4) ADEQUATELY IDENTIFY THE DOCUMENT, POSTING, OR OTHER
8 PUBLICATION CONTAINING THE PERSONAL INFORMATION.

9 (C) A REQUEST MADE BY THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY
10 CERTIFIES THAT A REQUESTER IS A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL AND NO FURTHER
11 INFORMATION MAY BE REQUIRED TO CONFIRM THAT THE REQUESTER IS A
12 PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL.

13 (D) ON RECEIPT OF A REQUEST UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION,
14 A GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY SHALL PROMPTLY ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE
15 REQUEST IN WRITING BY CERTIFIED MAIL OR BY E-MAIL AND:

16 (1) TAKE STEPS REASONABLY NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT THE
17 PERSONAL INFORMATION IS NOT PUBLISHED; OR

18 (2) IF THE PERSONAL INFORMATION IS ALREADY PUBLISHED,
19 PROVIDE FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE PERSONAL INFORMATION WITHIN 72 HOURS
20 AFTER RECEIPT OF THE REQUEST.

21 (E) A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL OR THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY
22 MAY BRING AN ACTION FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION AGAINST A
23 GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY FOR:

24 (1) DECLARATORY RELIEF;

25 (2) INJUNCTIVE RELIEF; OR

26 (3) REASONABLE ATTORNEY'S FEES.

27 **3-2303.**

28 (A) A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL, OR THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY
29 ON BEHALF OF A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL, MAY REQUEST THAT A PERSON WHO HAS

1 PUBLISHED THE PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONAL INFORMATION REMOVE THE
2 PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONAL INFORMATION FROM PUBLICATION.

3 (B) A REQUEST MADE UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL:

4 (1) BE IN WRITING;

5 (2) BE SENT BY CERTIFIED MAIL OR BY E-MAIL;

6 (3) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION,
7 PROVIDE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO CONFIRM THAT THE REQUESTER IS A
8 PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL; AND

9 (4) ADEQUATELY IDENTIFY THE DOCUMENT, POSTING, OR OTHER
10 PUBLICATION CONTAINING THE PERSONAL INFORMATION.

11 (C) A REQUEST MADE BY THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY
12 CERTIFIES THAT A REQUESTER IS A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL AND NO FURTHER
13 INFORMATION MAY BE REQUIRED TO CONFIRM THAT THE REQUESTER IS A
14 PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL.

15 (D) THE PERSON TO WHOM THE REQUEST IS MADE SHALL:

16 (1) PROVIDE FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE PERSONAL INFORMATION
17 WITHIN 72 HOURS AFTER RECEIPT OF THE REQUEST; AND

18 (2) NOTIFY THE PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL OR THE OFFICE OF
19 INFORMATION PRIVACY BY CERTIFIED MAIL OR BY E-MAIL OF THE REMOVAL.

20 (E) (1) A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL OR THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION
21 PRIVACY MAY BRING AN ACTION FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION AGAINST A
22 PERSON FOR:

23 (I) DECLARATORY RELIEF;

24 (II) INJUNCTIVE RELIEF;

25 (III) DAMAGES INCURRED AS THE RESULT OF A VIOLATION OF
26 THIS SECTION; OR

27 (IV) REASONABLE ATTORNEY'S FEES.

28 (2) IN ADDITION TO THE RELIEF PROVIDED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)
29 OF THIS SUBSECTION, IF A COURT FINDS THAT A PERSON WILLFULLY REFUSED TO

1 PROVIDE FOR THE REMOVAL OF PERSONAL INFORMATION KNOWING THAT THE
2 INDIVIDUAL ON BEHALF OF WHOM THE REQUEST WAS MADE WAS A PROTECTED
3 INDIVIDUAL, THE COURT MAY AWARD PUNITIVE DAMAGES.

4 **3-2304.**

5 (A) ~~A PERSON~~ AN INDIVIDUAL MAY NOT KNOWINGLY PUBLISH THE
6 PERSONAL INFORMATION OF A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL IF:

7 (1) ~~THE PERSON~~ INDIVIDUAL KNOWS OR REASONABLY SHOULD KNOW
8 THAT PUBLISHING THE PERSONAL INFORMATION POSES AN IMMINENT AND SERIOUS
9 THREAT TO THE PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL; AND

10 (2) THE PUBLISHING OF THE PERSONAL INFORMATION RESULTS IN:

11 (I) AN ASSAULT IN ANY DEGREE;

12 (II) HARASSMENT;

13 (III) TRESPASS; OR

14 (IV) MALICIOUS DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY.

15 (B) ~~A PERSON~~ AN INDIVIDUAL WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF
16 A MISDEMEANOR AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO IMPRISONMENT NOT
17 EXCEEDING 18 MONTHS OR A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$5,000 OR BOTH.

18 **SUBTITLE 24. PROTECTED INDIVIDUALS – JUDICIAL ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY**
19 **PROGRAM.**

20 **3-2401.**

21 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
22 INDICATED.

23 (B) “ACTUAL ADDRESS” MEANS A RESIDENTIAL STREET ADDRESS,
24 INCLUDING PRIMARY RESIDENCE OR SECONDARY RESIDENCE, OF A PROTECTED
25 INDIVIDUAL AS SPECIFIED ON THE PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL’S APPLICATION TO BE A
26 PROGRAM PARTICIPANT UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.

27 (C) “GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 10-1501 OF
28 THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.

1 (D) "OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY" MEANS THE OFFICE OF
2 INFORMATION PRIVACY IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS.

3 (E) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE JUDICIAL ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY
4 PROGRAM.

5 (F) "PROGRAM PARTICIPANT" MEANS A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL
6 DESIGNATED AS A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.

7 (G) "PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 3-2301 OF
8 THIS TITLE.

9 3-2402.

10 THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBTITLE IS TO:

11 (1) ENABLE STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS
12 FOR PUBLIC RECORDS WITHOUT DISCLOSING THE ACTUAL ADDRESS OF A PROGRAM
13 PARTICIPANT;

14 (2) ENCOURAGE INTERAGENCY COOPERATION IN PROVIDING
15 ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS;

16 (3) ALLOW GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES AND PERSONS TO ACCEPT A
17 PROGRAM PARTICIPANT'S USE OF AN ADDRESS DESIGNATED BY THE OFFICE OF
18 INFORMATION PRIVACY AS A SUBSTITUTE ADDRESS; AND

19 (4) PROVIDE A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT WITH PROTECTIONS IN
20 ADDITION TO THOSE PROVIDED UNDER TITLE 3, SUBTITLE 23 OF THIS ARTICLE.

21 3-2403.

22 THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY SHALL ESTABLISH AND ADMINISTER
23 A JUDICIAL ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM FOR PROTECTED INDIVIDUALS.

24 3-2404.

25 (A) A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL MAY APPLY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
26 PROGRAM IN THE MANNER REQUIRED BY THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY.

27 (B) ON RECEIPT OF AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM,
28 THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY SHALL DETERMINE WHETHER THE
29 APPLICANT QUALIFIES AS A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT.

1 3-2405.

2 (A) THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY MAY:

3 (1) REQUEST THAT A PERSON OR GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY USE A
4 SUBSTITUTE ADDRESS DESIGNATED BY THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY AS
5 THE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT'S ADDRESS;

6 (2) REQUEST THE SHIELDING OF REAL PROPERTY RECORDS ON
7 BEHALF OF A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT WHO HAS AN OWNERSHIP INTEREST IN REAL
8 PROPERTY IN ACCORDANCE WITH TITLE 3, SUBTITLE 1, PART II OF THE REAL
9 PROPERTY ARTICLE; AND

10 (3) REQUEST THAT A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT'S ACTUAL ADDRESS BE
11 SHIELDED FROM PUBLIC INSPECTION IN A RECORD MAINTAINED BY A
12 GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY.

13 (B) A REQUEST MADE BY THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY UNDER
14 THIS SUBTITLE CERTIFIES THAT A REQUESTER IS A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT.

15 (C) ON RECEIPT OF A REQUEST BY THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY,
16 A PERSON OR GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY SHALL:

17 (1) PROMPTLY ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE REQUEST IN
18 WRITING BY CERTIFIED MAIL OR BY E-MAIL; AND

19 (2) TAKE STEPS REASONABLY NECESSARY TO COMPLY.

20 (D) NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF SUBSECTION (A)(3) OF THIS
21 SECTION, A CUSTODIAN OF RECORD MAY:

22 (1) MAINTAIN A COPY OF A RECORD CONTAINING A PROGRAM
23 PARTICIPANT'S ACTUAL ADDRESS IN A SEPARATE SECURE AREA TO WHICH PERSONS
24 WHO DO NOT HAVE A LEGITIMATE REASON FOR ACCESS ARE DENIED ACCESS;

25 (2) PERMIT PUBLIC INSPECTION OF A RECORD WITH THE CONSENT
26 OF THE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT;

27 (3) PERMIT PUBLIC INSPECTION OF A RECORD WITH THE ACTUAL
28 ADDRESS REDACTED FROM THE RECORD; OR

29 (4) AFTER NOTIFICATION TO THE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT, PERMIT
30 PUBLIC INSPECTION OF A RECORD IF THE INSPECTION WILL FURTHER A
31 SUBSTANTIAL PUBLIC INTEREST OR A LEGITIMATE BUSINESS NEED.

(35)

1 **3-2406.**

2 **A RECORD OF A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT’S ACTUAL ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE**
 3 **NUMBER MAINTAINED BY THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY OR A**
 4 **GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY IS NOT A PUBLIC RECORD WITHIN THE MEANING OF §**
 5 **4-101 OF THE GENERAL PROVISIONS ARTICLE.**

6 **3-2407.**

7 **(A) A PERSON MAY NOT KNOWINGLY DISCLOSE A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT’S**
 8 **ACTUAL ADDRESS.**

9 **(B) A PROTECTED INDIVIDUAL OR THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY**
 10 **MAY BRING AN ACTION FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION FOR:**

11 **(1) DECLARATORY RELIEF;**

12 **(2) INJUNCTIVE RELIEF; OR**

13 **(3) REASONABLE ATTORNEY’S FEES.**

14 **Article – Real Property**

15 **3-114.**

16 **(a) In this part the following words have the meanings indicated.**

17 **(b) “ACP number” means the unique identification number assigned to each**
 18 **program participant by the Secretary OR BY THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY.**

19 **(c) “Actual address” means a residential street address, school address, or work**
 20 **address of an individual, as specified on the individual’s application to be a program**
 21 **participant under Title 7, Subtitle 3 of the State Government Article.**

22 **(d) “Address Confidentiality Program” means the Address Confidentiality**
 23 **Program for survivors of threatened, attempted, or actual domestic violence, sexual assault,**
 24 **stalking, harassment, or human trafficking administered by the Secretary under Title 7,**
 25 **Subtitle 3 of the State Government Article AND THE JUDICIAL ADDRESS**
 26 **CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF**
 27 **THE COURTS UNDER TITLE 3, SUBTITLE 24 OF THE COURTS ARTICLE.**

28 **(e) (1) “Identity information” means information that may be used to identify**
 29 **a program participant.**

30 **(2) “Identity information” includes a program participant’s:**

- 1 (i) Name;
- 2 (ii) Phone number;
- 3 (iii) E-mail address;
- 4 (iv) Social Security number; and
- 5 (v) Driver's license number.

6 **(F) "OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY" MEANS THE OFFICE OF**
 7 **INFORMATION PRIVACY IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS.**

8 **[(f)] (G)** "Program participant" means an individual designated by the Secretary
 9 **OR BY THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY** as a participant in an address
 10 confidentiality program.

11 **[(g)] (H)** "Real Property ACP Notice" means the notice required under this part
 12 for a program participant to request the shielding of real property records.

13 **[(h)] (I)** "Real property record" means any record or data maintained by a clerk
 14 of the circuit court or a State or local agency as part of the land or tax records.

15 **[(i)] (J)** "Secretary" means the Secretary of State.

16 **[(j)] (K)** "Shield" means to remove real property records from public inspection
 17 in accordance with this part.

18 **[(k)] (L)** "Shielding" means, with respect to a real property record accepted for
 19 recording by a clerk of the circuit court or a State or local agency, removing the record to a
 20 separate secure area to which persons who do not have a legitimate reason for access are
 21 denied access.

22 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

23 (a) There is a Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities.

24 (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

25 (1) the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland;

26 (2) the Chief Judge of the Appellate Court of Maryland;

27 (3) the Chair of the Conference of Circuit Judges, or the Chair's designee;

1 (4) two circuit court administrative judges from counties with varying
2 population densities, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland;

3 (5) the Chief Judge of the District Court of Maryland;

4 (6) two District Court administrative judges from counties with varying
5 population densities, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland;

6 (7) three members of county leadership or their designees, from counties
7 with varying population densities, appointed by the Governor;

8 (8) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of
9 the Senate;

10 (9) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the
11 House;

12 (10) three sheriffs or their designees, from counties with varying population
13 densities, appointed by the Governor;

14 (11) the Superintendent of the Maryland State Police, or the
15 Superintendent's designee;

16 (12) the Secretary of General Services, or the Secretary's designee;

17 (13) the Secretary of Budget and Management, or the Secretary's designee;

18 (14) the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services, or the
19 Secretary's designee;

20 (15) three chiefs of police or their designees, from counties with varying
21 population densities, appointed by the Governor;

22 (16) a magistrate from a circuit court, appointed by the Chief Justice of the
23 Supreme Court of Maryland;

24 (17) one clerk of a circuit court, appointed by the Chief Justice of the
25 Supreme Court of Maryland;

26 (18) the Director of Commissioners for the District Court of Maryland;

27 (19) the Chief of Security Administration for the Administrative Office of
28 the Courts;

29 (20) one District Court bailiff, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme
30 Court of Maryland; ~~and~~

1 (21) one representative of the Maryland Association of Counties, appointed
2 by the Governor;

3 (22) the president of the Maryland State Bar Association, or the president's
4 designee;

5 (23) the Public Defender, or the Public Defender's designee;

6 (24) the president of the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association, or the
7 president's designee; and

8 (25) the chair of the Conference of Orphans' Court Judges, or the chair's
9 designee.

10 (c) The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland shall chair the Task
11 Force.

12 (d) The Administrative Office of the Courts shall provide staff for the Task Force.

13 (e) A member of the Task Force:

14 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

15 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State
16 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

17 (f) The Task Force shall:

18 (1) identify minimum requirements for courthouse safety, including:

19 (i) the minimum number of security officers that should be present
20 in each type of judicial proceeding in a circuit court or in the District Court;

21 (ii) the minimum qualifications for security officers;

22 (iii) minimum standards for secure entry and exit of judicial officers
23 from court facilities, including for secure parking and, if such parking is not connected to
24 the courthouse, secure transit between parking and the courthouse; and

25 (iv) minimum standards for safe public areas of courthouses,
26 including for the protection of judicial officers who are required to enter public areas of the
27 courthouse in the performance of their public duties;

28 (2) develop a legislative proposal to ensure that the requirements
29 identified under item (1) of this subsection can be met; and

1 (3) identify physical security deficiencies that currently exist in
2 courthouses and develop a plan to address these deficiencies.

3 (g) A member of the Task Force serves at the pleasure of the person who
4 appointed the member.

5 (h) At the Task Force’s first meeting, the Task Force shall vote to adopt a code of
6 conduct providing for the acceptable conduct of Task Force members.

7 ~~(g)~~ (i) On or before January 1, 2025, the Task Force shall report its findings and
8 recommendations to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland and, in accordance
9 with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

10 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 1 of this Act shall take
11 effect October 1, 2024.

12 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, except as provided in Section
13 3 of this Act, this Act shall take effect June 1, 2024. Section 2 of this Act shall remain
14 effective for a period of 2 years and 1 month and, at the end of June 30, 2026, Section 2 of
15 this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and
16 of no further force and effect.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

APPENDIX B:
Task Force to Ensure the Safety of Judicial Facilities
Committee Reports

STANDARDS WORKGROUP
MEMORANDUM ON BEST SECURITY PRACTICES
AUGUST 28, 2024

The Standards Workgroup has been assigned to establish the minimum standards for court security in the four (4) security areas identified in the Andrew F. Wilkinson Judicial Security Act. To complete its task, the Workgroup reviewed the National Center for State Courts “Steps to Best Practices for Court Building Security,” the Arizona Judicial Administration Court Security Standards, the Georgia Standards for Courthouse Security, the CALEA Standards for Court Security, and the Judicial Security Task Force Best Practices Workgroup’s “Personal Safety Tips for Judicial Officers.” Links to those documents are listed at the end of this document to the extent they are available online.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We recommend that Court security plans and documents be excepted from discovery pursuant to a Public Information Act request and the Maryland Rules 16-900, *et seq.* Amendments should be requested to existing legislation and the Maryland rules to accomplish these exceptions.
2. We recommend that an appropriate task force or commission should conduct periodic reviews of secured facilities, evaluate its findings, and implement recommendations and updates as needed.
3. We recommend requiring all courthouse staff, including judicial officers, to receive basic training in behavioral threat assessment, to include understanding how to identify and assess a broad range of concerning behaviors that may pose a risk to the safety and security of judicial officers and other court staff, including but not limited to communicated/expressed threats directed to court personnel, or their family members. All courthouse staff should receive the training when they commence service with the Maryland Judiciary and receive a refresher training every three years thereafter.
4. We recommend that the Maryland Judiciary establish a commission to develop and maintain the standards for initial and on-going training for all personnel involved in court security. The commission should be created at the directive of the Chief Justice of Maryland and be fitted into the Judicial Council’s committee structure. Its membership should include representatives from the Administrative Judges of the state courts, the Maryland Sheriffs’ Association and such other stakeholders as the Chief Justice shall appoint. The Workgroup recognizes that judicial security requires

- duty specific training that would not otherwise be provided in a law enforcement training regimen.
5. We recommend that court security officers, who are not sworn law enforcement officers, be granted the authority to provide security for judicial officers away from the court facility. A more detailed proposal for expanded powers is included below as Appendix A.

SECURITY ITEM ONE--The minimum number of security officers that should be present in each type of judicial proceeding in a circuit court or in the district court.

DISTRICT AND CIRCUIT COURTS

1. Assign at least one Court Security Officer (CSO) to be present in the courtroom whenever there is any court proceeding being held in the courtroom. A second CSO shall be assigned when there is an in-custody participant present, or, in any proceeding that may result in a participant being remanded to custody. The foregoing is in addition to any Correctional Officers from the Division of Correction or other jail responsible for housing the particular participant.

2. Assign at least one CSO on every floor of a court facility with one or more courtrooms or judicial chambers dedicated as a “rover” to ensure security in the public area and to assist, as needed, from one courtroom to the next. If a court facility houses quasi-judicial uses, such as an Orphans Court, these security protocols apply to the areas occupied by such use. Full facility security requires the standards to be applied to all areas.

3. A second CSO shall also be assigned in any proceeding when specifically requested by a judge or CSO based on a determination of risk by the administrative judge, chief of security, or their designees. NOTE: This second CSO should not be the same CSO assigned as responsible for an in-custody participant involved in the proceeding.

4. Pursuant to an Emergency Plan developed by a court’s Security Committee, identify such further and other security assets that may be necessary to respond to a serious, emergent situation at a courthouse.

APPELLATE COURTS

1. Assign at least one CSO to be present in the courtroom whenever there is any court proceeding being held in the courtroom. A second CSO shall also be assigned in any proceeding when specifically requested by the Chief Judge, a presiding judge or a CSO based on a determination of risk by the judge or CSO.

2. Assign at least one CSO on every floor that has one or more courtrooms or judicial chambers dedicated as a “rover” to ensure security in the public area and to assist, as needed, from one courtroom to the next.

SECURITY ITEM TWO--The minimum qualifications for security officers.

COURT SECURITY OFFICERS

All CSOs and other armed personnel shall meet the requirements for a Special Police Officer (SPO), see link below, or a sworn law enforcement officer as may be required by hiring authority, with additional court-specific training and duties to include:

1. CSOs should be trained in basic court security responsibilities. CSOs should receive initial classroom instruction on courtroom security techniques, judicial and staff protection, security screening activities, threat de-escalation techniques, non-lethal or less lethal threat suppression devices, and safety and weapons certification.
2. CSOs should receive basic training in emergency response, first-aid, defensive tactics, handcuffing, courtroom security, hostage situations, active-shooters, and judicial protection.
3. CSOs who also work in the courthouse security command center should be trained in critical incident command and crisis communications.

NOTE: This section is not meant to abrogate any existing local law pertaining to this topic.

ANCILLARY SECURITY PERSONNEL

All persons who work in courthouse security but are not CSOs or other armed personnel are considered Ancillary Security Personnel (ASP). Each ASP shall receive task specific training to include:

1. Operation of security devices including magnetometers, X-Ray machines, handheld scanning wands, and any other device used by the court per the manufacturers training manual.
2. Other security procedures necessary to complete assigned security tasks.
3. Non-CSOs who also work in the courthouse security command center should be trained in critical incident command and crisis communications.

SECURITY ITEM THREE--Minimum standards for secure entry and exit of judicial officers from court facilities, including for secure parking and, if such parking is not connected to the courthouse, secure transit between parking and the courthouse.

Ideally, each court facility will have attached and secured parking for judicial officers. However, the Workgroup recognizes this would require extensive capital improvements, if not complete rebuilds, of most court facilities in the state. Below are a mix of personnel and physical improvements that should be used where fully secure parking is not available.

GENERAL POLICY

Security measures should be implemented for, and installed in, judicial officer parking areas to mitigate threats including unauthorized access to judicial vehicles and the judicial parking area, surveillance of the judicial parking area or vehicles leaving or entering the parking area, explosive devices, snipers or other active shooters, and all hazards (weather, fire,...). Through electronic devices or observation, security personnel should be notified of a judicial officer's arrival or departure.

PARKING ATTACHED

1. The ideal standard would include a secure interior parking area for judicial officers, preferably underground, with a license plate reader (LPR) or keycard entry. Judicial officers should be able to proceed directly from their cars, through designated passageways via electronic key access and security screening, to their respective chambers without traversing through public areas or main court building entrance areas.
2. Provide sturdy vehicle access gates or overhead doors accessible by electronic devices. Install a video intercom connected to the command center.
3. Calibrate the timing of doors or gates to secure parking areas so that the doors or gates close in a timely fashion after entry of authorized vehicles to limit opportunities for tailgating.
4. Outside of the entrance, install additional signage indicating the enforcement of towing of unauthorized vehicles and the prohibition of stopping and/or loitering.

NOTE: Such secured parking and designated passageways should be considered and implemented in all new court facility designs and construction when feasible.

PARKING DETACHED—GENERAL

1. Install adequate lighting at the judicial officer's parking area.

2. Install security cameras with protective environmental housings in the judicial officer's parking area and along the walking route to the courthouse entrance.

3. Install emergency call boxes in the judicial officer's parking area and along the walking route to the courthouse entrance.

4. A designated CSO should be available for judicial officers to notify of their arrival in the morning and be offered an escort if they park in a detached parking area.

5. A designated CSO should be available for judicial officers to notify when departing for the day to provide an escort to detached parking areas. Judicial officers should also be provided an escort to detached parking areas during high-threat proceedings or when there are heightened security concerns.

6. Provide a regular CSO patrol presence in the parking areas in the morning, during the lunch hour, and at close of business.

PARKING DETACHED—SEPARATE LOT

1. Fence in the judicial officers' parking area using opaque materials such as brick or stone. If this is not feasible, then a chain-link fence should be installed with privacy slats in the chain-link.

