

**Court Security:  
Policy Development**

Presented by  
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**Why do I need a policy??**

- Guidance and direction for Court Security Personnel
  - Clear vision of what is expected
  - Can be relied upon if a supervisor is not immediately available
- Orientation and training for new hires
  - Helps insure consistency is maintained with personnel changes

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**Why do I need a policy??**

- Risk Management and Liability Protection
  - Good policy will take the sting out of lawsuits if properly implemented and followed
- Helps to insure that standards are in place to protect the court
  - This is being proactive instead of reactive

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### Where do I start?

- Don't reinvent the wheel
  - There are many operations that already have a policy in place that will share with you. Mine are in your book.
- Get sample policies from those that already have them
  - Texas Marshals Association
  - Texas Police Chief's Association Best Practices

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### Where do I start?

- Get sample policies from those that already have them
  - Other Courts (Municipal, JP, County, State, Federal)
  - On the internet
  - Books
  - From people sitting next to you in this room

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### Where do I start?

- Review what you have accumulated
  - Look for items consistent with what you do at your facility
    - You will see things that you don't do. Come back to them late if you take up that activity.
  - Identify things done at your facility that are not covered by the sample policies
    - These stick out like a sore thumb. Make note of them because you may find them in another policy or you will have to develop one.
  - Pull out the best from your samples that will fit your goals

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### Where do I start?

- Start putting your policy together
  - Reword it to fit your facility and your needs
  - Try to keep it simple while getting the key points across
  - **THE BIG BALANCING ACT:** Give good guidance and direction without stifling officer discretion

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### Where do I start?

- Anatomy of a Policy
  - Purpose
    - Why are we doing this? What is the goal to be achieved?
  - Definitions
    - Clarify words, titles, procedures so that industry and lay persons can understand it.
  - Policy
    - The guideline for performance.

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### Court Security Post Orders

- What do I need to include:
  - Entrance Screening
  - Court Bailiff
  - Prisoner Holding
  - Alarm Testing
  - Foot Patrols
  - Emergency Planning

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### Court Security Post Orders

- Entrance Screening
  - Define what is not allowed in the court facility.
    - Weapons (knives, guns, pepper spray, eating utensils, tools, heavy chain articles, scissors, knitting needles, aerosol cans).
    - Cameras and recording devices.
    - Non-working electronic devices (radio faceplates, etc.)
    - Contraband (drugs, etc.)

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### Court Security Post Orders

- Entrance Screening
  - Operation of Equipment
    - Hand held detector.
    - Walk through detector.
    - Special situations (wheelchair, pacemaker, large hand carried articles, etc.)
    - What to do if something is detected.
  - Behavior on Post
    - Inattentiveness.
    - Verbal conduct.

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### Court Security Post Orders

- Court Bailiff
  - Jury Handling
    - Selection procedures.
    - Conduct towards juries.
    - Deliberation procedures.
  - Pre and Post Session Search
    - How to.....
    - What if something is found.
    - Securing the courtroom.

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### Court Security Post Orders

- Court Bailiff
  - Security During Trial
    - Placement in courtroom.
    - What to look for (reading material, use of cell phones, loud talking, body language, distractions).
    - Handling disturbances.
    - Service to the court.
    - In custody defendants.
    - Taking defendants into custody.

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### Court Security Post Orders

- Prisoner Holding Facility
  - Escort to and from court.
  - Use of restraints.
  - Monitoring of holding facility.
  - Threat level of prisoners.
  - Transport to and from permanent facility.

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### Court Security Post Orders

- Alarm testing
  - Frequency to test.
  - The person at the station pushes the alarm button.
  - Malfunction reporting.
  - Keep records.