2. Utilize a keycard system for entry with sturdy vehicle access gates or overhead doors accessible by electronic devices. Install a video intercom connected to the command center.

3. Calibrate the timing of doors or gates to secure parking areas so that they close in a timely fashion after entry of authorized vehicles to limit opportunities for tailgating.

4. Outside of the entry gate, install additional signage indicating the enforcement of towing and the prohibition of stopping and/or loitering.

5. Consider installing a security booth checkpoint for access to secure parking in high-risk areas. Provide a CSO to staff the booth.

PARKING DETACHED—INDIVIDUAL SPACES

1. Remove all signs in judicial officer's parking areas that identify parking spaces either by name or title of judge/judicial officer. Any signs should simply say "reserved" along with a number as appropriate.

2. Install additional signage indicating the enforcement of towing and the prohibition of stopping and/or loitering.

3. All efforts should be made to minimize the line of sight between the public/parties to judicial proceedings and judicial officers entering and exiting their vehicles.

COURTHOUSE INGRESS/EGRESS

1. Utilize a separate secure entrance to the building for judicial officers that is not used by the public. If this is not possible, then have a CSO fast-track the judicial officer's entry by bypassing any lines or creating a designated line for judicial officers and court staff.

2. Provide a CSO at the entrance/exit used by the judicial officers after having been notified by the judicial officer that she/he will be arriving/departing

SECURITY ITEM FOUR--Minimum standards for safe public areas of courthouses, including for the protection of judicial officers who are required to enter public areas of the courthouse in the performance of their public duties.

GENERAL POLICY

Everyone entering a court building should be properly screened for weapons and contraband prior to access to any office, courtroom, or public area. This practice, known as “universal screening”, includes judicial officers, elected officials, court staff, attorneys, and police officers. Ideally, judicial officers and court employees should gain access into the courthouse through separate and restricted entrances for use by designated personnel. Such a separate entrance should include its own screening procedure. Any deviations from this standard should only occur after the Administrative Judge and the head of security conduct a balancing of risk to determine the best procedure for the particular facility at issue.

ENTRANCES AND SCREENING

1. Entrances. Each court shall establish one main entrance through which the public can enter the court facility. The main entrance should be staffed with at least one CSO with enforcement authority and such other personnel necessary to adequately operate the screening devices and control ingress and egress flow. Entrances should be equipped with video surveillance that may be monitored by the command center. Fixed barriers should be used to separate ingress and egress paths. Additional entryways for the public may be established provided at least one form of screening device is used. Appropriate screening shall be used at entrances established to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

2. Employee entrances. To the extent possible, a separate secure employee entrance should be maintained. If a separate entrance is not possible, the public and employees should have separate entry lines.

3. Screening Devices. All entrances should be equipped with a magnetometer, X-Ray conveyor, handheld scanning wands, video surveillance, and doors that can be remotely locked in an emergency. Each court shall ensure regular testing and calibration of all screening devices consistent with manufacturers’ directions.

4. Materials. All glass panels used in entrance areas should be minimally reinforced with ballistic film. Level 4 bullet proof glass should be considered in areas considered highly vulnerable.

5. Personnel. Persons conducting entryway screening shall be trained on the operation of the types of screening devices used pursuant to manufacturer specifications.

6. Deliveries. Electronic and visual inspections of mail and delivered packages should also occur. A separate oversized magnetometer should be used as needed for such inspections.

PUBLIC AREAS AND HALLWAYS

1. A judicial officer should notify court security prior to exiting a secure area and entering a public area in order to reach a secure destination.
2. Sufficient CSOs should be available to frequently check the public areas and any hidden areas for potential threats.
3. There should always be a clear line of sight in public areas and hallways. Extraneous and large decoration in public areas should be avoided.
4. Video surveillance should be installed in all public areas and hallways. This should be monitored by the command center at all times while the courthouse is open.
5. Furniture, garbage bins and the like should be secured to the floor.
6. Cleaning and maintenance staff should only perform their duties while security is on duty in the courthouse.

COURTROOMS

1. All doors to the courtroom shall be securely locked when the courtroom is not in use.
2. Courtrooms shall be used only for official purposes, and only persons authorized by court officials or security personnel shall be allowed access to the courtroom when there are no official, public activities occurring therein.
3. All windows should use privacy materials to restrict a view of the courtroom from the outside. First floor, and vulnerable upper floor, windows should be reinforced with Level 4 bullet proof glass.
4. Courtroom furniture should to the extent possible be secured to the floor. The judge's bench should be reinforced with bullet proof materials, raised, and a safe distance back from trial tables and the witness stand.
5. The judicial officer should have a direct path to evacuate from the bench that may be secured after escape.
6. Panic buttons should be installed at the judicial officer's bench, the clerk's seat and the jury room, if any.
7. Items located on a trial table should be either affixed to the table or limited to preclude any item that may be used as a weapon.
8. Civilian ceremonial bailiffs assigned to a judicial officer are not to be considered security assets and they shall be tasked with responsibilities regarding the jury and judge but not responsibilities that would place them in harm's way.

DEFINITIONS

Court Proceeding: Any hearing or event presided over by a judicial officer.

Court Facility: A courthouse or any other portion of a building being used for court functions or occupied by personnel related to the operations of the courts. Such buildings include, but are not limited to, the Supreme Court of Maryland, the Appellate Court of Maryland, Circuit Courts, District Courts and District Court Commissioner locations.

Judicial Officer: A justice, judge, magistrate, auditor, examiner, or District Court commissioner.

Court Security Officer (CSO): An individual with a minimum rating of Special Police Officer (SPO) who is trained and qualified in court building security that has been specifically trained and qualified to use a firearm and intermediate weapons such as a taser, chemical spray, or restraints.

Command Center: An established office or area in the lobby area of the court building with an assigned CSO or ASP that can monitor video surveillance, telephone/radio communication, and provide a point of contact between the CSOs, judicial officers, and emergency personnel.

Special Police Officer (SPO): [Special Police Officer \(maryland.gov\)](https://www.maryland.gov/government/Departments/Police/Training/Training%20and%20Recruitment/Special%20Police%20Officers.aspx)

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

https://www.ncsc.org/data/assets/pdf_file/0032/78647/Best-Practices-for-Court-Building-Security.pdf

<https://georgiasuperiorcourts.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CSCJ-GSA-Georgia-Courthouse-Security-Standards-Rev-01-2018.pdf>

[210218-AZ-Court-Security-Standards-01-2020.pdf \(napco4courtleaders.org\)](https://www.napco4courtleaders.org/210218-AZ-Court-Security-Standards-01-2020.pdf)

[Law Enforcement - Standards Titles | CALEA® | The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.](https://www.calea.org/standards) (Please NOTE that this site has a membership wall. Court security is found in Title 73, but access is limited to members).

APPENDIX A

A Court Security Officer (CSO) under this subtitle is an officer of the court, that reports to the Administrative Office of the Court, or a Sheriff of the county and provides security to a court.

Court Security Officers as provided in this subtitle shall have the powers of a deputy sheriff to make an arrest, and serve court orders, writs, warrants and other process issued by the court within any building used in whole or in part by court officials in the State of Maryland.

After being duly trained and qualified, as established the Judicial Security and Training Standards Commission, or the Sheriff of the County in which they are appointed, a CSO shall have the power to:

1. Preserve security and the public peace within and around a court facility;
2. Provide free and unimpeded access to and from a court facility;
3. Transport and hold in custody arrestees and inmates;
4. Carry firearms and other intermediate weapons such as taser, chemical spray or restraints; and
5. Enforce judicial orders to preserve the peace and in furtherance of the administration of justice; and
6. Arrest any person who or attempts to:
 - a. Deface or damage a court facility; or
 - b. Disturb or interfere with the decorum and tranquility of any courtroom or any other part of a courthouse facility; or
 - c. Disrupt and endanger the administration of justice, the integrity and dignity of the judicial processes, the orderly progress of a court proceeding, or the rights of litigants
 - d. Is in criminal violation of a State or local law within or immediately a court facility

This authority shall extend outside of a court facility to capture an inmate, or arrestee who has escaped from a court facility; and

A Sheriff, in order to assist in manpower to protect the Courts, and to protect the administration of justice, may special deputize a duly trained and qualified Court Security Officer to have the limited jurisdiction in their county for the following specific matters concerning crimes against court:

1. To protect and safeguard a court official that has been subjected to a threat.

The regulations concerning the administration of a special deputization process under this subtitle to include special deputy CSO identification cards, oath or affirmation, length of deputization and training standards shall be formulated by the Judicial Security and Standards Commission, and publicly posted on the AOC website for transparency as a standardized practice across the State of Maryland.

Under this subtitle a CSO who is an employee of the Judiciary and who is deputized as a special deputy, remains an employee of the Judiciary and does not become an employee of the County, or the Sheriff.

This subtitle does not remove any existing authority of a judge, or a sheriff has to appoint security personnel, or deputy sheriffs.

Report of the Costs and Resources Workgroup

Task Force on Ensuring the Security of Judicial Facilities

November 2024

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Executive Summary

The Costs and Resources Workgroup (Workgroup) of the Task Force for Judicial Security (Task Force) is charged with developing estimated costs for the security needs by the Standards Workgroup of the Task Force. The analysis is based on both initial and supplemental security surveys of each courthouse. These surveys were used to identify where the standards are being met and where they fall short of best practices. The Workgroup divided the work product of the Standards Workgroup into three broad categories: 1) personnel needs, including the number of security assets required to satisfy the standards set out by the Standards Workgroup;¹ 2) issues related to parking for judicial officers; and 3) physical hardening of courthouses and other facilities where judicial officers work. The Workgroup met four times over the course of September 2024 and worked diligently to assign monetary costs, where possible, to the security deficiencies of each courthouse. These deficiencies were identified by comparing the courthouse security surveys with the best practice standards established by the Standards Workgroup. The Workgroup also identified where the Judiciary was already providing the needed financing for the security resources identified, noted where certain security enhancements would not be reasonably or fiscally practical, or where these standards should instead be incorporated into future building design.

Introduction

The Workgroup was charged with determining the resource needs and associated costs with ensuring the security of Judicial facilities. The Workgroup analyzed the documentation provided by the Standards Workgroup, assigning an item number to each “standard” outlined as a best practice. This resulted in 89 individual security standards across four areas: personnel, personnel training, parking, and physical plant. The Workgroup assessed whether each judicial facility met the standards outlined. This was accomplished by surveying each courthouse, either utilizing an existing assessment report of all court facilities that was prepared in the Spring of 2024 or by two new sets of survey questions. The results of the surveys and assessments were mapped to the 89 identified standards so that the Workgroup could determine which court facilities fell below the standard and what additional resources would be required to bring each facility up to standard.

The 89 standards were then broken down into three areas: standards with costs, standards with additional explanation, and standards which do not have a cost. The first group, standards with costs associated, are summarized in this Report, and provided with a location-specific cost analysis in Appendix A. The second group, costs that need a narrative explanation, are included in Appendix B. The final group of standards which do not have a cost associated were determined to either be too difficult or not practically reasonable to cost or the cost would be minor and could be absorbed into existing operational budgets.

¹ The Standards Workgroup had broken the data into four areas. In addition to the three mentioned in this Report, the fourth was security officer training. The Costs and Resources Workgroup did not include this fourth standard in their analysis as all levels of the court are substantially in compliance with all training requirements for court security officers (CSOs) and can continue adherence to training standards with existing resources.

Once each location was assessed and mapped to the standards, an agreed upon list of security deficiencies was identified for each location. Based on publicly available cost data, cost data from past projects, and information established from subject matter expertise, costs were estimated. The estimated agreed upon costs are listed in Appendix C. Each judicial facility location was then analyzed to determine what resources and associated costs would be required to bring the location up to compliance with the standards. Thus, final costs could be analyzed by location or by standard (e.g., the total cost to bring Baltimore County up to standard or the total cost of all parking needs across the state).

Section I: Personnel and Personnel Qualifications

There are nine standards in this section, five related to personnel needs and four related to personnel training qualifications.

Appellate Courts

The appellate courts are collectively located in one courthouse and have sufficient security personnel to meet the standards identified by the Standards Workgroup. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Circuit Courts

Each county has a circuit court courthouse. In addition, the Baltimore City Circuit Court has three court locations. County/City sheriffs provide courthouse security for the circuit courts across the state. The number of circuit court security personnel stationed at each courthouse varies greatly from county to county across the state.

The circuit court has both judges and magistrates. Both groups are considered judicial officers and both groups conduct judicial hearings.

Security standard 1.1 recommended that, at a minimum, one (1) Court Security Officer (CSO) should be present in each type of judicial proceeding in a circuit court. The need identified by this standard was determined by the number of courtrooms and hearing rooms in each courthouse.² Security standard 1.2 recommended a second CSO be present when an in-custody hearing was being held. This requirement was estimated by assuming a need for an additional CSO in fifty percent (50%) of the number of courtrooms. Last, security standard 1.3 recommended having additional CSOs, as needed, for high profile cases or in the hallways “roving” through the courthouse. This requirement was calculated by assuming a need for one (1) CSO for every four courtrooms.³ The appropriate security staffing levels were determined by combining the requirements in standards 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3. To further refine a more accurate

² Because of the need to provide CSOs with annual leave, breaktime or sick leave, the Costs and Resources Workgroup estimated that 1.5 CSOs would be needed for each courtroom or hearing room and applied this calculation to the personnel needs recommended by standard 1.1.

³ It should be noted that Sheriff’s Offices as well as the District Court Bailiffs’ offices have had difficulty in attracting and retaining security officers. This results in staffing vacancies even if a particular Sheriff’s Office or the District Court has a sufficient number of allocated CSOs or bailiffs.

assessment of actual courtroom use, minutes of courtroom proceedings were used to calculate the average daily courtroom use for criminal and family cases which include juvenile and guardianship related cases. A second calculation was done to determine the average courtroom use of criminal cases each day. These two calculations were added together to determine how many CSOs would be needed to have one (1) CSO in each family case hearing, and two (2) CSOs in each criminal case hearing.

A survey was then sent to each sheriff requesting the sheriff to identify the existing number of security personnel assigned to interior security of each courthouse. The actual number of personnel provided by the sheriffs were then subtracted from the number of recommended security officers.⁴ The Workgroup then applied the statewide average sheriff salary, including benefits, in estimating a numerical value to the identified personnel needs for both large and medium-large jurisdictions in one grouping and for medium and small jurisdictions in another grouping.⁵

Courtroom minutes were again used to determine the average use of courtrooms including civil case types. This average daily courtroom use was used to calculate the needs for sheriff deputies, during a phased in approach. While focusing initially on the need for security officers in criminal, family, juvenile and guardianship case types in year one of the plan, security officers would be added to civil cases in the third year of the plan. Additional assumptions were made regarding contributions to the overall funding of personnel with the State providing funding for 80% of the cost needs in year 1 and reducing the contribution each year before the counties assuming the full cost after year 5.

Year	1	2	3	4	5
FY	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
State Funding	\$27,244,198	\$20,433,149	\$22,092,142	\$14,728,094	\$7,364,047

It should be noted that the “roving” court security officer has been assigned the most responsibilities and are assumed into security standard 1.3 – CSO dedicated as “rover.” As noted below, security standards 1.4 thru 4.21B are all assumed into the cost of roving personnel.

- 1.4: Second CSO available upon request.
- 3.8A: Designated CSO available to be notified of judicial officer on arrival.
- 3.8B: Designated CSO available to escort if requested on arrival.
- 3.9A: Designated CSO available to be notified of judicial officer departure.
- 3.9B: Designated CSO available to escort if requested on departure.
- 3.10: CSO patrol parking areas during morning, lunch hour, and at COB.
- 3.15: CSO installed in booth at security checkpoint.
- 3.20: CSO to be stationed at entrance/exit once notified of judicial officer entrance/exit.

⁴ The Workgroup did not discuss a minimum number of security officers being always present in the courthouse, a factor particularly relevant for small courthouses.

⁵ These additional personnel needs, and the associated costs, will be recurring annual costs (operating budget) as opposed to the parking and courthouse hardening needs that are outlined below which are onetime costs (capital budget).

- 4.1B: CSO at main entrance will have enforcement authority.
- 4.7: Judicial officer notify CSO when exiting a secure areas to enter a public area.
- 4.21A: civilian ceremonial bailiffs not acceptable security assets.
- 4.21B: civilian ceremonial bailiff duties will not put them in harm's way.

Security standards 4.21A and 4.21B could be met by ensuring that sheriff's deputies are in each courtroom and that those deputies assist with juror movement which is a responsibility given to ceremonial bailiffs. The Workgroup assumed that staffing and personnel scheduling would shift based on the individual needs of the courthouse, thus no cost was associated with roving personnel needs.

Finally, security standard 4.1 – video surveillance at main entrance will be monitored by command center, and security standard 4.10 – video surveillance in public areas/hallways monitored by command center were combined into one personnel calculation. Two shifts of surveillance personnel are required to account for the courthouse operational hours. Courthouses are open to the public and/or court staff prior to the commencement of dockets and, at times, courthouse hours are extended to the evening account for lengthy dockets or deliberating juries.⁶ While the Workgroup based the cost assumption on the average cost of a sheriff's deputy, this responsibility could be assumed by unarmed or other personnel types.

Orphans' Court

Orphans' Court total personnel cost: \$293,625

Orphans' Court judges are responsible for judicial actions related to probate and the administration of estates. Three Orphans' Court judges sit in Baltimore City and each of the Maryland counties except for Harford, Howard, and Montgomery counties.⁷ Orphans' Court judges are elected every four years. The amount of time the Orphans' Court judges sit per week varies across the state. In three jurisdictions, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Prince George's County, the Orphans' Court judges sit five days a week. In the other 21 jurisdictions, the judges sit as a three-judge panel only part time, varying from one to three days a week. To calculate security for the courtrooms, a calculation was based on an hourly rate of an unarmed guard⁸ instead of a PIN or yearly salary of a sheriff's deputy calculation.⁹ It was further suggested that Orphans' Court judges are less likely to hold hearings two weeks of the year during the winter holiday season to accommodate both judge's vacations and as the result of the availability of counsel and other parties. Thus, the yearly cost of security for the Orphans' Court

⁶ The Workgroup again assumed 1.5 CSOs each shift to cover sick, vacation, break, and training leave.

⁷ In Harford, Howard and Montgomery counties, the Orphans' Court judges also sit as circuit court judges.

⁸ This would be the base amount, with the assumption that additional requirements such as firearm license and training would increase the hourly rate. The Workgroup was unable to source an hourly rate for an armed guard with sufficient accuracy.

⁹ The Workgroup separated out the cost of the Orphans' Court judges and did not incorporate the needs into the sheriff needs analysis. As the Orphans' Court judges only sit part-time in most locations, it was more prudent to do an hourly rate calculation instead of a sheriff's deputy salary with benefits, despite these judges often being located inside of circuit courts. As some Orphans' Court judges are located outside of circuit court courthouses, a staffing model that allowed sheriff's deputies to travel away from the courthouse would increase costs.

judges was calculated using 50 weeks, by the hours per week. The total cost statewide would be \$293,625.

District Court

District Court Personnel Costs Total: \$11,488,612

District Court Personnel Costs with Bailiff Conversion Total: \$23,835,815

The District Court is a statewide unified court system that is broken into twelve (12) Districts. Each District has at least one courthouse in each county. The larger suburban Districts have multiple courthouses.¹⁰ Unlike the circuit courts' use of local sheriff's offices, the District Court employs and uses bailiffs that are centrally trained. All bailiffs are Special Police Officers (SPOs) and meet all required training standards as outlined in the Standards Workgroup document.¹¹

In addition to judges in the District Court, court commissioners are part of the District Court and are judicial officers that operate in courthouses or standalone facilities. Commissioners handle interim peace, protective and extreme risk protective order hearings, make public defender application determinations, process requests for criminal charges and conduct initial appearances for individuals that have been arrested. They operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days year.

Finally, Baltimore County (District 8) is the only District to employ Constables.¹² Constables are responsible for posting and mailing summons in all landlord tenant related filings. They also are responsible for evictions. While based in the three Baltimore County courthouses, they are "on the road" on a daily basis, posting the summons on tenant locations as well as conducting evictions. Constables are neither judicial officers nor CSOs; however, the nature of their duties raises security concerns that are set forth later in this report.

Presently, the District Court has been allocated the appropriate number of personnel to have a CSO in each courtroom, a second CSO for criminal courtrooms, and a "roving" CSO for a total of [REDACTED] statewide. The appropriate number of personnel have not been allocated, however, to [REDACTED].

District Court bailiffs are contractual employees rather than full time equivalent employees. While they are entitled to some leave and have the option to purchase health insurance, they are not entitled to participate in the state retirement system. Their inability to participate in the pension system has hindered the Judiciary's ability to attract and retain bailiffs. A complicating factor is that some applicants for bailiff positions are retired Maryland State Police personnel or

¹⁰ Baltimore City (District 1) has four courthouses spread throughout the city. Baltimore County (District 8) has three courthouses. Prince George's County (District 5), Montgomery County (District 6), and Anne Arundel County (District 7) each have two courthouse locations.

¹¹ For purposes of this report, both sheriffs and bailiffs are referred to as Court Security Officers (CSOs) unless otherwise noted.

¹² In all other Districts, local sheriffs' departments are responsible for the work handled by the Constables.

other state law enforcement and, under existing law, are prohibited from drawing a second pension without a reduction to the first pension.¹³

The Judiciary should consider asking the legislature to modify existing law to convert the bailiff contractual positions to full time equivalent positions. Additional consideration should be given to legislation to provide an allowance for certain positions to return to state service and begin pension contributions and/or receive pension benefits.¹⁴

Costs were provided contemplating converting the contractual positions held by bailiffs to full time equivalent PINs, which includes benefits and pension costs. The conversion from contractual positions to full time equivalent positions (FTE) would cost the Judiciary: \$12,347,203. This would be an ongoing yearly obligation.

The cost breakdown is shown below in Table 1:

CLASSIFICATION TITLE	FTE Count	Potential Total cost for bailiffs as regular employees
Bailiff (up to 3 years of service)	█	\$ █
Bailiff (3 - 8 years of service)	█	\$ █
Bailiff (8+ years of service)	█	\$ █
Bailiff, Lead (up to 3 years of service)	█	\$ █
Bailiff, Lead (3 - 8 years of service)	█	\$ █
Bailiff, Lead (8+ years of service)	█	\$ █
Bailiff, Supervisor (up to 3 years of service)	█	\$ █
Bailiff, Supervisor (3 - 8 years of service)	█	\$ █
Bailiff, Supervisor (8+ years of service)	█	\$ █
Total	█	\$27,704,275.63
AY25 Budget Appropriation		(\$15,357,072.80)
Additional funds needed		\$12,347,202.83

¹³ As mentioned in Footnote 3, at any given time, █
 █ Despite a dedicated and ongoing hiring campaign, including expanding the pool of qualified applicants to include individuals with prior military experience as well individuals having correctional experience, the inability to hire new bailiffs at the rate needed to be fully staffed has been consistent for the last several years. To minimize the operational effect of these vacancies, the District Court has contracted with a security vendor to provide unarmed security in certain courthouses to supplement the armed bailiff force. These unarmed contracted guards, however, do not fulfill the security standards recommendations. This practice is also followed by some sheriffs' offices who have elected to employ unarmed civilians to screen at the courthouse doors with support from either sheriff's deputies or SPOs.

¹⁴ This issue is not unique to the District Court. In many instances, county funded Sheriff's Offices are unable to attract prior county law enforcement officers due to the rules regarding eligibility for more than one county pension.

Commissioner Offices

Commissioner Office Personnel Cost Total: \$10,873,372

Commissioners are judicial officers. While some commissioner offices are located within courthouses, commissioner offices are also located at detention facilities or other private leased offices. Regardless of location, commissioners work 24/7/365. Because commissioners work outside of standard working hours, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] To estimate the cost associated with having an armed security officer on site, the Costs and Resources Workgroup used the base salary of a bailiff including benefits. The expectation of this CSO would be to assist with securing the building facility and to ensure the safety of the commissioner.

The total costs of 24/7 security at commissioner offices, both within courthouses and standalone locations, is: \$10,873,372.

Constables

Constable Personnel Costs Total: \$615,240

The District Court in Baltimore County is unique as they are the only District to employ constables. Because of the nature of their work, constables are frequently put in challenging security situations as they are posting summons or performing evictions. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] While not judicial officers, constables face unique and increasingly alarming security challenges, and consideration should be given to address their security needs.

There are insufficient constable positions to staff each eviction event with two constables, so each constable is presently required to execute an eviction alone. An additional constable for each eviction would provide backup and added security. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] would result in an annual cost of \$615,243.20.

Table 2				
Position	Base Salary	Fringe Benefit Cost	Total cost	Total cost - 8 constables
Constable	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Section II: Parking

The Standards Workgroup identified 36 standards for parking and entrances: 3 ingress/egress standards, 11 attached parking, 8 detached parking, 9 separate lot parking, and 5 individual parking space standards.

[REDACTED] Where attached or underground parking does exist, an analysis was performed to determine if any additional security standards were unmet and what any associated costs would be to bring the location up to standard. Where attached or underground parking does not exist, the Costs and Resources Workgroup determined that retrofitting existing structures to provide this level of security is unrealistic. Accordingly, the Workgroup recommends that consideration for underground secure parking be added to all plans for new courthouse and building construction.

Security standard 3.7 recommends that emergency call boxes be installed in parking areas or walking areas. The cost estimates were derived by multiplying the installation cost of each call box by an assumption of one call box for every four judicial officers. The Workgroup recognizes this calculation does not account for the myriad of situations where a call box may be installed, such as on dense urban streets or within parking lots.

Finally, security standard 3.3 recommends that doors/gates for judicial parking be on a timed/timer closing schedule. This type of gate was assumed to be a model with quick lift capabilities [REDACTED]. This security standard and associated cost was assigned only to locations that had secure parking as they would need an existing structure to support this type of gate. Similarly, security standard 3.1C recommends that a license plate reader (LPR) be provided to secure interior parking areas. LPRs were added as a cost item only at locations that had existing attached or underground parking. Accordingly, if security standard 3.3 was added to a location, security standard 3.1C was also added.

Appellate Courts

Appellate Court Parking Cost Total: \$160,000

The Courthouse occupied by the Appellate Courts provides secured attached parking to all judicial officers. However, there are additional limited costs to bring the existing parking conditions up to full standard. The cost of parking needs for the Appellate Courts is: \$160,000.

Circuit Courts

Circuit Court Parking Cost Total: \$5,757,663

Circuit courts have a wide variety of parking needs. Judicial officers in the circuit courts who require parking security include judges, magistrates, and any appellate judges who have local chambers within the circuit court courthouse. For circuit courts which require parking safety enhancements, the Costs and Resources Workgroup determined that stone fencing was an appropriate [REDACTED].¹⁵

The Workgroup based its calculations of parking needs on one judicial officer requiring 225 square feet of space to park. This assumption included the ingress and egress of cars being able to pass each other. However, these cost calculations assumed a standard design and do not account for differently styled parking lots (angled parking, parallel parking, or entrance and exit

¹⁵ [REDACTED]

next to each other versus one on each end). Depending on the style of the parking lot, the associated fencing costs could increase or decrease.

The parking costs of the circuit court are: \$5,757,663.

District Court

District Court Parking Cost Total: \$9,701,750

District Court Courthouses

District Court Courthouses Parking Cost Total: \$6,513,975

Parking considerations were reviewed for all judges, commissioners and certain senior judges that maintain offices in District Court courthouse locations. The same analytical approach and cost assumptions taken with the circuit court was applied to the District Court.

Commissioner Offices

Commissioner Standalone Office Parking Cost Total: \$3,187,775

Commissioners have extensive parking requirements. In locations where commissioners are based in a courthouse that have secured parking for judges, [REDACTED] The Workgroup recommends that the commissioners' needs be accounted for in future courthouse programming, especially as commissioners may need to enter the courthouse facility from a different ingress point after regular courthouse hours. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] commissioner parking costs are assumed in the parking cost needs of the District Court courthouse where they are located.

Additionally, cost calculations for commissioner parking must consider the 12 off-site (standalone) locations.¹⁶ The needs to bring parking up to standard for all standalone commissioner offices, is: \$3,187,775.

The total cost to bring parking up to standard for all judicial officers (commissioners, judges, and senior judges who have chambers in District Court courthouses) is: \$9,701,750.

Section III: Hardening/Physical Plant

This Standards Workgroup identified four standards regarding public areas and hallways, 23 standards regarding entrances and screening requirements, and 14 standards related to courtrooms, chambers, and jury deliberation rooms.

While the Standards Workgroup determined that there were a number of security standards related to Level 4 glass (4.15B – First floor courtroom windows installed with Level 4 bullet resistant glass, and security standard 4.15C – vulnerable upper floor courtroom windows installed with Level 4 bullet resistant glass), the Costs and Resources Workgroup combined these separate standards into one security standard of 4.4 – Level 4 bullet resistant glass to be installed in vulnerable areas. To calculate items for security standard 4.4 Level 4 ballistic glass, a standard

[REDACTED]

window size of 3 feet by 5 feet was used. It was also assumed that there are four windows per courtroom and four windows per chambers resulting in 60 square feet per courtroom or chambers with external windows. External main entrance doors were assigned an average size of 27 square feet per door.

Other hardening costs were priced out by unit and numerical value as determined by the number of units needed in a specific courthouse, if any. Security standard 3.19, which recommended that there be a secure entrance for courthouse staff that was not to be used by the public, was determined too complex to assign a universal cost because of existing building considerations. Instead, the Workgroup relied on security standard 4.2 that recommended that if no employee entrance was possible, the public and employees should be separated to be appropriate. When security standard 4.2 was applied, courthouses were then assessed to see if fixed barriers were already installed at ingress/egress (security standard 4.1D). Additional partitions installation was assigned to security standard 4.1D to allow separation of public and courthouse staff while awaiting screening. In addition, certain circuit courthouses have clerk areas that are accessible to the public without having any physical barriers. In those locations, costs were estimated to install partitions.

Appellate Courts

Appellate Court Hardening Cost Total: \$1,677,850

The cost of bringing the physical plant of the Appellate Court building up to standard is \$1,677,850.

Circuit Courts

Circuit Court Hardening Cost Total: \$21,721,050

The cost of hardening the physical plant of circuit courts is complicated in a number of locations by the historic nature of some buildings. The Costs and Resources Workgroup agreed to assume a standard set of costs, regardless of the year the building was built or how recently the building received other improvements.

The overall needs of the circuit courts to bring the buildings up to standard is: \$21,721,050.

District Court

District Court Hardening Cost Total: \$19,836,575

District Court Courthouses

District Court Courthouse Hardening Cost Total: \$18,330,500

District Court needs vary statewide. However, most of the need is focused on ballistic glass and ballistic film.¹⁷ Overall, the costs associated with physical plant needs to bring District Court courthouses up to standard is: \$18,330,500.

¹⁷ The District Court has been implementing a courthouse hardening program for several years. As a result, some of the hardening projects have been completed or are in procurement.

Constables

Constables Hardening Cost Total: \$708,500

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] At times, this has presented a security challenge as most individuals, including in some cases law enforcement, do not understand the role and authority of a constable. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Table 3			
Number	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Total cost
23	\$25,000	\$2,000	\$621,000

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Consideration should be given to outfitting constables with body-worn cameras. An initial analysis was done, and general estimates of a new body-worn camera system is below in Table 4:

Table 4				
Number	Base Camera Purchase	Ongoing costs	Initial Costs	Ongoing Costs
25	\$2,200	\$1,300	\$55,000	\$32,500

There are other security considerations for constables, but those items would be assumed in the District Court's existing operating budget.

Commissioners Standalone Offices

Commissioner Standalone Office Hardening Cost Total: \$797,575

As set out in the Section I – [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Regardless of the presence of security personnel, commissioner locations often have separate entrances to permit the public to enter the office during non-court hours. Ideally, the entrance of commissioner office locations should be brought to standard per security standard 4.4 (entrance ballistic film or level 4 glass ballistic glass to be installed in entrance or vulnerable areas). The Costs and Resources Workgroup believes that additional security personnel will provide the needed security for commissioner locations in the short term but recommends that consideration be given to security standard 4.4 for separate commissioner entrances (wholly separated from the public) in future building programming.

Conclusion

The Costs and Resources Workgroup has attempted to provide the estimated costs to those judicial security needs as identified by the original and supplemental courthouse security evaluations consistent with the standards set out in the Standards Workgroup report. The Chair would like to acknowledge and thank the workgroup members and staff for the significant effort and expertise provided in compiling this report.

[This committee report included an appendix with confidential individual county analyses, which is retained on file].

Appendix B: Cost and Resources Workgroup Comments and Assumptions

The Costs and Resources Workgroup was charged with estimating costs for parking and security for judicial officers only, meaning judges, magistrates, and commissioners. While beyond the scope of this charge, the consensus among Workgroup members was that future consideration be given to security needs of certain justice partners such as Public Defenders and State's Attorneys who have offices housed within the courthouse facilities. This consideration is the most relevant when pricing out the cost of securing parking spaces or adding fencing and security for parking spots. Justice partners were not accounted for when counting the number of spaces, and thus parking costs would unquestionably rise if they were to be included in future secure parking plans. Additionally, security standard 4.2B recommended that if a courthouse has no separate entrance for employees, the public and employees should be separated. Accordingly, costs were estimated for installing barriers and partitions. Members of the Task Force asked that consideration should be given to including attorneys in the separated employee line. As this is a policy consideration, and would not involve additional costs, the Workgroup did not have any recommendations on this issue.

Although discussed, the source of funding for the cost estimates in this Report was determined to be beyond the scope of the Workgroup's charge. A theme that carried through the Workgroup's discussion was that consideration should be given to the balance of state versus county funding and the financial ability of each jurisdiction to contribute to such costs.

Underground parking was determined to be exorbitantly expensive and cost prohibitive to retrofit into existing courthouse structures. While a cost assumption was recommended to be \$50,00-\$65,000 per space for underground parking, that cost would increase 20% per space when building down one level and then a per space cost of \$100,000 to \$130,000 for two levels below ground. Instead of utilizing this cost to try to calculate retrofitting construction to existing structures, the Workgroup recommends that underground secure parking be included in future programming for new courthouse construction.

Security standard 3.6, installed security cameras have protective housings in parking areas/walking routes, was deemed unnecessary to assess. Instead, the Workgroup recommends that this standard be included in each future security camera system purchase and installation.

Certain additional security standards cannot be assigned a cost but should be given consideration when designing new courthouses. These include security standard 3.1B, designated passageways in interior parking area, security standard 3.1D, designated passageways separated from public area/main building entrance, security standard 3.18A-B, minimize lines of sight from public to judicial officers entering/exiting vehicles, security standard 4.9, public areas and hallways must maintain a clear line of sight. The Workgroup acknowledges that it is possible that in certain courthouse locations these security standards could be met or partially met with construction changes but given the timeframe of the Workgroup those assessments could not be completed timely.

Security standard 3.19, recommending fast tracking employees for entrance to the courthouses, was a standard assigned to the “roving” personnel but was not separately costed out. The formula for roving needs remained the same as it was assumed that if extra personnel was needed at the door for screening, they would be able to have the flexibility to assist as needed.

Security standard 4.1F recommended that screenings comply with the ADA. As ADA policies are already in place in all court locations, the Workgroup recommends that each Administrative Judge review existing ADA compliance.

The Workgroup assumed that certain security standards such as CSO training or business process changes such as: security standard 4.8, CSOs conduct frequent checks of public areas/hidden areas for threats, security standard 4.14, courtrooms used only for official purposes, security standard 4.3F, all entrance screening equipment to be regularly tested and serviced, security standard 4.20, trial table items either secured to table or limited for use, would be assumed under existing operating budgets or incur no substantial cost.

Security standard 4.16, recommending that courtroom furniture be secured to the floor, would require unique consideration, and was not assigned a cost. Not only would it be difficult to assess and appropriately assign cost, but the Workgroup also considered that anchoring furniture would make it difficult to host complex cases with multiple defendants. If juror seats could not be moved to accommodate jurors with accommodation needs, or trial tables cannot be added to accommodate multiple defendants, the Workgroup was concerned that some courthouses would have difficulty balancing case needs. The Workgroup recommends that any anchoring of furniture should be determined by the Administrative Judge and included in operating costs and the programming for installation or purchase of new furniture.

Security standard 4.17C, recommending setting trial tables back from the bench, was not able to be assessed and would likely be assumed into existing operating budgets. The same assumption applies to Standard 4.11 – hallway furniture, garbage bins anchored.

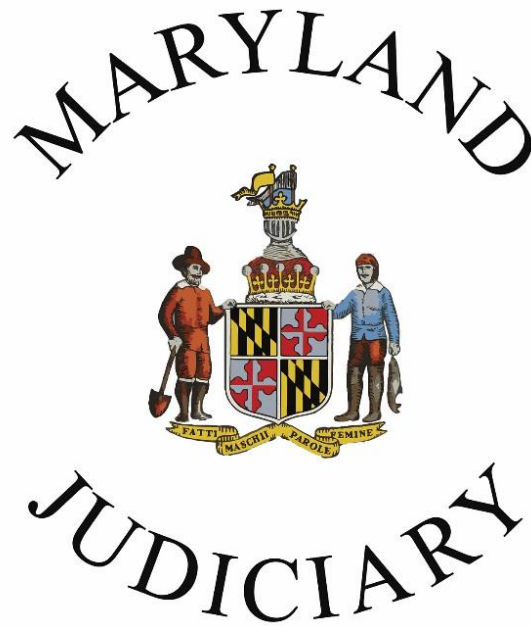
Security standard 4.3E, recommending remotely locking doors, would be assumed within the existing operating budgets, and should be included in new construction programming.

Security standard 4.6A recommends that all deliveries of mail and/or packages should be electronically and visually inspected. This standard was considered to be a business process issue and would have no associated cost. Additionally, it was assumed that if any location were to need additional screening hardware to accomplish this inspection task, those costs would be assumed into existing operating budgets.

Appendix C: Cost List

Section - Cost Category	Cost Item	Security Standard	Court Type (Cost)	Unit	Estimated Cost
Personnel	Sheriff - Medium-Large and Large Jurisdictions	1.1, 1.2 & 1.3: CSO present (x1) in the courtroom, Second CSO (In-custody), CSO Dedicated as Rover	Circuit Court	1	\$203,076.00
	Sheriff - Small and Medium Jurisdictions	1.1, 1.2 & 1.3: CSO present (x1) in the courtroom, Second CSO (In-custody), CSO Dedicated as Rover	Circuit Court	1	\$125,000.00
	Video monitored by command center	4.1C Video surveillance at main entrance will be monitored by command center	Circuit Court	1	\$203,076.00
	24/7 Security	4.3DG Entrances Monitored - Guard	District Court	1	\$89,126.00
	Constable Positions	1.1C: Constable Positions (Evictions)	District Court	Constable	\$76,905.00
	Guard- Orphans' Court Security	1 Guard Present for Orphans' Court Proceedings	Circuit Court	Number of Hours (Annual)	\$22.63
Parking	Automated license plate reader	3.1C: License plate reader (LPR) available in security interior parking area	Circuit/District/Appellate	1	\$30,000.00
	Video Intercom system	3.2B: Video Intercom, connected to a command center	Circuit/District/Appellate	System or Unit	\$2,500.00
	Gate system, including timer	3.3: Doors/gates on a timed/timer closing schedule	Circuit/District/Appellate	1	\$70,000.00
	Lighting for parking lot	3.5: Adequate lighting installation	Circuit/District/Appellate	1 system	\$100,000.00
	Call box	3.7: Emergency call boxes in parking areas/walking routes	Circuit/District/Appellate	1	\$2,100.00
	Stone Fencing	3.11A: Parking area fenced in either brick/stone	Circuit/District/Appellate	Square foot	\$145.00
	Key card system - full system	3.12A: Keycard entry available in separate lot	Circuit/District/Appellate	1 full system	\$100,000.00
	Key card system - unit	3.12A: Keycard entry available in separate lot	Circuit/District/Appellate	1 Unit	\$250.00
	Gate system	3.12B: "Sturdy" vehicle access gates/overhead door in separate lot	Circuit/District/Appellate	1 Gate	\$40,000.00
Hardening	Doors/Windows with Level 4 Glass	4.4B Level 4 bullet proof glass to be installed in vulnerable areas	Circuit/District/Appellate	Square foot	\$800.00
	Glass panels with ballistic film	4.4A Ballistic film to be installed on glass panels in entrance area	Circuit/District/Appellate	Square foot	\$125.00
	Fixed Barriers	4.1D Fixed barriers will separate ingress/egress at entrance	Circuit/District/Appellate	1	\$25,000.00
	Partitions	4.1D Fixed barriers will separate ingress/egress at entrance	Circuit/District/Appellate	1	\$36,000.00
	Video - surveillance system	4.3D Entrances equipped with video surveillance	Circuit/District/Appellate	1 system	\$200,000.00
	Judge's bench	4.17A Judge's bench reinforced with bullet proof materials	Circuit/District/Appellate	1	\$12,000.00
	Installation of bench	4.17B Judge's/Magistrates bench raised	Circuit/District/Appellate	1	\$8,000.00
Hardening - Constable	State Vehicles	4.22 Vehicles for Constables (Evictions)	District Court	1 vehicle	\$27,000.00
	Body worn camera	4.23 Body Worn Camera	District Court	1	\$3,500.00

Report of the Solutions Subcommittee



December 2024

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Solutions Subcommittee Membership

Subcommittee Member	Role	Organization
<i>The Honorable E. Gregory Wells, Chair</i>	Chief Judge	Appellate Court of Maryland
Samuel L. Cogen	Sherriff	Baltimore City
The Honorable Paul D. Corderman	State Senator	Frederick and Washington Counties
Natasha M. Dartigue	Public Defender	Office of the Maryland Public Defender
Sloan Franklin	State's Attorney	Caroline County
Timothy Haven	Coordinator of Commissioner Activity	District Court of Maryland
The Honorable Geoffrey G. Hengerer	Administrative Judge	Baltimore City District Court
The Honorable Dawn P. Luedtke	County Council Member	Montgomery County
The Honorable Stacy P. Mayer	Associate Judge	Baltimore County Circuit Court
Robert O. McCullough	Chief of Police	Baltimore County
Kelley O'Connor	Assistant State Court Administrator	Administrative Office of the Courts, Government Relations and Public Affairs
Raphael J. Santini	President	Maryland State Bar Association
The Honorable Shaem C.P. Spencer	Administrative Judge	Anne Arundel County District Court
The Honorable William M. Valentine	State Delegate	Frederick and Washington Counties
The Honorable Brett R. Wilson	Administrative Judge	Washington County Circuit Court
Jennifer Young	Policy Analyst	Department of Legislative Services
<i>Lily Kleppertknoop, Staff</i>	Senior Researcher	Administrative Office of the Courts, Research & Analysis
<i>William Vormelker, Staff</i>	Government Relations Representative	Administrative Office of the Courts, Government Relations and Public Affairs

The Solutions Subcommittee recognizes and thanks the hard work of its members.

Introduction

Consistent with section 2(f)(2) of the Judge Andrew Wilkinson Judicial Security Act, the Solutions Subcommittee was tasked with developing “a legislative proposal” that encompasses the following:

- i. minimum number of security personnel for judicial proceedings,
- ii. qualifications of that personnel,
- iii. minimum standards for entry and exit from courthouses, including parking, and
- iv. minimum standards for safe public areas within a courthouse.

The Solutions Subcommittee met on multiple occasions to consider the work of the Standards Workgroup and the Costs and Resources Workgroup. The contributions of those Workgroups greatly aided us in developing what we consider to be a reasonable set of proposals for the General Assembly to consider.

Summary and Recommendations

In reaching our proposals, the Solutions Subcommittee considered the 89 individual security standards that the two prior Workgroups determined were the minimum standards for ensuring the security of judicial facilities across the state as well as the costs estimated in four areas: personnel, personnel training, parking, and physical plant.

Those two Workgroups assessed whether each judicial facility met the standards outlined. That was accomplished by surveying each courthouse, either utilizing the existing assessment report of all court facilities that was prepared in the Spring of 2024 and by two new sets of survey questions.

The results of the surveys and assessments were mapped to the 89 identified standards so that the Costs and Resources Workgroup could determine which court facilities fell below the standard and what additional resources would be required to bring each facility up to full standard.

Based on those assessment, the Solutions Subcommittee makes the following recommendations:

Recommendations for Section I: Personnel Qualifications

Appellate Courts:

- The appellate courts meet the security standards, and no additional personnel are needed for non-courthouse locations.

Circuit Courts:

- There is a significant disparity in security staffing across Maryland’s 24 circuit courts.

- The standard recommends 1.5 Court Security Officer (CSO) per courtroom, with additional CSOs for in-custody hearings and high-profile cases.
- The phased implementation of additional personnel is recommended due to financial and recruitment challenges. Counties shall hire security officers to meet a First-Year goal of 1.5 CSOs in the courtrooms that circuit court administration determines most in need of security by FY2027. The counties will meet the additional security standards by the end of the five (5) year period accounting from FY2027.

District Courts:

- District courts already have sufficient bailiffs for judicial proceedings but lack security for commissioners, especially during non-court hours in standalone facilities.
- The subcommittee recommends prioritizing bailiffs for vulnerable locations [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with additional bailiffs phased in by 2027.
- Bailiffs are currently contractual employees; the subcommittee recommends converting these to full-time positions over the five-year period FY 2027-FY2032 to improve recruitment and retention.

Constables:

- Constables in Baltimore County face security risks in their duties but are considered outside the scope of the security recommendations. No changes are recommended for their staffing.

Fiscal Considerations:

- The implementation of these security standards involves significant costs, and both state and local jurisdictions are urged to pursue grant funding and state appropriations.

Recommendations for Section II: Parking

The Standards Workgroup identified various parking and entrance standards, including attached, underground, and separate lot parking. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] They recommended focusing on new constructions for secure parking.

The Solutions Subcommittee supported this and proposed focusing on near-term security improvements such as emergency call boxes, timed gates, and license plate readers for secure parking areas.

Key Points for Court Types:

- **Appellate Courts:** The current secured parking meets most standards, and given the planned construction of a new courthouse, no additional funds were recommended.
- **Circuit Courts:** With the widest range of parking needs, \$5.7 million is allocated for parking upgrades. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The Subcommittee suggests creating local task forces to determine feasible improvements and allocate funds accordingly.
- **District Courts:** An estimated \$6.5 million is needed to bring parking up to security standards. The Subcommittee recommends the allocation of these funds.
- **Commissioner Offices:** [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] An estimated \$3.4 million is required for upgrades, and the Subcommittee supports allocating these funds in FY 2026. Future courthouse planning should include provisions for commissioners' parking.
- **Funding for parking infrastructure improvements would be phased-in** over the same five-year period for hiring additional security personnel, FY2027-FY2032, via a non-lapsing fund to be administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts. This five-year phase-in should expect to spend 20% of the total allocation in each of the five years.