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### Court Security Post Orders

- Foot patrols
  - Frequency
  
- What to look for
  
- Logging
  
- Maintaining Reports

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### Occupant Emergency Plan

- Things to consider
  - Bomb Threats
  - Medical Emergencies
  - Physical Altercations
  - Weather
  - Fire
  - Evacuations
  - Hostage Situations
  - Protests
  - Armed Attacks

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### Responding to Emergencies

- Bomb threats:
  - Policy should include getting information from caller (if possible)
    - When the bomb is set to explode
    - Where the bomb is located
    - Identity of caller – name, male, female, etc
    - When the call was received
    - What kind of bomb it is
    - What the bomb looks like
    - Background noise
    - Reason for bomb
    - Time caller hung up

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**Responding to Emergencies**

- Bomb threats (cont):
  - Information from caller (if possible)
    - How the caller sounded
      - Nervous
      - Excited
      - Intoxicated
      - Laughing
      - Accent
      - Speech impediment
      - Familiar voice
      - Indication of age

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**Responding to Emergencies**

- Bomb Threat Response:
  - Who do you call
  - Turn off radios and cell phones, use only land lines
  - Secure area
  - Evacuation
    - Determine if it is necessary
    - Inspect premises for devices
    - Inspect videos and talk to employees

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**Responding to Emergencies**

- Bomb Threat Response (cont):
  - If a suspicious object is found
    - Don't touch
  - Secure area
  - Evacuate vicinity
  - Contact EOD per your policy

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**Responding to Emergencies**

- Medical emergencies:
  - Who has first aid/CPR training
  - Do you have a first aid kit
  - Do you have a defibrillator
  - Make room for the victim
  - Control the scene
  - Make room for the ambulance personnel
  - Shut down entry if necessary

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**Responding to Emergencies**

- Physical Altercations
  - Duress alarms
  - Radio for assistance
  - Phone for assistance

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**Responding to Emergencies**

- Who do you call???
- 911 will take care of most of your issues from police backup to medical and fire.
- Special Situations
  - EOD....ATF, Military, FD
  - Mental Health Officer
  - Utilities.....gas, electric, water
  - Animal Services

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**Responding to Emergencies**

- Weather
  - Monitor storms
  - Determine danger
  - Secure building
  - Move persons to places of safety
  - Wait for the all clear before coming out

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**Responding to Emergencies**

- Fire
  - Evacuate the building
  - Keep persons from returning to building until the all clear is given
  - Assist fire department in crowd control

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**Responding to Emergencies**

- Evacuation plans
  - Have all persons go to a single location so that you can account for them
  - Have a security person go to that location to protect them
  - Escort personnel back to building after all clear is given
  - Rotate locations
  - Practice the plan

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### Responding to Emergencies

- Hostage Situations:
  - Secure the scene
  - Do not negotiate
  - Call for tactical response
  - Assist tactical units as requested
  - A Marshal or his partner may be at the mercy of an armed suspect who has the advantage, but experience has shown that the danger to an Officer **is not reduced** by his giving up his weapon upon demand. Surrendering the weapon might mean giving away the only chance for survival; therefore, Officers should use every tactical tool at their disposal to avoid surrendering their weapon.

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### Responding to Emergencies

- Protests:
  - Peaceful protests are legal
  - Must remain on public sidewalks but cannot block sidewalks
  - Cannot protest on the property or block the access to the building
  - Communicate with the leader if possible, it can help keep things peaceful
  - Over response can aggravate the situation
  - Collect intelligence discreetly

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### Responding to Emergencies

- Armed attacks:
  - Isolate or neutralize the threat if possible
  - Call for tactical assistance if necessary
  - Once threat is secured, identify medical needs and call for assistance
  - Protect the scene and perform crowd control functions

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### Alarms

- Alarms
  - Fire alarm
    - Smoke detectors
    - Pull alarms
  - Duress Buttons
    - Judge's Bench
    - Judge's Chambers
    - Each Clerk station
    - Court Reporter's Desk
    - Court Bailiff's Post
    - Entry points at screening posts
    - Office supervisors desk
    - Test alarms monthly

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### Courtroom Evacuation

- Get the Judge and court personnel out if possible to a safe place
- Try to maintain security of prisoners and/or suppress violence
- Get the public to a safe place or evacuated
- Practice the plan

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### Conclusion

There are many things to consider. This is a basic course that only gives a place to start and some of the issues to consider.

Each court is different in its own way and you must be flexible and innovative when designing your program.

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### Conclusion

Please contact me if you have any questions  
or issues related to court security.

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