Recommendations for Section III: Hardening/Physical Plant

The Standards Workgroup identified security standards for public areas, entrances, courtrooms, chambers, and jury rooms. They consolidated two standards regarding Level 4 bulletproof glass into one for cost analysis. The Costs and Resources Workgroup calculated costs for hardening each courthouse, including separating employee entrances from public ones or using physical barriers where separate entrances weren't feasible. They also assessed areas where clerks' offices lacked physical protection and estimated costs for installing partitions.

Appellate Courts:

- **Hardening Cost:** \$1,677,850.
- No recommendation to harden the current appellate courthouse since a compliant courthouse is under construction.

Circuit Courts:

- **Hardening Cost:** \$21,721,050.
- Recommendations include implementing upgrades over two years, with funds allocated for new courthouses held in escrow for future security needs.

District Courts:

- **Hardening Cost:** \$21,147,700.
- Most needs involve ballistic glass/film, and full revitalization is planned by 2027, prioritized based on the severity of need.

Time Period:

Funding for hardening improvements in the circuit courts and District Courts would be phased-in over the same five-year period for hiring additional security personnel, FY2027-FY2032, via a non-lapsing fund.

Constables:

- The Subcommittee did not recommend requesting funds for constables since they are outside the judicial officer mandate. Funding for constables should come from other sources.

Section I: Personnel Qualifications

Estimated Circuit Court Costs: \$34,055,248 (Y1-Y2), \$36,820,236 (Y3-Y5 including civil)

Estimated Costs for District Court Stand-Alone Security: \$10,873,372

Estimated Cost to Convert Bailiffs to Full-Time Positions: \$23,835,815

Estimated Orphans' Court Costs: \$293,625

There are nine standards in this section, five related to personnel needs and four related to personnel training qualifications.

Appellate Courts

The appellate courts are collectively located in the Courts of Appeal Building in Annapolis and have sufficient security personnel to meet the standards identified by the Standards Workgroup. [REDACTED]

The Costs and Resources Workgroup determined that these three offsite locations do not require additional personnel. The Solutions Subcommittee agrees with this assessment and additional security personnel for the Appellate Courts and accessory judicial facilities in Annapolis will not be requested.

Circuit Courts

The twenty-three Maryland counties each have a single circuit court building. The Circuit Court for Baltimore City has three court locations. County sheriffs provide courthouse security for the circuit courts across the state.

Our current assessment highlighted significant variance in the number of circuit court security personnel serving the needs of each building regardless of the size and scope of the facility. [REDACTED]

Within the circuit courts, judges and magistrates serve as judicial officers and conduct judicial hearings.

The Subcommittee considered that Standard 1.1 recommends, at a minimum, that one (1) Court Security Officer (CSO) should be present in each type of judicial proceeding in a circuit court. The Costs and Resources Subcommittee determined the scope by assessing the number of courtrooms and hearing rooms in each courthouse. Standard 1.2 recommended a second CSO be present when an in-custody hearing was being held. This requirement was estimated by assuming a need for an additional CSO in fifty percent (50%) of the number of courtrooms. Security standard 1.3 recommended having additional CSOs, as needed, for high profile cases or in the hallways “roving” through the courthouse.

This requirement was calculated by assuming a need for one 1.5 CSOs for every four courtrooms. We use 1.5 as multiplier to account for personnel sick leave, vacation time, and emergencies for continued security presence consistent with federal and state standards for personnel staffing. Costs and Resources determined the appropriate security staffing levels by combining the requirements in standards 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.¹

Table 1 – Personnel Needs*

County Size	Cost per CSO	CSOs Needed	Funds Needed
Small	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	\$2,750,000
Medium/Large	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	\$33,601,780
	Total	[REDACTED]	\$36,820,236

*Includes CSO coverage for civil case types

¹ Costs and Resources Workgroup noted that compliance with security standard 4.1 (video surveillance at main entrance will be monitored by command center) and security standard 4.10 (video surveillance in public areas/hallways monitored by command center) were combined into one personnel calculation. [REDACTED]

The Solutions Subcommittee agreed that this standard should be met. But the Subcommittee determined that its implementation should be phased-in owing to the costs and the potential difficulty in hiring sufficient trained personnel that meet the qualifications for security officers contained in Standard 2.1-3. The following was noted in the Costs and Resources Subcommittee’s Report:

Sherriff’s Offices as well as the District Court Bailiffs’ offices have had difficulty in attracting and retaining security officers. This results in staffing vacancies even if a particular Sherriff’s Office or the District Court has a sufficient number of allocated CSOs or bailiffs.

Consequently, the Solutions Subcommittee propose that each jurisdiction hire a sufficient number of CSOs to meet Standard 1.1: 1.5 CSOs per court proceeding in each building to be met in FY 2027. We recommend that additional personnel be hired to meet Standards 1.2 and 1.3, based on the needs to be determined by the Administrative Judge, in consultation with the Sheriff in that jurisdiction. Priority should be given to criminal cases – with civil cases (including family court) covered beginning in year three of the program. Implementation of the second phase should be accomplished by FY 2032, or at the end of five years from the Phase One implementation.

Table 2 – Civil Cases, additional cost (thousands)

Year	3	4	5
FY	29	30	31
State	\$1,659	\$1,106	\$553
County	\$1,106	\$1,659	\$2,212
Total	\$2,765	\$2,765	\$2,765

Aside from the existing personnel challenges faced by each jurisdiction, there are significant fiscal obligations with meeting the recommended standard. While we know that each local jurisdiction will need to allocate funds to this purpose, we respectfully request a mandated annual appropriation by the State to the Maryland judiciary that can be distributed by formula to aid local jurisdictions in meeting this goal.

Further, the State would only be obligated to cover security personnel costs over a five-year period, FY2027 to FY2032, and after each jurisdiction meets certain conditions. Specifically, each jurisdiction should have at least 50% of the mandated number of security personnel in place by 2027. No jurisdiction would obtain state funding until they employed 50% of the mandated number of required security personnel. Only after a jurisdiction crossed the 50% threshold would they receive a percentage state funding.

The State funds would be held by the Administrative Office of the Courts and distributed to each jurisdiction annually. The State would cover the majority of the additional personnel costs in the first three years of the program, with the counties picking up more of the costs in years four and five, and all of the additional costs in year six. The subcommittee recommend the following funding percentages:

Table 3 – Funding Percentage

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6
FY	27	28	29	30	31	32
State	80%	60%	60%	40%	20%	0%
County	20%	40%	40%	60%	80%	100%

Table 4 - Personnel Costs (thousands)*

Year	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
FY	27	28	29	30	31	FY 27-31
State Funding	\$27,244	\$20,433	\$22,092	\$14,728	\$7,364	\$91,862
County Funding	\$6,811	\$13,622	\$14,728	\$22,092	\$29,456	\$86,710
Total Cost	\$34,055	\$34,055	\$36,820	\$36,820	\$36,820	\$178,571

*Years 3-5 includes CSO coverage for civil case types.

The Workgroup also recommends the State and local jurisdictions should pursue grant funding to the greatest extent possible to offset these costs. Maryland State Bar Association has offered to help with grant writing to assist with these endeavors.

Further, we recommend that local jurisdictions assess whether and how they may improve the physical layout of each courthouse to potentially reduce personnel needs with better design as recommended in Part III (Hardening) of this Report. We recognize that some infrastructure improvements may be difficult owing to the uniqueness of each building. With new construction, each of the security standards outlined in Sections II and II of this Report should be incorporated into the building plans.

District Court

Judges

Maryland’s District Courts are part of a unified court system comprised of twelve (12) Districts. Each District has at least one courthouse in each county.

The larger suburban Districts have multiple courthouses.² The Costs and Resources Workgroup reported that the District Court uses bailiffs rather than sheriffs. Bailiffs are Special Police Officers who meet all required training standards as outlined in the Standards Workgroup document.³ Consequently, the Solutions Subcommittee have no legislative proposals for hiring additional bailiffs for District Court judicial proceedings.

² Baltimore City (District 1) has four courthouses spread throughout the city. Baltimore County (District 8) has three courthouses, Prince George’s County (District 5), Anne Arundel (District 7) and Montgomery County (District 6) each have two courthouse locations.

³ For purposes of this report, both sheriffs and bailiffs are referred to as Court Security Officers (CSOs) unless otherwise noted.

Commissioners

Court commissioners are critical partners in the operation of the District Courts. These judicial officers work in courthouses in some jurisdictions, and in stand-alone facilities in other locations. Significantly, commissioners issue interim peace, protective, and extreme risk protective orders, make public defender application determinations, process requests for criminal charges and conduct initial appearances for individuals that have been arrested. They operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days year.

As noted, the Costs and Resources Workgroup reports that the District Court has been allocated the appropriate number of personnel to have 1.5 CSOs in each courtroom, a second CSO for criminal courtrooms and a “roving” CSO [REDACTED]. However, the Costs and Resources Workgroup reports [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] the Subcommittee recommends that the hiring of addition bailiffs be done in a two-step process.

The first step to curing this would be prioritizing [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Additionally, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]⁴

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The Solutions Subcommittee further recommend that these locations be fully staffed during all operating

⁴ The Solutions Subcommittee notes that at least a pro-rated appropriation might be needed for FY27 to cover the period of July 1, 2026, into some period to be determined in 2027.

hours by bailiffs no later than FY 2023, with priority given to the locations with the greatest need being staffed first over the five-year period FY 2027-FY2023.

[REDACTED]

Separately, the Costs and Resources Workgroup informed us that District Court bailiffs are contractual employees rather than full time equivalent employees. While they are entitled to some leave and have the option to purchase health insurance, District Court bailiffs are not entitled to participate in the state retirement system.

The lack of these benefits has hindered attraction and retention of competent security personnel. A complicating factor is that some bailiffs are retired from employment with the Maryland State Police or other state law enforcement. Under existing law, these bailiffs are unable to draw a second pension without a reduction to the first pension.⁵

For the following reasons, the Solutions Subcommittee recommends that the bailiffs should be converted from contractual positions to full-time equivalent positions. The quality of the former law-enforcement officers who serve in these positions is quite high, and we want to retain them and attract more to serve. Converting from contractual staff to full-time equivalent positions is fair and appropriate given the nature of the work, both stressful and dangerous.

Moreover, the Subcommittee does not believe individuals who previously served as state law enforcement personnel should be treated differently. Accordingly, we ask that all bailiffs receive the benefits of a full-time state employee.⁶

For those bailiffs who were formerly Maryland State Police Officers, of whom there are many, we recommend either they be allowed to return to the state retirement system and continue to accrue pension benefits or allow them to enter some other part of the state retirement system. The Solutions Subcommittee also discussed other options to resolve the issue of retirement benefits for former MSP employees.

⁵ As mentioned in Footnote 3, at any given time, [REDACTED] Despite a dedicated and ongoing hiring campaign, including expanding the pool of qualified applicants to include individuals with prior military experience as well individuals having correctional experience, the inability to hire new bailiffs at the rate needed to be fully staffed has been consistent for the last five years. To minimize the operational effect of these vacancies, the District Court has contracted with a security vendor to provide unarmed security in certain courthouses to supplement the armed bailiff force. However, unarmed contracted guards do not fulfill the security standards recommendations.

⁶ The Costs and Resources Workgroup reported that the conversion from contractual positions to full time equivalent positions would cost the Judiciary: \$12,347,203.

One option would be a salary offset, where the bailiff would receive a contribution to offset what could not be earned under the current system. An alternative would be to create an exception to the pension system for these former bailiffs. The consensus of the subcommittee's former law enforcement personnel and others was that exceptions have been made in the past and could be made in this case.

Constables

Baltimore County (District 8) is the only District to employ Constables.⁷ Constables are responsible for posting and mailing summons in all landlord tenant related filings. They also are responsible for evictions. While based in the Towson courthouse, they are "on the road" on a daily basis posting the summons on tenant locations as well as conducting evictions. Constables are neither judicial officers nor CSOs.

The nature of their duties raises security concerns, such as being put in potentially dangerous situations while they are posting summons or performing evictions. [REDACTED]

To help alleviate these security concerns the Costs and Solutions Subcommittee requested that consideration be given to increase the staffing of the number of constables [REDACTED].

The Solutions Subcommittee has considered this request and understands that the constables face dangers in performing their duties. However, because the constables are not judicial officers like judges, magistrates, or commissioners and they are unique to Baltimore County, the Subcommittee concluded that the constables were outside the scope of the statute's mandate. As a result, we decline to recommend increasing the number of constables at this time owing to more pressing security demands.

One suggestion that came from a member of our Workgroup was for the Chief Judge of the District Court, the Administrative Judge for Baltimore County, and any other relevant participants, including a representative from the constables, undertake an assessment of the viability of the constables. If the decision is to continue the constable's position seek other sources of funding for their security needs.

Orphans' Courts

Judges

The Orphans' Court is Maryland's probate court and presides over the administration of estates. Orphans' Court judges are judicial officers who are elected to four-year terms. Unlike other judicial officers, they serve on a part time basis and under the Maryland Constitution are allowed to continue to practice law. Due to the nature of their work, Orphans' Court judges often do not adjudicate cases in a courthouse setting, instead they can and do work from private office buildings which are not protected by Court Security Officers (CSOs). In some jurisdictions circuit court judges are also elected as Orphans' Court judges and thus hold

⁷ In all other Districts, local sheriffs' departments are responsible for the work handled by the Constables.

hearings inside the circuit court building. The security needs of Orphans’ Court judges located within courthouses are incorporated into the circuit court sheriff personnel needs analysis.

The Solutions Subcommittee recommends that Orphans’ Court judges be provided one CSO per courtroom when they are presiding over a case when the judicial officer is in a building outside the circuit court courthouse. When these judges work outside of courthouses, the Sheriff’s Office does not presently allocate staff resources to provide security. Given this reality, the subcommittee recommends that security be provided using private security contractors with funds for these contracts calculated based on the average salary with benefits of a sheriff’s deputy.

Section II: Parking

Estimated total costs: \$15,459,413

Table 5 – Parking Costs

	Estimate	Recommended
Appellate	\$160,000	\$0
Circuit	\$5,757,663	\$5,757,663
District	\$6,513,975	\$6,513,975
Constables	\$3,187,775	\$3,187,775
Total	\$15,619,413	\$15,459,413

In its report, the Standards Workgroup identified standards for parking and entrances: ingress/egress standards, attached parking, detached parking, separate lot parking, and individual parking space standards.

Where attached or underground parking already exists, an analysis was performed to determine if any additional security standards were unmet and what any associated costs would be to bring the location up to standard.

The Costs and Resources Workgroup determined that where attached or underground parking does not exist retrofitting existing structures to provide this security is unrealistic and would be extraordinarily difficult to fund as capital projects. The Solutions Subcommittee agrees with the conclusion of the Costs and Resources Workgroup and recommends that underground secure parking be a consideration for new courthouse construction.

Focusing on security features that can be accomplished in the near term, the Costs and Resources Workgroup recognized that security standard 3.7 recommends that installation of emergency call boxes be installed for emergency situations in parking areas or walking areas. The cost estimates were derived by applying a cost per call box and needs were calculated by one call box for every four judicial officers.

Additionally Costs and Resources noted that security standard 3.3 recommends that doors/gates for judicial parking be on a timed/timer closing schedule. This type of gate was assumed to be a model with quick lift capabilities. This security standard and associated cost was assigned only to locations that had secure parking as they would need an existing structure to support this type of gate. Similarly, security standard 3.1C recommends that a license plate reader (LPR) be provided to secure interior parking areas.

This was added as a cost item only to locations that had an existing attached or underground parking. Accordingly, if security standard 3.3 was added to a location, security standard 3.1C was also added. The Solutions Subcommittee recommends the installation of doors/gates and LPRs where practicable.

Appellate Courts

Appellate Court Parking - \$160,000 – not recommended

The Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal Building provides secured attached parking to all judicial officers. The Costs and Resources Workgroup recognized there are additional limited costs to bring the existing parking conditions up to full standard.

The Solutions Subcommittee considered the cost of bringing the parking area up to the current security standards (\$160,000.00) as well as the modest gains that this upgrade would bring in light of the construction of a new appellate courthouse which will meet the current security standards. Considering the modest benefits and the anticipated new construction, the Solutions Subcommittee declines to recommend appropriation of these funds for the appellate courts.

Circuit Courts

Circuit Court Parking Cost Total: \$5,757,663

By far, circuit courts have the widest variety of parking needs. Judicial officers in the circuit courts requiring parking security include judges, magistrates, and any appellate judges who have local chambers within the circuit court courthouse. For circuit courts requiring parking safety enhancements, the Costs and Resources Workgroup determined that stone fencing was appropriate [REDACTED].⁸

The Costs and Resources Workgroup based its calculations of parking needs on one judicial officer requiring 225 square feet of space to park. This assumption included the ingress and egress of cars being able to pass each other. However, calculations as to parking costs could not be made for the differently styled parking lots (angled parking, parallel parking, or entrance and exit next to each other versus one on each end). Depending on the style of parking lot, the associated fencing costs could increase or decrease.

[REDACTED]

The Costs and Resources Workgroup determined that upgrades to circuit court parking would be \$5,757,663.

The Solutions Subcommittee reviewed the individual parking needs of the individual building as noted in the appendix of the Costs and Resources Workgroup’s report. Individual members of the Solutions Subcommittee were familiar with their local courthouses. To these members, [REDACTED]

Because each courthouse poses unique challenges and needs, the Solutions Subcommittee recommends that the funds that Costs and Resources Workgroup calculated for enhanced circuit court parking be appropriated but held by the AOC. Further, the Subcommittee recommends that the General Assembly mandate the creation of a local Circuit Court Security Taskforce to determine which of the recommended security measures could be undertaken. Once determined, the circuit court would then apply to AOC for an equitable percentage of the available funds. We recommend that each jurisdiction bear a percentage of the total cost of these improvements.

Additionally, we request that for a jurisdiction dedicated to building a new circuit courthouse, that the percentage to be allotted to that jurisdiction to meet parking needs be held in escrow to offset future security costs.

District Court

District Court Courthouses Parking Cost Total: \$6,513,975

The Costs and Resources Workgroup reviewed the parking considerations for all judges, commissioners, and certain senior judges that maintain offices in District Court locations. That Workgroup undertook the same analytical approach and cost assumptions taken with the circuit court and applied them to the District Court.

The Solutions Subcommittee recommends the appropriation of the requested funds to bring District Court parking up to the established security standards.

Commissioner Offices

Commissioner Stand-Alone Office Parking Cost Total: \$3,187,775

The Costs and Resources Workgroup reported that commissioners have extensive parking requirements. Where commissioners are in a courthouse that has secured parking, the Solutions Subcommittee recommends that commissioners be included in these secure parking areas. [REDACTED]

The Costs and Resources Workgroup reported [REDACTED] Costs and Resources reports that the cost to bring parking up to standard for all stand-alone commissioner offices is: \$3,390,525. The Solutions Subcommittee has considered the unique security needs of these commissioners and recommends that the requested funds be appropriated in fiscal year 2026 to address these concerns as quickly as possible.

The Costs and Resources Workgroup recommended that commissioner needs be accounted for in future courthouse programming, especially as commissioners may need to enter the courthouse facility from a different ingress point after regular courthouse hours. The Solutions Subcommittee agrees and recommends that parking for commissioners be included in future District Court parking considerations.

Funding Model and Timeline

The Solutions Subcommittee recommends that physical improvements to the parking of each courthouse be separate from personnel costs. Even though the judiciary is requesting a one-time outlay from the State, we ask that the funds be provided over the same five-year period to implement improved security personnel, FY2027-FY2032. The funding would be non-lapsing and controlled by the judiciary. Each jurisdiction would assess its needs and apply for funding through the Administrative Office of the Courts similar to the School Safety Funding model.

[REDACTED]

Section III: Hardening/Physical Plant

Estimated total costs: \$40,849,125

Table 6 – Hardening/Physical Plant Costs

	Estimate	Recommended
Appellate	\$1,677,850	\$0
Circuit	\$21,721,050	\$21,721,050
District	\$19,128,075	\$19,128,075
Constables	\$708,500	\$0
Total	\$43,235,475	\$40,849,125

Methodology

The Standards Workgroup identified four standards regarding public areas and hallways, 23 standards regarding entrances and screening requirements, and 14 standards related to courtrooms, chambers, and jury deliberation rooms. The Costs and Resources Workgroup combined two separate standards related to Level 4 glass into one security standard to study the costs of installing Level 4 bullet proof in vulnerable areas of each courthouse.¹⁰

The Costs and Resources Workgroup calculated additional hardening costs by unit and numerical value as determined by the number of units needed in a specific courthouse, if any.

Security standard 3.19 recommended that there be a secure entrance for courthouse staff that was not to be used by the public. The Costs and Resources Workgroup concluded that it would be too complex to assign a universal cost to meet this standard because of existing building considerations. Instead, that Workgroup relied on security standard 4.2 that recommended that if no employee entrance was possible, the public and employees should be separated to be appropriate. When security standard 4.2 was applied, courthouses were then assessed to see if fixed barriers were already installed at ingress/egress (security standard 4.1).

Additionally, the Costs and Resources Workgroup noted that certain buildings have clerk areas that are accessible to the public because there were no physical barriers. In those locations, costs were estimated to install partitions.

¹⁰ Standard 4.15B requires first floor courtroom windows installed with Level 4 bullet proof glass. Security standard 4.15C requires vulnerable upper floor courtroom windows installed with Level 4 bullet proof glass. The Costs and Resources Workgroup used a standard window size of 3 feet by 5 feet. That Workgroup also assumed that there are four windows per courtroom and four windows per chambers resulting in 60 square feet per courtroom or chambers with external windows. External main entrance doors were assigned an average size of 27 square feet.

Appellate Courts

Appellate Court Hardening Cost Total: \$1,677,850 – not recommended

The Costs and Resources Workgroup determined that the cost of bringing the physical plant of the current Courts of Appeal building up to standard is \$1,677,850. Considering that the appellate courts will be housed in a security compliant courthouse in the near future, the costs to harden the existing courthouse seemed exorbitant in light of more critical needs.

Consequently, the Solutions Subcommittee does not recommend appropriating funds to harden the existing appellate courthouse.

Circuit Courts

Circuit Court Hardening Cost Total: \$21,721,050

The Costs and Resources Workgroup concluded that the cost of hardening the physical plant of circuit courts was complicated in a number of locations by the historic nature of the building, they agreed upon standard costs regardless of the year a courthouse was built or how recently the building received other improvements.

The Costs and Resources Workgroup calculated that cost to bring the circuit courts up to our established safety standards is \$21,721,050.

As is the case with our recommendation regarding hiring security personnel, recommend that the General Assembly fund this cost, and that via the local Circuit Court Security Taskforce, each circuit court prioritize the implementation of upgrading its physical plant over a two-year period.

Additionally, we request that for a jurisdiction dedicated to building a new circuit courthouse, that the percentage to be allotted to that jurisdiction to meet hardening security needs be held in escrow to offset future security costs.

District Court

District Court Courthouse Hardening Cost Total: \$19,836,575

The Costs and Resources Workgroup found that District Court needs vary statewide. However, most of the need is focused on ballistic glass and ballistic film.¹¹ Overall, the costs associated with physical plant needs to bring District Court courthouses up to standard is: \$18,330,500.

The Solutions Subcommittee agrees with the assessment. As is the case with the circuit courts, the Chief Judge of the District Court should implement the improvement of the physical plant of these courthouses based on severity of need with the full revitalization completed by 2027.¹²

¹¹ The District Court has been implementing a courthouse hardening program for several years. As a result, some of the hardening projects have been completed or are in procurement.

¹² As a matter of general policy, this Workgroup recommends that all court personnel, and members of the public who enter any judiciary building be subject to security screening, including attorneys. We leave it to each administrative judge to determine whether attorneys may enter a separate queue for courthouse personnel.

Constables

Constables Hardening Cost Total: \$708,500 – not recommended.

The Solutions Subcommittee deemed the constables, because they are not judicial officers, to be outside the scope of the statute’s mandate. As a result, we do not recommend requesting funding for the constables. Again, we are aware of the safety risks that the constables face but recommend that funding to assist them come from other sources.

Funding Model and Timeline

The Solutions Subcommittee recommends that hardening of each courthouse, like the funding for parking improvements, be separate from personnel costs. Even though the judiciary is requesting a one-time outlay from the State for these purposes, we ask that the funds be provided over the same five-year period requested to implement increased security personnel, FY2027-FY2032. We request the funding be non-lapsing and controlled by the judiciary. Each jurisdiction would assess its needs and apply for funding through the Administrative Office of the Courts similar to the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) funding model.

APPENDIX C:
Special Police Officer Requirements

Special Police Officer Entrance Level Training Objectives

Effective July 1, 2025

Approved by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission on July 10, 2024.



Objective	
SPO 1	Identify the requirements for receiving and maintaining Special Police Commission in the State of Maryland.
SPO 2	Identify the potential consequences if a Special Police Officer performs official duties without a valid Special Police Commission from the State of Maryland.
SPO 10	Identify why Special Police Officers, both on and off duty, should exemplify the highest ethical and moral standards.
SPO 3	Identify basic criminal law concepts (level of suspicion, felony, misdemeanor, warrant, warrantless).
SPO 4	Given various scenarios, demonstrate the ability to identify elements of a given crime, using the annotated code of Maryland and/or the Digest of Criminal Laws
SPO 5	Identify the legal requirements to lawfully detain a person.
SPO 6	Identify the legal requirements to make a lawful arrest.
SPO 7	Identify basic juvenile law concepts.
SPO 68	Identify a juvenile offender's rights regarding parental notification and telephone calls upon being placed in temporary custody.
SPO 8	Demonstrate advising a person of their rights against self-incrimination.
SPO 20	Identify "chain of custody" and why it is important.
SPO 9	Identify basic search and seizure concepts.
SPO 11	Identify the procedure to apply for and serve an arrest warrant.
SPO 12	Identify the legal requirements to conduct a stop or search based on evidence of cannabis.
SPO 19	Identify the consequences of Special Police Officer actions that are not legal.
SPO 16	Identify legal requirements related to a Special Police Officer's use of force based upon Maryland law.
SPO 14	Identify a Special Police Officer's legal responsibilities to intervene when another Special Police Officer is using unnecessary force or acting outside the scope of their duties.
SPO 15	Given a scenario, determine what level of use of force is justified.
SPO 17	Identify how a suspect's level of resistance may impact the level/type of force used by a Special Police Officer.
SPO 18	Identify specific conditions or factors that may impact the level/type of force used by a Special Police Officer.
SPO 56	Identify de-escalation requirements under the Maryland Use of Force Statute.
SPO 57	Identify the roles of time, distance, and cover in de-escalation.
SPO 21	Identify patrol strategies Special Police Officers may employ to provide protection and service within their assigned areas.
SPO 22	Identify locations/situations warranting frequent checks within a Special Police Officer's assigned area.
SPO 23	Identify factors that indicate criminal or suspicious circumstances/person(s).

Special Police Officer Training Objectives

Objective	
SPO 45	Identify the Special Police Officer's role in crime prevention.
SPO 46	Identify the purpose of a business security survey.
SPO 25	Identify the tactical responsibilities of the first responding Special Police Officer for a crime in progress call.
SPO 28	Given a scenario, respond to a crime in progress.
SPO 33	Identify responsibilities of a Special Police Officer who discovers or is first to respond to a crime scene and identify suspects.
SPO 26	Identify circumstances and procedures for responding to and handling hazardous materials incidents.
SPO 27	Identify circumstances and procedures for responding to and handling bomb threats.
SPO 75	Identify considerations when responding to a scene where the presence of a Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD) is suspected.
SPO 76	Identify considerations when responding to a scene where a Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD) attack has occurred.
SPO 29	Identify criminal activities associated with gangs active in the U.S. and locally.
SPO 31	Identify strategies for preventing and controlling gang activity.
SPO 73	Identify threats and challenges posed by terrorism.
SPO 74	Identify indicators of terrorist activity.
SPO 35	Successfully complete an emergency medical care program that includes CPR.
SPO 32	Identify the basic responsibilities of a Special Police Officer when responding to a missing person and resources available.
SPO 34	Identify potential indicators of Human Trafficking and/or child exploitation.
SPO 37	Demonstrate communication skills for de-escalation in public interactions.
SPO 47	Identify the duties of a Special Police Officer when intervening in an interpersonal conflict.
SPO 48	Identify options a Special Police Officer has in resolving a conflict situation, such as de-escalate, separate, mediate, refer, and arrest.
SPO 49	Identify the role of a Special Police Officer in a civil dispute, such as landlord/ tenant, employer/employee, driver/tow truck operator, etc.
SPO 50	Identify basic victim psychological responses, such as feelings of helplessness, lack of control, self-blaming or blaming others, anger, and fear.
SPO 51	Identify techniques a Special Police Officer can use to de-escalate a crime victim in crisis, such as active listening, acknowledging their ordeal, and explaining options and next steps.
SPO 52	Identify the Special Police Officer's role in handling crowds and 1 st Amendment protected activities such as protests, political events, and labor disputes.
SPO 53	Identify important considerations when interacting with a person who may have an Intellectual/Developmental Disability (I/DD) and resources available.
SPO 54	Given a scenario, identify how to interact effectively with a person who has a physical disability.
SPO 55	Demonstrate effectively interacting with a person in mental health crisis.
SPO 36	Identify the importance of cultural awareness for Special Police Officers.
SPO 24	Identify the objectives of a field interview.
SPO 38	Demonstrate interviewing techniques.

Special Police Officer Training Objectives

Objective	
SPO 39	Identify implicit bias and how it can influence decision-making in policing.
SPO 40	Identify the relationship between successful prosecution and police reports.
SPO 41	Demonstrate preparing complete field notes.
SPO 42	Demonstrate completing acceptable police reports.
SPO 43	Demonstrate completing a statement of probable cause and statement of charges for a warrantless arrest.
SPO 44	Demonstrate obtaining and serving an arrest warrant.
SPO 59	Identify techniques to minimize the possibility of a Special Police Officer entering an ambush situation.
SPO 60	Demonstrate a safe and effective position to assume while interviewing a suspicious person.
SPO 13	Identify the legal requirements to conduct a frisk/weapons pat down.
SPO 61	Identify the basic principles of weaponless defense.
SPO 62	Demonstrate proper techniques for using departmentally-approved impact weapons.
SPO 63	Demonstrate safe and effective use and removal of a restraint device on a compliant subject.
SPO 58	Demonstrate proper procedure for thoroughly searching an individual.
SPO 64	Demonstrate safe and effective use of a restraint device on a non-compliant subject, including moving the suspect to the recovery position.
SPO 65	Demonstrate a safe and effective method to escort a suspect from premises.
SPO 66	Identify methods for preventing in-custody deaths.
SPO 67	Identify procedures for searching vehicles before and after transporting prisoners.
SPO 69	Demonstrate safely placing, securing, and removing a prisoner in a vehicle.
SPO 70	Identify the general structure of the Maryland court system.
SPO 71	Identify situations when a Special Police Officer may testify in court, such as arraignment, bond review, trial, and appeal.
SPO 72	Identify a Special Police Officer's pre-trial responsibilities and procedures.

APPENDIX D:
Sheriff Need Analysis

Sheriff Need: Years 1 and 2, 1.5 CSO Multiplier								
Jurisdiction Size	Court Location	Year 1: Cost	Year 1: 80% State Funding	Year 1: County Cost to Meet 50% Threshold	Year 1: 20% County Funding	Year 2: Cost	Year 2: 60% State Funding	Year 2: 40% County Funding
Large	Anne Arundel County Circuit							
Large	Balt City Circuit Cummings							
Large	Balt City Circuit Juvenile							
Large	Balt City Circuit Mitchell							
Large	Balt County Circuit							
Large	Montgomery County Circuit							
Large	Prince George's County Circuit							
Medium	Allegany County Circuit							
Medium	Calvert Circuit							
Medium	Cecil County Circuit							
Medium	St. Mary's County Circuit							
Medium	Wicomico County Circuit							
Medium	Worcester County Circuit							
Medium-Large	Carroll County Circuit Court							
Medium-Large	Charles County Circuit							
Medium-Large	Frederick County Circuit							
Medium-Large	Harford County Circuit							
Medium-Large	Howard County Circuit							
Medium-Large	Washington County Circuit							
Small	Caroline County Circuit							
Small	Dorchester County Circuit							
Small	Garrett County Circuit							
Small	Kent County Circuit							
Small	Queen Anne's County Circuit							
Small	Somerset County Circuit							
Small	Talbot County Circuit							
Grand Total	Total	\$34,055,248	\$27,244,198	\$5,701,900	\$6,811,050	\$34,055,248	\$20,433,149	\$13,622,099

Sheriff Need: Years 3-5, 1.5 CSO Multiplier										
Jurisdiction Size	Court Location	Year 3: Cost	Year 3: 60% State Funding	Year 3: 40% County Funding	Year 4: Cost	Year 4: 40% State Funding	Year 4: 60% County Funding	Year 5: Cost	Year 5: 20% State Funding	Year 5: 80% County Funding
Large	Anne Arundel County Circuit									
Large	Balt City Circuit Cummings									
Large	Balt City Circuit Juvenile									
Large	Balt City Circuit Mitchell									
Large	Balt County Circuit									
Large	Montgomery County Circuit									
Large	Prince George's County Circuit									
Medium	Allegany County Circuit									
Medium	Calvert Circuit									
Medium	Cecil County Circuit									
Medium	St. Mary's County Circuit									
Medium	Wicomico County Circuit									
Medium	Worcester County Circuit									
Medium-Large	Carroll County Circuit Court									
Medium-Large	Charles County Circuit									
Medium-Large	Frederick County Circuit									
Medium-Large	Harford County Circuit									
Medium-Large	Howard County Circuit									
Medium-Large	Washington County Circuit									
Small	Caroline County Circuit									
Small	Dorchester County Circuit									
Small	Garrett County Circuit									
Small	Kent County Circuit									
Small	Queen Anne's County Circuit									
Small	Somerset County Circuit									
Small	Talbot County Circuit									
Grand Total	Total	\$36,820,236	\$22,092,142	\$14,728,094	\$36,820,236	\$14,728,094	\$22,092,142	\$36,820,236	\$7,364,047	\$29,456,189

APPENDIX E:

Report of the National Center for State Courts: “Steps to
Best Practices for Court Building Security”



STEPS TO BEST PRACTICES *for* COURT BUILDING SECURITY

Revised June 2022



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INTRODUCTION

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC), through its Court Consulting Services division, has conducted security assessments of court buildings as well as personal security and safety training throughout the country. In conducting court building assessments, the NCSC has evaluated court security in terms of “best practices” – guidelines describing those security measures that should be in place concerning a comprehensive set of topics on court buildings and court operations. These best practices are not only based on the considerable experience of NCSC security experts, but are also consistent with guidelines from the United States Marshals Service, National Sheriffs’ Association, Conference of Chief Justices/Conference of State Court Administrators Joint Committee on Court Security and Emergency Preparedness, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Transportation Safety Administration, the Department of Homeland Security, and the National Association for Court Management. The NCSC recommends that leadership in every court building strive to achieve best practices in all topic areas to provide a suitable level of security for all those who work in or visit the court building.

Implementing some of the best practices in court building security may be a challenge to constrained or limited budgetary resources. Accordingly, best practices are set forth in a format of steps and phases as an incremental approach that envisions an effective level of security upon implementation of all measures. These steps may be a useful approach to courts as they strive to implement improvements in court building security. The NCSC wishes to emphasize that an effective level of security will be reached when all the measures at the best practices level are incorporated. The NCSC has provided these steps in phases, so that a court may use its discretion to incrementally adopt improvements before reaching the level of best practices. These steps and phases are laid out as plateaus along an ascending path to improvement – improvement the NCSC recommends that courts achieve over time.

It is important to note that *Steps to Best Practices for Court Building Security* focuses almost exclusively on security matters. With some exceptions, issues of emergency preparedness, continuity of operations, and disaster recovery are not within the scope of this document.

Steps to Best Practices for Court Building Security is organized by steps, phases, topics, and categories. It will be helpful for the reader at the outset to have a working understanding of each of these terms, and a description for each is provided below.

TERMS USED IN STEPS TO BEST PRACTICES

- **Steps:** These are specific buildings blocks and/or specific actions that courts can take to improve security.

- Phases: These are logical groupings of steps forming a temporary plateau in terms of security measures in place.
- Topics: These are the subject areas into which steps in phases are organized.
- Categories: These are sets of topics. There are three categories listed in priority order, with Category A taking top priority.
 - Category A: These are fundamental topics that should be addressed first in order to provide a base on which to place all of the other topics.
 - Category B: These are critical topics to be addressed after the Category A topics.
 - Category C: These are essential topics to be addressed after the Category A and B topics.

CATEGORY A: FUNDAMENTAL

The following four topics in this category provide an essential foundation for all the other topics in *Steps to Best Practices for Court Building Security*. The recommended measures in Category A are those that typically can be implemented with relatively limited cost. For example, operating a security committee or developing and implementing policies and procedures may incur time and effort on the part of staff but do not, as a rule, involve or cause additional expenditures from court budgets for such “hard-cost” items like equipment or facilities improvements.

- **A-1: Security Committee.** A court building security committee that meets regularly and is empowered to exercise oversight and sustain matters related to security within the court building is a prerequisite to enable the court and its stakeholders to properly assess and address the myriad security challenges facing court and stakeholder leadership.
- **A-2: Policies and Procedures.** A cohesive and comprehensive set of security policies and procedures is necessary to assure a thorough and consistent application of security measures aimed at making a court building reasonably safe. The development of policies and procedures is an iterative process. Reference will need to be made to the information included in *Steps to Best Practices for Court Building Security* to further the process of developing a meaningful and effective set of policies and procedures.
- **A-3: Threat and Incident Reporting.** Threat and incident reporting is of paramount importance to the safety of judges, court employees, and the public who visit the court building. Enacting a threat and incident reporting system enables stakeholders to review and develop responses to potential negative events and reinforces security best practices.
- **A-4: Security Training.** Every single person who works in a court building has the potential to materially enhance the safety and security of his or her work environment, to be the “eyes and ears” of a workforce constantly alert to risks and threats. Judges and court staff that have been well-trained on well-publicized policies and procedures provide the best eyes-and-ears function.. Moreover, a cadre of well-trained Court Security Officers are a necessity for a safe and secure court building.

TOPIC A-1: SECURITY COMMITTEE

PHASE ONE

1. Establish a court building security committee for the court building, to be chaired by a judge (preferably presiding) and having membership of at least the primary security provider and a representative of the county or other funding source. The committee should serve as the primary champion for attainment of the best practices outlined in this document and should, in particular, assume as one of its primary responsibilities the achievement of the foundational elements set forth in Topics A-1 thru A-4.
2. The court building security committee should operate its meetings on an action-planning process of “who does what, by when, and what resources are needed.” The committee should initially meet monthly to identify and discuss security challenges facing the court building, and devise and implement solutions to meet those challenges. Then, it should meet at least quarterly to discuss security problems and track progress on an ongoing basis.
3. The presiding judge or court administrator, as representatives of the court building security committee, should meet with court security personnel and law enforcement officials on a regular basis and after any negative event to discuss security concerns and improve security at the court building.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

4. Add security committee members representing all “stakeholders” who have an interest in security at the court building. Stakeholders, by way of example, include county facilities management, the district attorney and public defender, the state or local bar, the probation department, and other non-court tenants of the court building. In terms of the size of the committee, a balance should be struck between ensuring stakeholder inclusivity and the need to keep the committee at a manageable size. (Stakeholders not represented on the committee can be appointed to task forces per Step 6 below.)

PHASE THREE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

5. Undertake an assessment of the security in place within the court building. Assistance in conducting assessments is available from the NCSC.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One, Two, and Three, plus add the following:

6. As needed, and under the auspices of the security committee, form task forces to provide the committee with additional research and information gathering capacity.¹ Additional members added to various task forces could include:
 - Court staff members working in the court building, to include appropriate staff with expertise and responsibility related to the issue to be addressed by the task force
 - Judicial stakeholders, including local and state government and law enforcement officials
 - Local and state subject matter experts
7. One or more members of the court building security committee should actively participate in any committee or working group established for court facility design, construction, and renovation projects.
8. Periodically engage an independent professional organization to conduct an audit of security measures in place for the exterior and interior of the court building.

TOPIC A-2: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PHASE ONE

1. Under the auspices of the court building security committee (see Topic A-1), the leadership of the court, county (or other funding body), and law enforcement should understand the need for and commit to the development and implementation of effective and comprehensive court building security policies and procedures. It is important to note that it is particularly crucial for judges to be at the forefront of court building security, providing leadership in the development and implementation of security policies and procedures.
2. Under the auspices of the court building security committee, and with the cooperation of the appropriate law enforcement agency(s), develop a cohesive and comprehensive set

¹ For example, an “Incident Reporting and Threat Assessment” task force could be chaired by a member of the security committee and oversee implementation of an incident reporting and threat assessment system that not only collects data, but actively analyzes it, reports on actions taken, and presents recommendations for change to the committee.

of court building security materials, to include such items as policies and procedures, operations manuals, training manuals, contingency plans, and incident reporting and risk assessment instruments and protocol. NOTE: Policies and procedures should be developed to include the topics listed in Appendix A.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phases One, plus add the following:

3. Establish communication protocols with court staff and stakeholders that allow for feedback and revision of security materials as follows:
 - Provide periodic briefings in various formats to court staff and stakeholders.
 - Solicit formal feedback from court staff and stakeholders.
 - Revise court building security materials as necessary based on court staff and stakeholder feedback.
4. Officially adopt the court building security materials and issue appropriate court orders on key security matters. To be successful, security documents need the support of judicial leadership. Court orders give legitimacy and enforceability to security policies.
5. Publish the court building security materials. The level of detail and the audience to whom materials are published should be determined on a need-to-know basis.

PHASE THREE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

6. Practice and evaluate the court building security materials as follows:
 - Conduct drills and exercises to test policies and procedures.
 - Evaluate the results of the drills.
 - Evaluate the results of responses to actual negative events and incidents.
 - Revise the court building security materials as warranted based on an evaluation of the results of drills and actual incidents.
7. Invite first responders including SWAT units to walk the court building and grounds to familiarize the first responders with the facilities. Request that the SWAT unit utilize the court building for training on a periodic basis.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One, Two, and Three, plus add the following:

8. Review and update policies and procedures on at least a biennial basis and after major incidents, events, and facility renovation projects.

9. Analyze the activities undertaken in Phases Two, Three, and Four for operational effectiveness.

TOPIC A-3: THREAT AND INCIDENT REPORTING

DEFINITIONS

THREAT – is a statement or behavior that signals an intention to inflict pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action on someone (court employee or court attendee) or an institution (court building) in retribution for something done or not done now or in the future. A threat is synonymous with a threatening remark, behavior, warning, or ultimatum to a person or institution. A threat can be a person or a thing likely to cause damage or danger.

INCIDENT – is an action or communication that causes or threatens to cause personal injury, property damage, or disrupts court building proceedings. Court building proceedings include activities in the courtroom and outside the courtroom and within the facility (e.g., chambers, clerk’s offices, etc.). NOTE: This definition is focused on the potential that an action may manifest physically (personal injury, property damage) or be a threat of the same.

PHASE ONE

1. Establish a policy requiring threats and incidents to be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and to court administration as soon as feasible, but no later than the close of business on the day in which a threat or incident occurred. The more serious the threat or incident, the more quickly it should be reported.
2. Coordinate with law enforcement to ensure that all threats and incidents are thoroughly assessed and that appropriate responses and/or mitigation steps are taken.
3. Train Court Security Officers² (CSOs), judges, and staff in the court building on how to recognize threats and incidents and how to report them orally and in writing.
4. Develop and use threat and incident reporting forms and submit forms in writing to the proper authorities, at least monthly, preferably in electronic format so the designated reporters can more easily file their reports and necessary guidance/assistance can be

² **COURT SECURITY OFFICER (CSO)** – A Court Security Officer (CSO), as referenced throughout this document, is defined as an individual trained and qualified in court building security, and has been specifically trained and qualified to use a firearm and intermediate weapons such as Taser, chemical spray, or restraints (e.g., handcuffs, leg restraints). A summary of CSO staffing recommendations included in this document can be found in Appendix B.

provided more readily. The court building security committee should receive a copy of all threat and incident reports.

5. Coordinate threat and incident information with interested parties at the state and local level.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

6. Implement a practice for regularly evaluating threat and incident reports and making improvements based on lessons learned from reports with law enforcement officials and the chairperson of the court building security committee (and the committee's incident reporting task force).
7. Provide feedback to staff on threats and incidents, particularly to those who reported them (i.e., complete the feedback loop).

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phase Two, plus add the following:

8. Establish threat and incident information sharing with state or metropolitan fusion centers.³
9. Train CSOs or appropriate staff on how to monitor social media platforms to identify and track potential threats. If trained staff are not available, consider seeking assistance from a fusion center or local law enforcement agency.
10. Establish an electronic system for reporting threats and incidents to enable quick review and deployment of resources and to enable organization of data and analysis by law enforcement and authorized stakeholders. A database should be maintained on all pertinent information, to include organizational responses and any follow-up activities. Databases should be maintained at the local and state level.

³ According to the Department of Homeland Security, fusion centers are state-owned and -operated centers that serve as focal points in states and major urban areas for the receipt, analysis, gathering and sharing of threat-related information between state, local, tribal and territorial (SLTT); federal; and private sector partners. For more information, see the Department of Homeland Security Website at: <https://www.dhs.gov/fusion-centers>.

TOPIC A-4: SECURITY TRAINING

NOTE: Training is the glue that binds all court building security measures together. Security training needs to be frequent, repetitive, and simple. Without training, staff and CSOs will never be prepared for the unexpected. Every staff member and CSO needs security training. It is essential that training be mandatory and universal. Judges in particular need to participate. Nothing gets staff to buy in to security more than a judge actively participating in security training. The judge sets the tone.

PHASE ONE

1. New judges and court staff should receive an initial court security orientation briefing that includes such topics as shooter in place and hostage-taking, emergency procedures (e.g., for fire, weather, and medical emergencies), building evacuation routes, and personal safety procedures for work and home.
2. Judges and court staff should be provided with detailed instructions on reporting threats and incidents received at home or in the court building.
3. CSOs should be trained in basic court security responsibilities. CSOs should receive initial classroom instruction on courtroom security techniques, judicial and staff protection, security screening activities, firearm operation, threat de-escalation techniques, and safety and weapons certification.
4. CSOs should receive basic training in emergency response, first-aid, defensive tactics, handcuffing, courtroom security, hostage situations, active-shooters, and judicial protection.
5. Command center staff should be trained in critical incident command and crisis communications. Communication during an emergency must be clear, understandable, and simple.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

6. Establish a judge and staff security continuing education program that deals with workplace violence and personal safety techniques, courtroom security and protection, and personal safety while at work and off-site.
7. Invite first responders, particularly the SWAT team, to do a walk-through of the court building. Encourage the SWAT team to utilize the court building as part of their own training program.

PHASE THREE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

8. Establish mandatory, ongoing security and safety education programs for judges and court staff that include topics addressed in the initial security orientation briefing, along with such topics as handling difficult people, anger-management, home safety techniques, safety practices for inside and outside the court building, hostage incidents, and emergency evacuation from the court building.
9. In addition to annual familiarization and qualification courses on firearms and intermediate weapons, establish regularly scheduled mandatory advanced refresher training courses for CSOs, to include such topics as emergency response, first-aid, defensive tactics, handcuffing, courtroom security, hostage situations, active-shooters, and judicial protection.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One, Two, and Three, plus add the following:

10. Establish mandatory ongoing security and safety education programs for judges and court staff that include high-profile trials, home safety techniques, travel safety tips, suspicious packages, bomb and other threats, and emergency evacuation from the court building. Train judges and court staff on self-defense options, threat de-escalation techniques, and personal safety/security considerations during hostage situations.
11. Establish and schedule advanced court security training programs for CSOs to include topics such as threat de-escalation, security assessments, judicial protection, security for domestic violence cases, incident response, dangerous individuals, mental health issues, and high threat proceedings. All CSOs should receive at least 24 hours of mandatory in-service training on court security each year.

CATEGORY B: CRITICAL

TOPIC B-1: COMMAND CENTER

NOTE: A security command center, as referenced in this document, refers to a physical location where all security activities for the court building are controlled and all security infrastructure is monitored. A security "command center" has a different function than an in-custody defendant "control room", which is used to manage the transport and housing of in-custody defendants. In some court buildings, the command center and control room are combined into a single facility to gain building and staffing efficiencies.

PHASE ONE

1. Until a proper dedicated command center can be established, install a security desk or workstation near the front entrance screening station to serve as the central location for control and monitoring of security systems.
2. Dedicate at least one full-time CSO position the staff the security desk (where resources are limited, this may be the same person who is assigned to secure the main public entrance to the court building as described in Topic B-6, Phase One).
3. Constantly monitor duress alarms⁴ and security cameras⁵ at the command center.
4. Provide alarm panels or posted diagrams at the command center that clearly and logically number each room in the court building to aid in response.
5. Establish telephone/radio communication points between the security desk and potentially vulnerable areas of the court building, such as courtrooms and chambers.
6. Establish telephone/radio communication between the security desk and local law enforcement, and/or emergency dispatch entities.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

7. Construct a dedicated command center within the court building. Make sure that access to the command center is carefully restricted.
8. Assign a CSO to the dedicated command center. The assigned command center CSO is not necessarily required to carry a firearm.

⁴ A summary of duress alarm recommendations included in this document can be found in Appendix C.

⁵ A summary of cameras recommendations included in this document can be found in Appendix D.

9. Install control panels and monitoring equipment for security surveillance cameras, duress alarms, fire alarms or alerts, intrusion detection systems, and telephone and radio communication and dispatch. As noted above, all control panels should clearly identify locations in the court building to include rooms clearly and logically numbered to aid in emergency response.
10. Command center staff should have access to mass notification systems (e.g., public address systems, telephone notification systems, email, text, social media, etc.) installed in the court building to be able to communicate with building occupants in the event of emergencies. Staff should receive ongoing training on mass notification protocols and procedures (see related recommendation in Topic C-1, Step 9).
11. The individuals staffing the command center should not be the physical responders to a crisis. Removing them from the command center to be physically present at the scene of the crisis could result in the loss of a critical element providing situational awareness to emergency responders and staff. The situational awareness provided by the command center allows responders to make the best tactical decisions and staff to decide whether to shelter in place or run.
12. The command center should be staffed at all times when the court building is open to the public.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

13. Cameras should be integrated with duress and access control (door) alarms. When a duress or access control alarm activates, an image on the appropriate camera should activate on a monitor in the command center. The command center staff should not only have the ability to view the monitor but also to communicate via audio with staff activating the alarm.
14. Provide additional monitoring capacity for critical court building infrastructure including elevators, mechanical systems, emergency generators/generator fuel levels.
15. Provide additional security personnel as required to supervise and monitor command center activities.
16. In court buildings where the command center is situated in a vulnerable area (e.g., in the main entrance/lobby area with windows facing the exterior) and as justified by a threat assessment, provide ballistic-resistant protection over the command center's doors, windows, and other areas subject to attack.
17. After-hours monitoring of intrusion alarms and cameras should be provided. This may be accomplished through network linkage and coordination with local law enforcement, and/or emergency dispatch entities.

TOPIC B-2: IN-CUSTODY DEFENDANTS

PHASE ONE

1. Assign at least one CSO or transport deputy to escort in-custody defendants through all non-secure areas of the court building and to clear the path ahead of members of the public.
2. Assign one CSO to remain with in-custody defendants in the courtroom at all times.
3. In court buildings lacking secure in-custody defendant circulation zones (see discussion of circulation zones in Topic B-7), efforts should be made to modify schedules so in-custody defendants are escorted through public areas when the presence of members of the public is at a minimum. Ideally all members of the public should be moved to the far end of the hallway. If this is not possible, at least move members of the public to the side of the hallway prior to the escort of in-custody defendants.
4. When escorting in-custody defendants in a public elevator, the elevator should first be cleared of all members of the public.
5. In-custody defendants should be properly restrained while being escorted, using handcuffs, ankle restraints, and belly chains. (They should not be handcuffed from the front.)
6. In-custody defendants should have no contact of any type -- physical or verbal -- with the public, family, or friends while being escorted or while in court.
7. Always check for holds and live warrants before releasing an in-custody defendant as a result of a courtroom proceeding.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

8. Establish one or more dedicated holding cells where in-custody defendants may be held while waiting for their court hearing.
9. Make sure all holding cells within the court building are appropriately secured, staffed, and searched before and after each occupation.
10. Provide sight and sound separation, as required or appropriate, of different in-custody populations within secure in-custody holding and transportation areas (e.g., male, female, and juveniles). The design of these areas should prohibit unauthorized access by the public and escape by in-custody defendants.
11. Install security cameras (with tamper-resistant housings) in holding cells.
12. Install security cameras along the entire in-custody defendants' escort route including staging areas, hallways, and elevators.

13. Install duress alarms in circulation areas through which an in-custody defendant may be escorted (i.e., staging areas, hallways, and elevators).
14. Establish a secure sally port for in-custody defendants entering the court building. The sally port should be equipped with a security camera and duress alarm (see also Topic B-9 for camera coverage of exterior areas leading to the sally port).
15. Assign a second CSO or transport deputy to escort an in-custody defendant and clear a pathway. The transport officer closest to the in-custody defendant should be armed with an intermediate weapon (e.g., Taser or chemical spray) and the other officer trailing behind should be armed with a firearm using a triple retention holster.
16. Provide remote video and audio linkages (and supporting infrastructure) to allow for reliable connectivity between the court and the detention centers for both adult and juvenile populations. Alternatively, establish a courtroom in the detention center(s) for advisements/arraignments and other hearings. From a security perspective, either measure minimizes the number of in-custody defendants brought into the courthouse and is a preferred solution to bringing in-custody defendants back and forth to the court buildings, particularly for arraignment settings and non-evidentiary hearings.

NOTE: The presence of in-custody defendants poses inherent security risks for those who work in and visit court buildings. During the COVID 19 Pandemic many state courts took steps to reduce and minimize the number of in-custody defendants brought into court buildings on a regular basis. These steps included:

- Providing technology tools connecting courtrooms remotely to detention centers and jails (for both adult and juvenile populations) to minimize the number of in-custody defendants brought into the court building.
- Providing suitable and adequate space to efficiently conduct remote proceedings at detention centers and jails.
- Limiting the number of transportation events to necessary in-court hearings for individuals in custody or receiving services pursuant to court order, including combining hearings (subject to maximum gathering size and to minimize the mixing of populations to eliminate avoidable quarantines when such individuals are returned to custody following court hearings).

Continuing to implement such steps, even in the aftermath of the Pandemic, will have a beneficial impact on the safety and security of court buildings.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

17. Establish a control room to manage the transport and housing of in-custody defendants. The control center should include monitoring capacity and control of all doors, elevators,

cameras, and alarms within the secure in-custody defendant circulation area. As stated in Topic B-1, in some court buildings, this function may be located and managed together with the building security command center.

18. The control room should be staffed at all times when in-custody defendants are present in the court building.
19. Establish and maintain complete separation between areas used for the transportation of in-custody defendants and all other areas of the court building. This includes secure circulation for a defendant from the transport vehicle, through the sally port, through secure elevators, to the holding cell, and to the courtroom to avoid crossing the path of judges, jurors, staff, or the public.

TOPIC B-3: COURTROOMS

PHASE ONE

1. Assign at least one CSO on every floor that has one or more courtrooms, dedicated as a “rover” from one courtroom to the next (unless local or state rules require additional coverage).
2. There must be at least one CSO present throughout the entire court proceeding whenever an in-custody defendant is involved.
3. Install duress alarms⁶ in the courtroom at accessible locations:
 - On top of or under the working surface of the bench, plainly marked
 - At the clerk’s station
4. Train judges and staff on the functionality of duress alarms and on the protocols for use.
5. Test duress alarms regularly (at least monthly).
6. Courtrooms should be cleared and locked during a recess or when the courtroom is otherwise not in use. It should be possible to easily lock all courtroom doors from the inside. If individuals are allowed to stay in the courtroom during a recess, a CSO should be assigned to remain in the courtroom.
7. Secure or remove items inside the courtroom that can be used as weapons (e.g., scissors, staplers, metal water pitchers, water glasses). As substitutes for these items, use Styrofoam or paper products. Use snub nose scissors, bendable pens for defendants, and smaller staplers. There should be no drawers in plaintiff’s or defendant’s tables. Secure

⁶ See Appendix C for a summary of information pertaining to duress alarms.

or remove all moveable furniture. (Moveable or folding chairs can be secured by fastening them together with secure ties around their legs.)

8. Install and then regularly test emergency lighting/fire equipment in courtrooms.
9. Use proper and acceptable restraints per state law and a judge's approval on in-custody defendants. In-custody defendants, except during a jury trial or as prohibited by law, should be restrained with handcuffs, leg restraints, and belly chains.
10. Install door scopes (i.e., peepholes) for the judge's entry into the courtroom.
11. Ensure weapons allowed in the courtroom as exhibits are rendered inoperable. Ammunition should always be secured in sealed evidence bags separate from any firearms. All evidence that has been admitted must be stored in a secured location to prevent tampering or theft when the court is recessed or not in session.
12. Judges presiding over courtroom matters should issue orders of decorum at the outset of all proceedings and should maintain vigilance in observing activities and maintaining decorum within the courtroom all times.
13. Judges, CSOs and court staff should maintain continual verbal and non-verbal communication regarding courtroom decorum and possible security issues throughout all court proceedings.
14. For high-visibility trials and for other proceedings as warranted, institute other security measures such as leaving the front row of the public gallery vacant and/or keeping separate family and friends of the plaintiff or prosecution from family and friends of the defendant.
15. Develop policies and procedures to keep defendants seated during pleas and sentencing hearings. A seated defendant is more easily controlled and less likely to be disruptive.
16. Keep presentation tables and podiums a safe distance away from the bench.
17. Conduct sweeps of all courtrooms. Sweeps should be made each time before the courtroom is opened and at the end of the day. If CSOs are not available, court staff can be trained and instructed to conduct courtroom sweeps. Logs must be made of sweeps to include descriptions of any items found during sweeps.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

18. Assign at least one CSO to be present in the courtroom whenever there is any court proceeding being held in the courtroom. A second CSO or transport officer should be assigned when there is an in-custody defendant present. The transport officer maintaining custody (i.e., having direct contact) of the in-custody defendant should be armed with an intermediate weapon (e.g., Taser, stun gun, or chemical spray, etc.) in lieu

of a firearm. This will minimize the likelihood of an in-custody defendant obtaining a firearm during confrontations.

19. CSOs in courtrooms should remain standing throughout the proceeding and positioned to be able to observe and to respond quickly to potential security incidents.
20. CSOs in courtrooms should manually lock down front door(s) in case of a security incident in the public area outside the courtroom.
21. Install at least **one** security camera in every courtroom. The primary security camera should be installed on the wall behind the bench facing the litigation area and public seating (refer to Best Practice level in this Topic for installation of an additional camera).
22. Establish separate entrance approaches and appropriate access controls into courtrooms for judges and court staff, jurors, in-custody defendants. Attorneys, witnesses, and the general public should enter courtrooms only through the main public entrance doors.
23. The courtroom door nearest the bench should allow the judge to quickly leave the courtroom in case of an emergency or security event and should lock behind the judge to thwart the pursuit by a potential assailant. If the door is required for public exit in the event of an emergency, a delayed egress device should be installed in accordance with local building codes.
24. Provide holding cells adjacent to courtrooms where matters involving the presence of in-custody defendants are regularly scheduled. Holding cells for the courtroom should be properly constructed, safe for the in-custody defendants, and escape-proof.
25. Install bullet-resistant materials at the bench and workstations inside courtrooms. Opaque ballistic-resistant material that meets UL Standard 752, Level III, should be installed behind the vertical surfaces on the three sides of the benches and stations that are visible to the public. Bullet-resistant fiberglass panels are a cost-effective material that can be field cut or factory cut to specific dimensions and installed on the backside of existing courtroom millwork. NOTE: The installation of bullet resistant materials should be highly prioritized if there is no weapons screening at the court building or if screening is materially deficient.

PHASE THREE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

26. A second CSO should be assigned in the courtroom for all proceeding types except those types deemed as having a low risk of security incident as determined by the security committee. Regardless of such determination by the security committee, a second CSO should also be assigned in any proceeding when specifically requested by a judge based on a determination of risk by the judge. NOTE: This CSO should not be the same CSO assigned as responsible for an in-custody defendant(s) involved in the proceeding.

27. A judge should periodically convene a meeting with court staff to debrief on incidents that have occurred in the courtroom and to review procedures related to courtroom security. There should be an immediate debriefing following any significant security incident.
28. Provide remote video and audio linkages (and supporting infrastructure) to allow for reliable connectivity between the court and the detention center(s) as discussed Topic B-2 above.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One, Two, and Three, plus add the following:

29. For high-risk or high-visibility proceedings,⁷ a minimum of two CSOs should be assigned to be present in the courtroom if no in-custody defendants are involved. If in-custody defendants are involved, a minimum of three CSO's should be assigned to be present in the courtroom.
30. For high-risk or high-visibility trials, coordinate with law enforcement and intelligence entities (e.g., Fusion Centers) to monitor social media for potential threats or protests at the court building.
31. For high-risk or high-visibility trials, coordinate with law enforcement to utilize a dog trained with the ability to detect guns, bomb materials, and other explosive contraband. Dogs may also be used to sweep courtrooms at random intervals or at the request of a judge.
32. Install two security cameras in all courtrooms:
 - One camera should be installed on the wall behind the bench facing the litigation area and public seating as described in a previous Step.
 - A second camera should be installed in the back of the public seating area facing the litigation area.
33. Install an automatic electronic lock-down mechanism on the public entrance to the courtroom in case there is a security incident in the public area outside of the courtroom.

⁷ High-risk or high-visibility proceedings may be regarded as those that have the potential for personal injury, property damage, or disruption of court proceedings. Examples might include: proceedings involving more serious criminal charges, cases with multiple victims or multiple offenders; aggravated domestic violence cases; cases involving significant media coverage, demonstrations, or protests; and cases involving other significant public attention.

TOPIC B-4: CHAMBERS

PHASE ONE

1. Provide training to judges and court staff regarding personal security and safety in chambers.
2. Install a duress alarm at the judge's desk and in the chambers reception area.
3. Test duress alarms regularly (at least monthly). Train judges and court staff how and when to use the duress alarms in chambers.
4. Provide a CSO to escort judges between the chambers area and the courtroom when requested by the judge, particularly if the chambers hallway is unsecured and/or if the judge must travel through a public hallway.
5. Install blinds, preferably vertical, as interior window coverings in all chambers. Keep blinds positioned at all times so as to prevent a view into chambers from the outside.
6. Conduct daily sweeps of chambers in the morning and at the end of the day.
7. Keep entrance doors to chambers areas locked. Keep doors to individual chambers locked when judge is not present, especially at night.
8. Provide advance notice to judges so they do not step outside their chambers while in-custody defendants are being escorted in the chambers hallway.
9. Position furniture in chambers with security in mind. For example, the judge's access to the exit door should not be blocked by a visitor's chair. Also, the judge's chair should be positioned, where feasible, to avoid a direct line of sight from the outside.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

10. Establish a video intercom and remote-controlled magnetic door strike system to control access into chambers areas.
11. Plan for and conduct drills regarding emergency situations in chambers areas.
12. In locations where there are no dedicated transportation corridors for in-custody defendants, assign at least two CSOs or transport deputies to escort in-custody defendants through chambers and staff hallways, with one to clear the path ahead. The transport officer assigned direct contact with the in-custody defendant should not carry a firearm but should be armed with an intermediate weapon such as a Taser or chemical spray; the other officer should carry a firearm in a triple retention holster.
13. Install a sound and light (i.e., strobe) system in the hallways by chambers to alert judges and staff when in-custody defendants are about to be escorted through the hallway.

14. Cleaning crews should be prohibited from entering judges' chambers unsupervised at any time and should be supervised at all times by someone who is accountable to the court. Require that cleaning crews clean chambers during the end of the day when court staff members are present, rather than at night. If cleaning must be conducted at night, leave waste baskets outside locked chambers area doors. NOTE: See Topic B-6 for additional recommendations regarding access control policies and procedures for cleaning crews and vendors.
15. Install duress alarms in chambers conference room(s).

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

16. Install security cameras in chambers hallways that lead to chambers areas.
17. Establish a secure path (horizontally and vertically) for judges to go from chambers to courtrooms. As discussed above in Topic B-2, a separate secure path for escorting of in-custody defendants from holding cells to the courtroom without going through chambers hallways should also be established.
18. Install reflective glass or reflective film on the outside of chambers windows so that the public cannot see into these areas. Install security film on the inside of such windows. NOTE: Reflective glass and film does not prevent a view into interior spaces at nighttime and does not preclude the need for window coverings. Security film is not ballistic rated but may prevent the shattering of large pieces of glass in the event of an assault.
19. Consider installing ballistic-resistant windows in areas deemed to be exposed to a specific significant threat or vulnerability (e.g., windows at ground level offices for judges and/or elected officials, presence-adjacent structures, and/or vulnerable geographic features associated with the location of the office). The recommended ballistic-resistant material for severe risk applications should meet UL Standard 752, Level IV (designed for high powered rifles).

TOPIC B-5: ACCESS OF THE PUBLIC INTO THE COURT BUILDING (WEAPONS SCREENING)

NOTE: The NCSC recommends as a Best Practice that everyone entering a court building should be properly screened for weapons at all times. This practice, known as “universal screening”, includes judges, elected officials, court staff, attorneys, and police officers. This is recommended for the public in Topic B-5 beginning at Step 6. It is recommended for all others (e.g., judges, staff) in Topic B-6.

PHASE ONE

1. Establish only one main entrance through which the public can enter the court building.
2. Install appropriate signage at the main entrance to alert the public to what items cannot be brought into the court building (e.g., guns, knives, mace, scissors, etc.) and that all persons are subject to search by security personnel. Additionally, signage should be conspicuously placed:
 - a. to inform the public of any health and safety requirements in force; and
 - b. to inform the public that security cameras are operating and recording activity throughout the court building.
3. Keep all other exterior doors locked during all hours, including business hours (see also Topic B-9 for recommendations regarding security cameras at exterior doors).
4. Emergency exit crash bars should be installed on all exterior exit doors. All exit doors should be alarmed, with a ten second delay consistent with local codes. Establish signage that explains the “Exit Only” requirement. Alarms should sound at the command center and also in the immediate area of the door.
5. Conduct a security sweep of the court building in the morning before the building is open to the public and each evening after all areas of the building are closed to the public.
6. Dedicate at least one full-time CSO position to secure the main public entrance to the court building and to operate the temporary screening station.
7. Until a permanent screening station can be installed, set up a temporary table and other physical structures (e.g., stanchion ropes, dividers, etc.) to serve as the screening station.
8. Ensure that sight lines from the screening station and the building entrance/exit are unobstructed to allow for appropriate visual assessment and security response.
9. Screen people coming in the public entrance for weapons by use of a hand wand and physical search of personal items. The screener(s) should be provided with:
 - Training on the use of hand wand and physical search techniques.
 - The ability to contact the command center by way of a radio.
 - A weapons identification chart.
 - A list of contraband items.
 - A protocol for how to respond when weapons or contraband are discovered.
 - A listing of daily court activities.
 - Special instructions pertaining to any high-risk or high-visibility proceedings.
 - A list of phone numbers for judges, bailiffs, and other court staff.
10. Train CSO(s) in all Phase One tasks.
11. Establish a direct line of communication between law enforcement and the courts so screening personnel are aware of potentially dangerous individuals who may seek to enter the court building.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

12. Install a magnetometer at the main door (public entrance) to the court building.
13. Per equipment manufacturer specifications, conduct a daily testing and inspection of the magnetometer. (The individual conducting the test should remove all metal from his or her person while conducting the test.) Recalibrate the magnetometer as necessary. Testing and recalibration should be conducted by an individual who has received the required training. A log should be kept of daily testing and of any necessary recalibration.
14. Train CSO(s) in all tasks added in Phase Two and provide additional security training for judges, staff, jurors, and others.
15. Install a security camera at the main door (public entrance) to the court building.
16. Assign a second CSO or contract security officer to assist with screening at the main entrance during high-traffic times of the day. During the day, a second CSO occasionally should conduct internal and external walk-around patrols and assist with courtroom security and security monitoring at the judge and authorized staff entrances.
17. Add a duress alarm, telephone, and gun lockers at the screening station.
18. Establish a policy that only law enforcement officers with responsibility for court security or those inside the building in an official capacity may bring a weapon into the building. Officers entering the court building on personal business (including uniformed and plain clothes officers) should not be allowed to bring in a weapon and should be required to check their weapons in a lock box at a secure location adjacent to the screening station(s). Officers that are in plain clothes on official business must wear visible identification while in the court building if they are carrying a concealed weapon.
19. Securely store contraband that has been seized at the screening station.

PHASE THREE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

20. Install an x-ray imaging system at the public entrance screening station.
21. The second CSO or contract security officer referenced in Step 16 should be assigned as a full-time, permanent CSO or contract security officer to operate the public screening station. During slow periods, this second CSO or contract security officer can still be available for additional duties as described in Step 16 above.
22. Train CSOs and contract security officers in all tasks and provide security orientation training for judges and staff.

23. Provide screening staff with ballistic-resistant vests and require staff to wear vests at all times. (See Appendix A, item #2 for possible other CSO equipment requirements, including ballistic vests for other assignments.)
24. Install ballistic-resistant barriers at the screening station to protect screening staff.
25. Establish additional policies and procedures for Phase Three operations as follows:
 - Conduct an annual inspection and certification of x-ray imaging system. This equipment must be registered with state health and safety agencies.
 - Provide a detailed, step-by-step manual, training, and continuing education on contemporary screening procedures.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One, Two, and Three, plus add the following:

26. Assign a CSO as the third security officer to staff the public screening station: one to direct and assist visitors as they enter the screening station, one to operate the x-ray imaging system, and one to operate the magnetometer. During low traffic times, the third CSO can assume another assignment. Ideally, all CSOs should be armed, but at a minimum, one should be armed (armed CSOs should be outfitted with triple-retention holsters). All screening staff should be trained and outfitted with non-lethal defense equipment (e.g., ballistic vests). All screening staff should have body cameras and radio communication equipment.
27. Implement the following strategies into the design of security screening areas:
 - Provide an appropriate number of screenings stations⁸ based on the volume of traffic regularly entering the court building.
 - Design the screening station to allow screening staff to observe the public as they enter the court building, throughout the main entrance, screening area, and lobby.
 - Provide adequate space in queuing areas to avoid overcrowding and congestion.
 - Provide re-dressing tables for visitors to organize their personal effects and belongings after going through screening. These should be located away from the screening station(s) to not interrupt the screening process for other visitors.
 - Establish clear and separate court building exit lane(s). These may be separated from the screening/queuing area with glass partitions to allow for security to

⁸ In this context a screening “station” is defined as one x-ray machine plus one or more associated magnetometers.

observe the area. The exit lane(s) should be equipped with turnstiles for one way traffic.

28. If two or more public screening stations are in operation, assign an additional CSO as a supervisor to oversee operations.
29. Install reflective glass or film so that the public cannot see into the front entrance screening area but the screening station staff can see outside. Install security film on the inside of the main entry and exit doors to the court building. Such film is not ballistic rated but may prevent the shattering of large pieces of glass in the event of an assault.

TOPIC B-6: ACCESS TO SECURE AREAS WITHIN THE COURT BUILDING

NOTE: The NCSC recommends as a Best Practice that everyone entering a court building should be properly screened for weapons at all times. This practice, known as “universal screening,” includes judges, elected officials, court staff, attorneys, and police officers. This is recommended for the public in Topic B-5 beginning at Step 6. It is recommended for all others (e.g., judges, staff) in Topic B-6.

PHASE ONE

1. Establish a protocol for staff entry into the court building (i.e., controlled access).
 - Where staff are not required to use the main public entrance, designate one of the exterior doors to the building as a restricted entry for designated personnel (preferably staffed by an armed and qualified CSO). Access should be controlled with an access card or key. Lawyers and jurors should not be permitted to use this door but should enter through the public entrance.
 - Develop and enforce policies and procedures prohibiting staff from bringing in others (such as family members, and friends) through secure doors. “Tailgating” through secured doors should never be allowed. In this context, tailgating is when an individual(s) enters a court building by following a person who is authorized to properly gain entry with an access card or key.
2. Establish, as feasible within the court building, the concept of circulation zones to maintain separation between public, restricted, and secured areas and routes within the court building. As warranted, separation between circulation zones should run vertically (floor to floor) as well as horizontally (on the same floor). Circulations zones include the following:
 - **Public Zone:** The public circulation system provides access from the main entrance to all publicly accessible areas of the court building. All areas that require access by the public should be accessible within the public circulation zone including

courtrooms, public counter areas and court service functions, court administration, public restrooms, public elevators, and chambers reception areas.

- **Restricted Staff Zone:** The restricted circulation corridors, elevators and stairwells provide access for court staff, judges, escorted jurors, and security personnel to courtrooms, chambers, offices, and jury deliberation rooms. Judges and court staff should be able to move into work areas or courtrooms through private corridors and a private elevator without going through the public area.
 - **Secure In-Custody Defendant Zone:** This zone includes in-custody defendant transport and holding areas throughout the building. The configuration of these areas should prohibit unauthorized access by the public and escape by in-custody defendants (See also Topic B-2).
3. All doors that are required to be locked, in accordance with the court building circulation zone concept should be kept secured at all times. Such doors should never be left propped open or unlocked.
 4. Permit access into all secure areas of the court building only via key or electronic access device. Keys and electronic access devices should be issued and controlled pursuant to a comprehensive accountability system that has been approved under the purview of the court building security committee. Metal keys, particularly masters and grand masters, should be under close supervision at all times. The loss of metal keys for sensitive areas requires rekeying of affected locks without delay. A person should be designated to be responsible for these keys and keep a record of who has copies of these keys.
 5. Conduct background checks prior to issuing a key or electronic access device to any person. Background checks should be conducted prior to employment or execution of a contract. All after-hours access should be restricted as much as possible.
 6. Require, when employment is terminated, that electronic access devices be inactivated and keys turned in on the last day that the device or key holder is present in the court building and ensure that this has happened prior to the issuance of a final paycheck.
 7. Document and monitor those activities where the public is required to be in the building after-hours. Set policies and procedures to ensure no unauthorized persons are in the building after-hours.
 8. Establish policies and procedures for cleaning crews and any vendors including the following:
 - Conduct annual background checks for cleaning crews and any vendors granted after-hours access to the building.
 - Cleaning crews and vendors should be supervised at all times by a person who is accountable to the court.
 - To the extent possible, courtrooms and judges' chambers should be cleaned by crews/vendors during the business day with no authorized access after-hours.

NOTE: See Topic B-4 for additional recommendations regarding cleaning of judges' chambers.

- When a contract is terminating, access devices should be immediately deactivated, and keys turned in on the last day that the device or key holder is present in the court building. Log and confirm device deactivation and key collection prior to the issuance of a final paycheck or contract payment.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

9. Require judges and staff to prominently display badges with a photo and identifying information to allow a security officer to confirm if the individual in possession of a badge is in fact the properly authorized holder of the badge. Consider coding badges based on access level. Do not display titles on the badge to ensure that the public cannot easily identify judges.
10. Eliminate metal keys and migrate toward electronic access devices. Only maintenance staff and emergency responders should retain keys. Where keys are required in specific instances, issue double-cut, non-duplicate keys for use in emergencies or building maintenance purposes.
11. Prevent unauthorized access to critical rooms and areas such as electrical supply, roof, data centers, maintenance areas/shops, water utilities, and other building systems. Install cameras at access points to critical areas. Consider adding a two-factor authentication (e.g., using electronic access device and a unique code on a keypad) to allow a person to enter those critical rooms and areas.
12. Prevent unauthorized access to secure storage areas containing dangerous objects and substances (e.g., weapons, toxic substances, and flammable materials). When dangerous objects and substances are maintained in the court building, they should be stored in a secure area to which access is limited to those specifically identified to have access. There should be adequate ventilation, temperature controls, and fire suppression systems as required to ensure safe storage.
13. Where applicable, establish a video intercom and remote-operated magnetic door strike system to allow permitted visitor access into secure areas.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

14. Establish and maintain complete separation between different zones of circulation throughout the building as described previously in Step 2 of this Topic.

15. Establish a universal screening policy. Universal screening means everyone entering the building is screened. (However, if there is not a separate entrance with a screening station for judges, then judges ought not to wait in a screening line at a public entrance.)
16. Install a magnetometer, x-ray imaging system, duress alarm, and security camera at the judge/staff entrance. Consider allowing jurors to use this entrance.
17. Assign at least one CSO to staff the judges/staff entrance. Assign two or more security officers (at least one of whom should be a CSO) to the judges/staff entrance as warranted by volume (e.g., peak hours during the day or during all normal business hours in larger, heavily trafficked court facilities).
18. For after hours, create a single access point into the court building that is secured by a CSO, or contract security officer, who checks identification and signs in all people entering the building after regular hours. As time permits, the CSO should periodically patrol the interior and exterior of the court building.
19. Install delayed egress units in all doors that lead from public areas to secure areas where public transit is required through the secure area in the event of fire or other emergency. The delay should be set at 15 to 30 seconds as required by local building code officials to allow time for security personnel to respond to the access breach. The units should sound an alarm at the command center and also in the immediate area of the door to alert those inside the secure area.

TOPIC B-7: OFFICES AND WORK AREAS WHERE STAFF INTERACT WITH THE PUBLIC

PHASE ONE

1. Install one or more duress alarms at each work area where staff interact with the public. Train staff on the functionality of duress alarms and on the protocols for use.
2. Keep window coverings in work areas (e.g., drapes, blinds) drawn to restrict observation from outside.
3. Install Plexiglas™-type enclosures at counters where cash is handled. (See Topic C-5 for additional recommendations regarding cash handling.)
4. Ensure all public transaction counters are designed with adequate height and depth dimensions to discourage and limit attempts to jump or climb over.
5. Ensure that sensitive items such as court stamps or seals are not in reaching distance of the public standing at public transaction counters.
6. Require regular CSO patrols of all interior areas both during business hours and after hours.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

7. Install polycarbonate (e.g., Plexiglas™) barriers over all public counters. If there is no weapons screening at the court building, or if screening is materially deficient, provide ballistic rated barriers at public counters. Ballistic-rated barriers should be installed below the counter as well as above the counter.
8. Install duress alarms strategically in the office areas behind counters.
9. Install duress alarms in all interview and conference rooms where staff meets with the public (e.g., mediation rooms and assessment interview rooms). Position furniture in these rooms with security in mind. For example, staff's access to the exit door should not be blocked by a visitor's chair.
10. Confirm that all telephone handsets allow caller ID and train staff on the functionality and protocols for the use of handsets in case of an emergency or security event.
11. Establish, where feasible, alternative safe routes for staff to exit office areas away from an active shooter or other threat. Ensure staff are aware of all exit routes available.
12. Establish safe room(s) in the court building where judges and staff can seek safety in case of a negative event. Retrofit the locking mechanism on the safe room door so that it can be locked and unlocked from the inside. Reinforce the door jamb to protect against the door being kicked in. Install a duress alarm in the safe room. Make sure that room has adequate ventilation, communication equipment, and supplies (e.g., food and water) to support a reasonable length of stay.
13. Establish clear protocols for staff dealing with clients that may have the potential for violence (e.g., those on probation) or who are required to take on sensitive assignments such as obtaining urine samples.
14. Provide mobile duress alarms to staff who have cause to come into contact with the public outside of their immediate office space (e.g., in common meeting rooms, restrooms shared with the public, etc.). Mobile duress alarms should have location tracking technology that will allow command center staff or other first responders to be able to immediately identify the location of the alarm.
15. Install doors with glass panes and sidelight windows in all mediation and conference rooms.

PHASE THREE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

16. Install security cameras at the back of all public counters to capture the faces of members of the public conducting business at the counter.

17. Provide safe and secure waiting areas for use by victims and witnesses, protective order petitioners and respondents, and other court visitors who might be at risk of assault. Install security cameras and assign a CSO to monitor and patrol all waiting areas where there is potential for conflict.
18. Install Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) handsets that include emergency notification features to supplement duress alarms (e.g., push-button emergency alarm notification, two-way hands-free communication with security personnel, and audible public address notification capabilities).

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One, Two, and Three, plus add the following:

19. Create dedicated interview areas for staff to meet with members of the public or clients who may have the potential for violence (e.g., those on probation) rather than having staff meet with such clients in their own staff office spaces. Interview areas should include with meeting rooms/interview booths which should be accessed separately from public and staff areas. Duress alarms should be provided in individual meeting rooms/booths. The interview area should be equipped with security cameras and monitored and patrolled by a CSO.
20. Where applicable, create separate secure drug testing areas for clients who are required to give urine samples. Public or staff restrooms should not be used for this function. Install a duress alarm in each drug testing room provided.
21. Install reflective glass or film on ground floor office windows and in any offices where there may be a higher level of threat to specific staff so that the public cannot see into these office areas. Install security film on the inside of such windows. Consider installation of ballistic rated glazing in areas deemed to be exposed to an especially high threat.
NOTE: Reflective glass and film does not prevent a view into interior spaces at nighttime and does not preclude the need for window coverings. Security film is not ballistic rated but may prevent the shattering of large pieces of glass in the event of an assault.
22. Consider installing ballistic-resistant windows in areas deemed to be exposed to a specific significant threat or vulnerability (e.g., windows at ground level offices for judges and/or elected officials, presence-adjacent structures, and/or vulnerable geographic features associated with the location of the office). The recommended ballistic-resistant material for sever risk applications should meet UL Standard 752, Level IV (designed for high powered rifles).

TOPIC B-8: JUDGES PARKING

PHASE ONE

1. Remove all signs in judges' parking areas that identify parking spaces either by name or title of judge. Any signs should simply say "reserved" along with a number as appropriate.
2. Judges should notify law enforcement officials or a designated CSO of their arrival in the morning and be offered an escort if they park in an unsecured parking area.
3. When departing for the day, if requested, judges should be provided an escort to unsecured parking areas by designated CSOs. Judges should also be provided an escort to secured parking areas by designated CSOs during high-threat proceedings or when there are heightened security concerns.
4. Install adequate lighting at the judges' parking lot.

PHASE TWO

Continue the steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

5. Install security cameras with protective environmental housings in the judges' parking lot.
6. Install emergency call boxes in the judges' parking lot.
7. Fence-in the judges' parking lot using opaque materials such as brick or stone. If this is not feasible and instead a chain-link fence is used, install privacy slats in the chain-link.
8. Make sure that in-custody defendants are never afforded a view of judges getting in or out of their vehicles.
9. Provide sturdy vehicle access gates or overhead doors accessible by electronic devices. Install a video intercom connected to the command center.
10. Calibrate the timing of doors or gates to secure parking areas so that the doors or gates close in a timely fashion after entry of authorized vehicles to limit opportunities for tailgating.
11. Provide a regular CSO patrol presence in the parking areas in the morning, during the lunch hour, and at close of business.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue the steps in Phases One, and Two, plus add the following:

12. Provide a secure parking area, preferably covered, for judges where they can proceed directly from their car, through dedicated elevators and through screening, and to their chambers without traversing any public areas or main court building entrance areas.

13. Consider installing a security booth checkpoint for access to secure parking in high-risk areas. Provide a CSO to staff the booth.

TOPIC B-9: PERIMETER ISSUES

PHASE ONE

1. Provide for sufficient lighting around the building perimeter, including parking areas. Lighting should be sufficient to provide a reasonable level of safety for judges and staff going to and from the court building during hours of darkness.
2. Keep landscaping trimmed and neat to limit areas of concealment and reduce opportunities for undetected property damage and/or undetected access.
3. Make sure that there are clear, open, and non-congested lines of sight for all areas around the perimeter of the court building.
4. Make sure that there is adequate and unobstructed space for evacuation of the court building and for unfettered access by first responders.
5. Conduct daily security checks around the perimeter, particularly at times when the building is closed.
6. Relocate all trash receptacles, newspaper kiosks, and any other items that could be used to conceal weapons or hazardous materials to a safe distance away from the court building.
7. Keep doors locked after hours and allow access only via appropriately authorized key or electronic access devices.
8. Install signage to indicate any areas that are restricted to public access.

PHASE TWO

Continue steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

9. Install exterior security cameras overlooking the inside and outside of all exterior doors (see also Topic B-5). Cameras should be positioned to capture the face of all persons entering and exiting the building and recordings should be kept allowing CSO's, law enforcement, and court officials to review footage of building ingress/egress.
10. Install exterior security cameras around the perimeter (at each corner of the court building). Make sure that security cameras have a clear line of sight around the entire perimeter of the court building.
11. Install duress alarms and security cameras at the loading dock.

12. Install a security camera covering the driveway and exterior areas leading to the sally port (also provide a camera in the port per recommendation in Topic B-2).
13. Assign CSO exterior patrols randomly throughout the day.

PHASE THREE

Continue steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

14. Install bollards or heavy landscape features outside main entrance doors, large ground floor windows, shipping and delivery docks, and other vulnerable or critical areas.
15. Prohibit unauthorized motor vehicles from parking or accessing areas adjacent to or within “blast-proximity” of the court building. NOTE: the presence of unoccupied law enforcement vehicles parked around the perimeter of the court building can serve as a deterrent to unlawful activity.
16. Enclose and secure all exposed gas, electric, and other utilities from public access or tampering. Secure air ducts or other openings from physical intrusion and from the introduction of any toxic substance.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue steps in Phases One, Two, and Three, plus add the following:

17. Require scheduled patrols of all exterior areas 24/7. NOTE: The schedule should be staggered and changed regularly.
18. Replace keys with an electronic access device system (except for back-up emergency) on exterior door entrances to the court building.
19. Install emergency call boxes in both staff and public parking areas around the court building.

CATEGORY C: ESSENTIAL

TOPIC C-1: EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

PHASE ONE

1. Install an emergency, battery-generated lighting system in courtrooms, offices, and public areas to allow occupants to exit the building safely in the event of a power outage.
2. Ensure that proper and effective fire detection and suppression equipment, including, for example, alarms, sprinklers, hoses, and extinguishers, are properly installed and maintained, and are secured from tampering, vandalism, or sabotage.
3. Have periodic inspection and review of all emergency and life safety equipment and systems completed by appropriate local authorities.
4. Install automated external defibrillators (AEDs) located accessibly on each floor of the court building. Ensure staff are properly trained on the use of AEDs and related medical response procedures.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

5. Install an emergency generator system that is properly secured and protected.
6. Test generator system monthly; keep a log of tests.
7. Determine the time-delay for emergency generators to “power-on” and install uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) for critical systems.
8. Provide basic medical/first aid supplies for all offices.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

9. Install a public address system for the court building to notify occupants of emergency situations and provide instructions in case of events such as building evacuations, bomb threats, medical emergencies, in-custody defendant escapes, and unruly litigants or visitors. Pre-written and approved scripts for various incidents should be developed and approved in advance so messages can be quickly sent (see related recommendation in Topic B-1, Step 10).

TOPIC C-2: INTRUSION DETECTION SYSTEMS

PHASE ONE

1. All exterior doors and interior doors into secure areas should have basic intrusion alarm devices, that sound locally, and cover:
 - Building ingress/egress during business and after-hours.
 - Emergency exit doors during business and after-hours.
-

PHASE TWO

Continue the step in Phase One, plus add the following:

2. Install either glass-break or motion sensor intrusion devices that sound locally on all accessible windows, on the basement, first floor, and possibly the second floor. This can be accomplished with a passive infrared motion detector (PIR) in each room (or combination of rooms) that has an accessible window or by attaching a motion sensor to each window.
-

PHASE THREE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

3. Integrate the intrusion alarms described above into the command center (or appropriate monitoring agency during after-hours) so that triggered devices sound an alarm that clearly identifies the area intruded at the court building. Alarms triggered during business hours should alert the court building's command center; when the court building is closed, the alarms should alert the control center of the appropriate responding law enforcement agency (e.g., the 911 dispatch center).
-

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One, Two, and Three, plus add the following:

4. Integrate security cameras into the intrusion detection system described above so that cameras will be activated within the command center (or appropriate monitoring agency during after-hours) in the area(s) of intrusion.

TOPIC C-3: PUBLIC LOBBIES, HALLWAYS, STAIRWELLS, AND ELEVATORS

PHASE ONE

1. Provide emergency lighting in the court building, including backup generator powered lighting and lighted emergency egress signage.
2. Establish, as feasible, open hallways and lobbies with clear site lines and with no hiding spots.
3. Post floor diagrams in the hallways of the court building. Floor diagrams should be highly visible, legible, and should clearly indicate available emergency exit routes.
4. Establish egress/ingress standards regarding stairwells. For most court buildings, there should no re-entry for persons exiting into stairwells. Entry from the stairwell-side should be by controlled access only. For court buildings considered “high-rise” facilities, certain floors, as determined via security assessment and life safety analysis, may allow for re-entry.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

20. Install security cameras in court building lobbies, hallways, stairwells, elevators, and at elevator landings.
21. Provide adequate waiting space for court visitors outside of the courtrooms so that opposing parties are not kept in close proximity. Provide a CSO to monitor waiting areas for high-risk proceedings.
22. If there are easily lifted furniture or chairs provided in public seating areas, make sure that the furniture is fastened to the floor or tied together securely.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

23. Assign a CSO to regularly patrol these areas in accordance with an assigned schedule. Particular attention should be paid to patrolling high volume and high-risk areas.
24. Install adequate barriers over open atriums or stairwells to prevent someone from jumping or falling.

TOPIC C-4: JUROR SECURITY AND CIRCULATION

PHASE ONE

1. Provide jurors with court security information before they report for duty by placing information on the jury summons they receive. Such information could include by what of example:
 - Where to enter the court building.
 - What items (e.g., knives, nail files, scissors) may not be brought into the court building.
 - Not to discuss cases with anyone before and during jury service.
 - Who to contact regarding security and safety concerns or jury tampering.
2. Screen jurors as they enter the court building.
3. Give a basic security and building evacuation orientation and identification badge to jurors at the assembly area before going to the courtroom. Instruct jurors to not wear or display the identification badge off-site; and whom to notify if it is missing or lost.
4. Assign a CSO or bailiff to remain with the jury during the entire trial, including being stationed outside the deliberation room.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

5. Assign a CSO to provide security inside and outside the jury assembly room when jurors are present.
6. Assign a CSO to escort jurors to and from the courtroom. If jurors who are serving on a jury trial are dining as a group outside the court building, a CSO should accompany them. If an elevator is used to transport jurors, one CSO should supervisor the loading of jurors and another CSO should meet the jurors on the floor on which they disembark.
7. Install a duress alarm in each jury deliberation room and in the jury assembly room. A duress alarm may be need should a medical emergency or a violent altercation among jurors occur during deliberation,
8. Juror deliberation rooms should be located within a secure area of the court building.
9. Provide restrooms for juror use only, with no public access.
10. Provide secure ingress and egress for jurors to the court building and to their vehicles to avoid the threat of intimidation or attempt to influence.

TOPIC C-5: CASH HANDLING

PHASE ONE

1. Develop and train court staff on procedures for handling cash. The procedures should:
 - Determine who should collect the money.
 - Determine how to safeguard money during the daytime work hours and overnight.
 - Keep cash and checks in a secure, locked area overnight.
 - Train staff on how to verify checks and reconcile fees.
 - Determine and implement industry standards for deposits.
 - If employees are responsible for depositing funds, vary scheduled departure times and routes and employees assigned and notify designated persons when departing for and completing the deposit.
2. Install protective barriers and duress alarms at cash counters.
3. Install security cameras at counters where cash is handled.
4. Use a securely installed office safe for money storage.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

5. Install security cameras in offices where cash is handled and overlooking safes.
6. Install appropriate alarms and sensors (i.e., security, smoke, fire, extreme moisture, and motion) on safes.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

7. Use an armored car service or the bank's personnel to pick up funds daily.
8. Require two people – one court staff and an armed CSO – when carrying cash in and/or out of the court building.

TOPIC C-6: SCREENING MAIL AND PACKAGES

PHASE ONE

1. Provide routine visual inspection of all mail/packages coming into the court building, to include addressee verification and examination of suspicious items.

2. Require staff to attend training on postal security, recognition points, and package identification techniques as provided by the United States Postal Service (USPS).
3. Develop and practice a response protocol with law enforcement when a package is identified as suspicious or dangerous.
4. Develop specific policies and procedures to confirm mail/package senders and recipients whether the mail/package has been tampered with.
5. Install a duress alarm in the mailroom.
6. Install a security camera in the mailroom.

PHASE TWO

Continue all steps in Phase One, plus add the following:

7. Require all mail and packages to be processed through an x-ray imaging system.
8. Require everyone delivering mail or packages to pass through the magnetometer.
9. Delivery people and contractors should enter through the main door and be verified by an authorized representative requesting the delivery or service. Delivery people and packages should be screened through a magnetometer and x-ray machine respectively. The same procedure should be followed after verification at the main door to the court building for delivery people and contractors needing to use other external doors for service or delivery. These individuals should be escorted and supervised while in the building.

BEST PRACTICE

Continue all steps in Phases One and Two, plus add the following:

10. Establish a single and separate offsite screening station or location for all mail and packages delivered to the court building. It may not be feasible for smaller courts to have an offsite location dedicated exclusively to its use. Smaller courts may work with the USPS, county, or other local officials to find shared offsite space for this purpose. Best practices for operating the mailroom for larger courts include the following:
 - All mail, packages, and parcels from USPS, FedEx, UPS, DHL, and other carriers should be thoroughly screened (x-ray and explosive trace detector, if suspicious) upon being received at the mailroom. This includes all USPS mail delivered and picked up by court staff from the local post office.
 - Deliveries of flowers, candy, food, gifts, etc., to any person located in a court building should be cleared through the mailroom first, be verified and vouched for by the recipient, screened as appropriate, and then delivered.

- Mailroom staff should sort incoming mail and packages off site by building, division, and/or department and prepare them for acceptance by designated representatives of each court office or division.
- Designated representatives of each court office or division should go to the mailroom, pick up mail for distribution to their offices, and identify questionable items. All authorized court and other staff mail handlers should attend training on handling suspicious mail. Local USPS or postal inspectors may conduct advanced training for state and local government agencies.

CONCLUSION

Operating a court building today is, by its very nature, a risky business. Day in and day out, court buildings are visited by a large volume of disgruntled and even law-breaking citizens. Moreover, court buildings can be seen as an important symbolic target for those in our midst who wish to wreak mischief or terror.

Court building security is not a one-time achievement. It is a serious and continuous goal requiring constant vigilance. Security is a total team effort. Every court employee is an integral part of the “security team”. From court clerks to county employees to law enforcement officers, every person has a role. “See something, say something” must be the constant mantra. Judges need to be actively involved and supportive of the security effort. When judges are committed to security, a trickle-down effect on court employees will follow. When judges are not supportive of security, staff never will play their full necessary role in security efforts. The leadership role of judges cannot be overstated. Further, security must be a number one priority every single day for all those interested and involved in the process. The risks involved in court building operations are great and varied, and generally can never be eliminated. However, by exercising due diligence and devoting the appropriate attention, incidents can be both minimized and mitigated. Adhering to the stated principles and recommendations contained in this *Steps to Best Practices for Court Building Security* document will greatly assist the courts in this regard.

APPENDIX A: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TOPICS

1. Court-specific duties and responsibilities of CSO's (and other law enforcement officers, as may be applicable⁹), to include the following by way of example:
 - a) Courtrooms
 - i) Ensuring a sweep is conducted of the courtroom in the morning before a proceeding is held and at the end of the day.
 - ii) Maintaining courtroom order and decorum.
 - iii) Constantly surveying all individuals in the courtroom.
 - iv) Making sure that courtroom doors are kept properly closed and locked.
 - v) Taking appropriate action in disruptive situations.
 - vi) Securing or remove items inside the courtroom that can be used as weapons (e.g., scissors, staplers, metal water pitchers, glasses).
 - b) Chambers
 - i) Conducting daily sweeps of chambers in the morning and at the end of the day.
 - ii) Ensuring that chambers doors are kept properly closed and locked.
 - c) Security monitoring/command center
 - i) Staffing security monitoring/command center areas at all times that the building is open to the public.
 - ii) After hours security monitoring.
 - d) Security escorts
 - i) Being available on request to provide escorts for judges. In addition, escorts should be available for staff or jurors where there is an acute security risk or vulnerability present. Examples include (but are not limited to) interior escorts when a judge leaves a chambers area for a courtroom and the pathway is unsecured, exterior escorts for judges, staff or jurors, or escorts for staff when making bank deposits.
 - e) Interior and exterior patrols
 - i) Ensuring daily sweeps are conducted of the court building interior and perimeter in the morning and at the end of the day.
 - ii) Making sure that doors and windows are properly locked and that there are no unauthorized individuals loitering about.

⁹ Where those providing security for the court building are officers of an independent law enforcement agency, such as the county sheriff, the policies and procedures listed herein pertaining particularly to such officers (e.g., duties and responsibilities, equipment, job qualifications, etc.) must be the primary responsibility of that law enforcement agency, who should consult closely with the court on all policies and procedures pertaining to court building security.

- iii) Being on the lookout throughout the day for suspicious items or potentially disruptive persons.
2. Court Security Officers (and other law enforcement officers, as may be applicable) court-specific equipment, to address requirements with respect to the following equipment (along with possible additional equipment):
 - a) Firearms and Ammunition.
 - b) Firearm retention holsters (triple retention is recommended).
 - c) Intermediate weapons (e.g., spray, Taser)
 - d) Ballistic vests.
 - e) Two-way radios (with earpiece).
 3. Court Security Officers (and other law enforcement officers, as may be applicable) minimum job qualifications, job descriptions, performance evaluations, and other HR requirements.
 4. The supervision and transport of in-custody defendants, to cover the following elements:
 - a) Duty assignments for officers supervising and transporting in-custody defendants.
 - b) Appropriate arming of supervising/transport officers (e.g., firearms, intermediate weapons).
 - c) Required restraints (“shackling”) of defendants.
 - d) Procedures for transporting defendants through corridors/areas where judges, court staff or members of the public may be present.
 5. Entryway Screening Policy to cover the following elements (in addition to other possible elements):
 - a) Who is subject to screening? For example:
 - i) The public only.
 - ii) The public, including attorneys.
 - iii) The public, including attorneys, and court staff.
 - iv) Everyone entering the court building.
 - b) Items such as weapons that are prohibited in the court building.
 - c) Items that may be prohibited from the court building or courtroom, for example:
 - i) Cell phones, bags, purses, containers, outerwear coats.
 - d) Designation of entrances. For example:
 - i) Public.
 - ii) Judges.
 - iii) Staff.

6. Entryway Screening Procedures to cover the following elements by way of example:
 - a) Duty assignments for security officers operating the screening station.
 - b) Specific screening techniques, for example:
 - i) Before entering the magnetometer, must everyone do one or more of the following?
 - (1) Empty pockets.
 - (2) Remove belts.
 - (3) Remove shoes.
 - ii) Secondary screening via hand-wanding.
 - iii) What items can bypass the x-ray machine.
 - iv) Policies and procedures for the seizure and storage of contraband.
 - c) Operation/maintenance of equipment. For example:
 - i) Testing and calibration of magnetometers.
 - ii) Regular inspection and certification of x-ray machines.
 - iii) Demeanor of screening staff in greeting and dealing with public.
7. Who is permitted to bring a firearm into the court building, to cover the following considerations by way of example:
 - a) State statutes/local ordinances regarding the right to carry a firearm.
 - b) Law enforcement officers on official duty.
 - c) Law enforcement officers appearing off-duty for a court proceeding in their personal capacity.
 - d) Temporary storage of firearms that cannot be brought into the court building.
 - e) Firearms as evidence in a proceeding.
8. Access controls that consider the following elements by way of example:
 - a) Circulation zones (separate, restricted, and secured areas and routes) for the following:
 - b) Judges and court staff areas (e.g., chambers, administration, jury deliberation rooms, conference rooms, staff-side of public counters, private elevators, secure stairways).
 - c) In-custody defendant transport areas (e.g., routes for entering and exiting the building, to and from holding areas/courtrooms).
 - d) Public areas.
 - e) Require all doors to be locked at all times in accordance with the circulation zone concept. Access control doors should never be left propped open and unsecured
 - f) Keeping all exterior doors (other than the main public entrance) closed and locked at all times.
 - g) After-hours access control to cover the following elements:
 - i) Permitting access only via key or electronic card access.
 - ii) Providing measures to govern cleaning crews and vendors who are in the court building after hours.
 - iii) Cleaning crews and vendors should be supervised at all times by a person who is accountable to the court.

- iv) To the extent possible, courtrooms and chambers should be cleaned by crews/vendors during the business day with no authorized access after-hours. Cleaning crews should never be allowed to work in judges' chambers areas unsupervised.
 - h) Creating a single access point into the court building that is secured where feasible by a security officer, who checks IDs and signs in all people entering the building after regular hours. As time permits, the security officer should also periodically patrol the interior and exterior of the court building.
 - i) Establishing where feasible full security screening operations requiring all persons to go through entryway screening.
9. Criminal background checks, to cover the following elements by way of example:
- a) Requiring criminal background checks prior to issuing a key or access card to any person.
 - b) Criminal background checks should be conducted prior to employment (in the case of staff) or execution of a contract (in the case of a vendor).
 - c) Criminal background checks for cleaning crews and any vendors granted after-hours access to the court building should be conducted at least annually.
10. Control over metal keys and electronic access cards/fobs, to cover the following elements by way of example:
- a) Establishing a key or access card system to control access based on a system of who needs to have access to which areas. Cards or keys should be issued on the basis of need, not convenience.
 - b) This system should:
 - i) Be under the control of a central authority.
 - ii) Include effective procedures for retrieving keys or canceling cards when situations change (e.g., employment termination).
 - iii) Require an up-to-date inventory on all access cards and keys.
 - iv) Including sufficient information on the face of the access card to allow a security officer to challenge the person in possession of the card in order to make sure that the person is in fact the properly authorized holder of the card. In this regard, it is helpful for face of the access card to contain a photograph of the authorized holder.
11. Employee identification badges that include the following elements by way of example:
- a) Photo requirements.
 - b) Identifying information.
 - c) Requirements for displaying on person.
 - d) Procedures for reporting/replacing lost or stolen badges.
 - e) Integration with electronic access cards.
12. High-risk/high-visibility trials, to include the following elements (in addition to other possible elements):

- a) Extensive advance planning between security officers, judges, court administration and staff, and judicial partners/stakeholders with a responsibility or interest in ensuring the safety of the proceeding.
 - b) Intensified intelligence gathering and sharing regarding threats.
 - c) Additional security measures to ensure proper separation of parties in the courtroom such as leaving the front row of the gallery vacant and/or separating family and friends of the plaintiff or prosecution from family and friends of the defendant.
 - d) Intensified sweeps, to include the possibility of utilizing a dog trained to detect guns, bomb materials, and other explosive contraband.
 - e) Additional CSOs to be present in the courtroom.
 - f) Pre-set procedures to anticipate and respond to disruptive behavior.
13. Duress alarms, to cover the following by way of example:
- a) Training judges and court staff on the location and functionality of duress alarms and on the protocols for use.
 - b) Testing duress alarms regularly on an established schedule (at least monthly).
 - c) Repairing or replacing non-functioning or malfunctioning alarms as soon as possible.
14. Security camera retention and records requirements, to cover the following elements by way of example:
- a) Whether recordings should be continuous or activated by motion or sound.
 - b) How long to retain recordings.
 - c) Where/how to securely store recordings.
 - d) Policy regarding confidentiality of recordings.
 - e) Procedures for responding to requests for recordings by law enforcement, the public, press, etc.
15. Jurors, to cover the following elements by way of example:
- a) Providing safety and security information to jurors.
 - b) Entrancing and exiting for jurors.
 - c) Supervision of jurors at various stages of a trial.
 - d) Juror identification badges.
16. Cash handling to cover the following elements by way of example:
- a) Determining how to safeguard money during daytime work hours and overnight.
 - b) Training staff on how to verify checks and reconcile fees.
 - c) Determining and implementing secure practices for deposits, to include methods for transmitting deposits to a bank (e.g., armored courier service, CSO/law enforcement escort, etc.).
17. Screening mail and packages, to cover the following elements by way of example:

- a) Visual inspection of all mail/packages coming into the court building, to include addressee verification and examination of suspicious items and to determine whether the mail/package has been tampered with.
 - b) Training staff on postal security, recognition points, and package identification techniques as provided by the United States Postal Service.
 - c) Response protocols with law enforcement when a package is identified as suspicious or dangerous.
 - d) In buildings where x-ray equipment is in place, requiring all mail and packages to be processed through an x-ray imaging system and requiring everyone delivering mail and packages to pass through a magnetometer.
18. Cell phones, to cover the following elements by way of example:
- a) Whether cell phones are permitted or prohibited in the court building or in courtrooms.
 - b) Whether other portable electronic recording devices are permitted or prohibited in the court building or in courtrooms.
 - c) If cell phones or other portable devices are permitted, whether photography, audio or video recording is permitted in courtrooms or elsewhere in the court building.
19. Availability of personal information online, particularly about judges.
- a) Implementing procedures for limiting or eliminating such information.
20. An Emergency Operations Plan to describe the policies and procedures dictating the response to short-term emergencies. Emergency events to be addressed should include (but not be limited) to the following:
- a) Active shooter.
 - b) Suspicious and unattended packages and articles (including mail)
 - c) Bomb threats and terror.
 - d) Hostage situations and negotiations.
 - e) Fire emergencies.
 - f) Medical emergencies (AED, CPR, choking, etc.).
 - g) Weather emergencies.
 - h) Mechanical/ electrical emergencies.
 - i) An irate or disruptive person on the premises.
21. The Emergency Operations Plan should include the following elements as appropriate:
- a) Identification of roles and responsibilities in responding to emergency events, to include identification of an incident commander during an emergency event.
 - b) Lockdown, evacuation and other procedures for courtrooms, judges' chambers, in-custody holding areas, staff offices, and for all other areas of the court building.
 - c) Methods for notifying judges and staff of emergencies.
 - d) Lockdown and evacuation procedures for judges' chambers and courtrooms, and for all other areas of the court building.

- e) Designating a floor warden on each floor to ensure proper response to emergency instructions.
- f) Designating a safe area for staff to assemble and remain in place during an emergency or negative event.
- g) Designating a safe area for a command center during an emergency or negative event.
- h) Developing methods for notifying judges and employees of emergencies or negative events.

22. A Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan to establish policies and procedures that ensure essential court functions are sustained during a disaster or extended emergency situation.¹⁰

¹⁰ For extensive information on Continuity of Operations (COOP) Planning, see the [NCSC Courts Continuity of Operations \(COOP\) Planning Guide and Template](#), which offers a step-by-step process with clear instructions for how courts may complete the key components of their COOP plan. See also the [NCSC Courts Continuity of Operations Assessment Tool \(C-CAT\)](#). The C-CAT was developed to help courts identify gaps in their continuity programming and identify strategies for improvement.

APPENDIX B: SECURITY STAFFING – SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

NOTE: Staffing recommendations summarized here have been previously described in the steps, phases, topics, and categories listed previously. Refer to the individual topics for additional descriptive and phasing information.

COURT SECURITY OFFICER (CSO) STAFFING LEVELS

A CSO, as referenced in this document, is defined as an individual trained and qualified in court building security and has been specifically trained and qualified to use a firearm and intermediate weapons such as Taser, chemical spray, or restraints (e.g., handcuffs, leg restraints). An armed CSO should be outfitted with a triple-retention holster. All CSOs should be outfitted with a radio that can communicate with the command center and a body camera. The CSO assigned to the command center is not necessarily required to carry a firearm.

NOTE: It is estimated that each CSO post requires an appropriate relief factor. Typical relief factors range from 1.2 to 1.3 full-time employees to cover for sick and annual vacation, training, etc.

1. Assign CSOs to meet recommended initial staffing guidelines in the following topics:
 - At the command center (Topic B-1).
 - To escort in-custody defendants through all non-secure areas and to clear the path ahead of civilians (Topic B-2).
 - In the courtroom while there is an in-custody defendant in the courtroom (Topic B-3).
 - At the main entrance of the court building during business hours (Topic B-5).
 - On every floor that has one or more courtrooms, dedicated as a rover from one courtroom to the next (Topic B-3).
2. As additional CSOs become available, assign in the following priority per recommended phases leading up to best practice level in each relevant topic:
 - To meet recommended staffing guidelines at the command center (Topic B-1).
 - To meet recommended guidelines for transporting in-custody defendants (Topic B-2).
 - To meet the recommended staffing guidelines at the in-custody transportation control room (Topic B-2).
 - To meet recommended staffing guidelines for the courtroom (Topic B-3).
 - To meet recommended staffing guidelines at the screening station (Topic B-5).
 - To meet recommended staffing guidelines at the judges/staff entrance (Topic B-6).

- To meet recommended staffing guidelines in waiting areas for victims and witnesses, protective order petitioners and respondents, and other potential high-risk areas (Topic B-7)
 - To assign random patrols for the interior and exterior of the building (Topics B-9, and C-3).
3. To achieve full recommended staffing guidelines, assign CSOs at the best practice level for the following topics:
- Command center (Topic B-1).
 - Transporting in-custody defendants (Topic B-2).
 - Courtrooms (Topic B-3).
 - Screening stations (Topic B-5).
 - Dedicated interview areas where staff meet with members of the public (e.g., centralized probation interview area) (Topic B-7).
 - Secure parking area security booth checkpoint (Topic B-8).
 - Regular patrols of building interior and exterior (Topics B-7 and B-9).

APPENDIX C: DURESS ALARM PLACEMENT – SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

NOTE: Duress alarm recommendations summarized here have been previously described in the steps, phases, topics, and categories listed previously. Refer to the individual topics for additional descriptive and phasing information.

Duress alarms, which are recommended throughout this Best Practices document, should be designed to allow judges and staff to silently send a signal to security personnel in the event of a security incident. Training should be provided to judges and staff on the functionality of duress alarms and on the protocols for use. Alarms should be tested at least monthly. Newer duress alarms are generally battery operated and controlled over a wireless network, thus reducing the need for cabling. The duress alarms should provide an audible signal to alert staff when the battery needs to be replaced. Placement of duress alarms should be in a discreet yet easily accessible location, often just below the desk of counter work area. In open office staff areas, they may be wall-mounted in an easily accessible location. Duress alarms should be integrated with other security systems as discussed in Topic B-1 (e.g., when a duress activates, an image on the appropriate camera should activate on a monitor in the command center).

DURESS ALARM LOCATIONS

1. In the in-custody transportation sally port (Topic B-2).
2. At all circulation areas through which an in-custody defendant may be escorted (i.e., staging areas, hallways, and elevators) (Topic B-2).
3. In the courtroom at the bench and clerk's station (Topic B-3).
4. In each chamber, reception area, and chambers conference rooms (Topic B-4).
5. At public screening stations (Topic B-5).
6. At staff screening stations (Topic B-6).
7. At public service transaction counters (Topic B-7).
8. In staff offices and work areas (Topic B-7).
9. In interview and meeting rooms where staff meet with the public (Topic B-7).
10. For staff who have cause to come into contact with the public outside of their immediate office space (mobile duress alarms) (Topic B-7).
11. In each drug testing room provided (Topic B-7).
12. In the loading dock area (Topic B-9).
13. In the jury assembly room and in each jury deliberation room (Topic C-4).
14. In the mailroom (Topic C-6).

APPENDIX D: SECURITY CAMERAS – SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

SECURITY CAMERA FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY

Courts should ensure that security cameras have sufficient and appropriate functional capacity to meet the security requirements of the court building. Functional capacity should include at least the following areas.

- Capacity to capture images in high-resolution and in color. High-resolution, digital color cameras are much better equipped to capture faces and other specific details than low-resolution, black-and-white cameras.
- Capacity to focus on targeted areas. Two types of cameras that have traditionally been used at court buildings are (a) pan/tilt/zoom cameras, and (b) fixed cameras. More recently, high-definition digital cameras with wide angle lenses, cameras with multiple lenses, fisheye, panoramic, digital pan/tilt/zoom capability have become popular. Wide-angle cameras, when equipped with sufficient image resolution quality, provide the capability for the user to focus digitally on targeted areas without losing the overall wide-angle coverage provided by the camera, thus avoiding the limitations inherent to traditional pan/tilt/zoom cameras (i.e., pan/tilt/zoom cameras might be panning and zooming at location X while another event may be happening at location Y).
- Capacity to capture images in low-light settings. Exterior cameras should have appropriate night settings, such as infrared (IR), to allow for identification of incidents and individuals in low-lighting conditions.
- Network streaming capacity. Security camera systems should utilize secure internet protocol (IP) technology to transmit video images and to provide system access and control over networks.
- Recording capacity. The camera system should have networked video recording capacity (either local or cloud-based), enabling CSOs, law enforcement, first responders, and court personnel to view incidents at a later time. This recording function is essential for identifying perpetrators for the purpose of apprehension as well as conviction. Recordings should be retained for at least ten working days.
- Activation capacity. The operation and recording function of a camera can be set to activate by either motion, sound, or by setting off duress or intrusion alarms.

SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEM MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PROTOCOLS

Courts should have written protocols in place to manage and maintain their security camera system. The written protocol should encompass at least the following topics:

- User and administrative access. Protocols should address the following types of questions:
 - What entities have access to view and download footage from the recording servers?
 - What levels of access do CSOs, law enforcement, first responder, and court staff have within the camera system?
 - What individuals have administrative rights to access and make changes to the camera system?
 - Where can the camera system be accessed (e.g., can the system be accessed remotely or only while on premise at the courthouse)?
- Camera settings and quality. Protocols should identify the following types of settings and specifications:
 - Camera resolution - Camera resolution should be set to the maximum level that the system can support (1080p is preferred). High resolution cameras typically require a large amount of data storage and bandwidth; therefore, camera resolution settings should be balanced with the capacity of supporting storage and network infrastructure.
 - Frames per second (FPS) - FPS should be set to the maximum level that the system can support (1080p is preferred). Faster frame rates typically require a large amount of data storage and bandwidth; therefore, camera frame rate settings should be balanced with the capacity of supporting storage and network infrastructure.
 - Recording intervals - A determination should be made as to whether cameras will record continuously, or if certain cameras will have recording activated only by motion (motion activated cameras will save on storage demands).
- Maintenance. Protocols should address the following types of questions:
 - What is the protocol when cameras need to be serviced?
 - How often are audits conducted on camera or recording quality?
 - Are appropriate server and security patches being applied to recording servers and computer workstations?
 - How is the overall system being protected from a cyber intrusion?
- Request for surveillance footage. Protocols should be developed to govern requests for surveillance footage. The protocols should identify who will approve and process such requests and define which recordings would be confidential and not subject to release.

SECURITY CAMERA LOCATIONS

NOTE: Security camera recommendations summarized here have been previously described in the steps, phases, topics, and categories listed previously. Refer to the individual topics for additional descriptive and phasing information.

Security cameras should be installed in the following locations:

1. In the sally port (Topic B-2).
2. In holding cells (Topic B-2).
3. At all circulation areas through which an in-custody defendant may be escorted (i.e., staging areas, hallways, and elevators) (Topic B-2).
4. In each courtroom (Topic B-3).
5. In hallways that access chambers (Topic B-4).
6. At security screening stations (Topic B-5).
7. At access points to critical rooms and areas such as electrical supply, roof, data centers, maintenance areas/shops, water utilities, and other building systems (Topic B-6).
8. At judges and staff entrances (Topic B-6).
9. At public service transaction counters (Topic B-7).
10. In secure waiting areas used by victims and witnesses, protective order petitioners and respondents, and other court visitors who might be at risk of assault (Topic B-7).
11. At dedicated interview areas for staff to meet with members of the public or clients who may have the potential for violence (Topic B-7).
12. In judges' parking areas (Topic B-8).
13. At the court building perimeter (Topic B-9).
14. Overlooking the inside and outside of all exterior doors (Topic B-9).
15. In staff, juror, and general public parking lots (Topic B-9).
16. At the loading dock (Topic B-9).
17. At the driveway used for transporting in-custody defendants (Topic B-9).
18. In public hallways (Topic C-3).
19. In elevators and stairwells (Topic C-3).
20. In the mailroom (Topic C-6).