



GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

Chapter: Operations

Section: 412.15

Subject: Court Security/Civil Process

Topic: Use of Ceremonial Courthouse

Accreditation:

Revised:

Reaffirmed:

Enacted: 07/30/2015

Last Review: 07/24/2015

Review: 07/30/2016

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this General Order is to outline procedures and court security responsibilities for the various uses of the Ceremonial Courthouse.

II. POLICY:

It shall be the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Court Security Section to utilize the Ceremonial Courthouse for such cases and public functions as directed by the Court in a safe, secure manner.

III. DEFINITIONS:

Ceremonial Courthouse – the old historic court building on the grounds of the court complex. This building dates from the late 1800's and has been preserved with antique furnishings and valuable paintings of historical figures.

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. Holding Court Cases

1. When used for any type of court cases, a minimum of one (1) bailiff shall be assigned to provide security for the presiding Judge and to ensure that there are no disruptions.
2. At the discretion of the Judge, entrance screening will be accomplished by two (2) deputies utilizing a walk through magnetometer and hand-held magnetometer. All bags and packages will be searched by hand to detect potential weapons and contraband.
3. A thorough pre-court inspection shall be made of the courtroom and all adjacent areas. A hand-held mirror and flashlight will be maintained for this daily inspection process at, or near, the bailiff's area.
4. All three (3) panic alarms shall be checked daily when the court is in use. These alarms must be activated for at least thirty (30) seconds to initiate the alarm call to the Control Room.
5. Due to the age and value of this courtroom and its contents, care will be taken to ensure that no food, drink or other potentially damaging actions are permitted in the Courthouse.

6. Unless directed to the contrary by the Judge, this courtroom will function in the same manner as all other courtrooms with regard to openings, recesses, and closings.
7. At times, special hearings may be held in this courtroom. The bailiff assigned shall meet with the Judge or special justice in these cases and determine how the hearing is to be completed.

B. Political Meetings and Announcements

1. This Courthouse is frequently used by local political figures to make announcements of candidacy for elections and other public announcements.
2. The deputy assigned will give access to the courtroom to the candidate or his representatives to effect setting up appropriate equipment for the speakers.
3. Throughout the program, the deputy will be responsible for the security of the building and its contents. Another concern is the safety of the citizens attending the program. No one is allowed access to the balcony of the courtroom unless given express permission by a Judge.
4. Once the program has been concluded, the deputy will ensure that any furniture moved is replaced to its original position. They will also check for any damage and items left behind and secure the building. If there is any trash left, the deputy will contact the cleaning services at the main building and request that the building be cleaned before the next planned use of the courtroom.

C. First Night Leesburg

1. The First Night Leesburg activities usually involve a specific performer(s) being assigned to the Courthouse for the evening.
2. The deputies assigned will be given an assignment sheet that outlines the duties and responsibilities as well as providing specific communications information.
3. The coordinators of the program will be given time, a day or two prior to New Year's Eve, to come in during normal work hours to set up any equipment necessary for the shows.
4. On New Year's Eve, the two (2) deputies assigned will open the Courthouse at 1700 hours for the performers to come in and prepare.

5. The program will begin around 1800 hours and last until approximately 0010 hours. The coordinator of First Night Leesburg will be responsible for maintaining at least one person at the Courthouse entrance to take tickets and control access to the program.
6. The deputies assigned are responsible for ensuring that no damage is done to the courtroom or its contents, and to maintain order and safety of the citizens who attend the performances.
7. The deputies will allow time for the performers to pack up their belongings and time for the First Night Leesburg staff to clean up after the performances.
8. Once done, the deputies will complete a walk-through of the building to be sure all is proper and clean. The building will then be secured for the night.

D. Other Special Events

1. Weddings

- a. Judges may authorize other special events to be held at the Ceremonial Courthouse such as weddings. For weddings, one of our Judges may preside over the ceremony.
- b. For events such as weddings, the presiding Judge rarely requests any security. Only in cases where there is some known problem will a Judge make such a request. If a request is made, a Court Security Supervisor will prepare and initiate a staffing plan that will meet the Judge's needs.
- c. On the next work day following the use of the Ceremonial Courthouse for a wedding, a deputy will make an inspection of the courtroom to be sure that there was no damage and that all furniture has been moved to its proper place.

2. Judicial Investitures

- a. Judicial Investitures, the swearing in of a new Judge, may include many Judges, political figures and prominent citizens as well as the family members of the prospective Judge.
- b. Judicial Investitures will be thoroughly planned in advance, coordinating security with the prospective Judge and the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court.
- c. Considerations will be made based upon the number of people expected to attend the event, the known judicial attendees, known political attendees and, potentially, any media who may have been on the invitation list.
- d. A Court Security Supervisor will ensure that an appropriate staffing plan be drafted and approved. Staffing assignments will be made and all deputies assigned will be briefed prior to the event.

- e. Due to the status of this Courthouse as a fully functioning courtroom of the Commonwealth, all rules of courtroom demeanor that apply to a courtroom will be enforced.
 - f. Deputies shall be responsible for the safety and security of all Judges who are attending the investiture. In many cases, this will include Judges from other jurisdictions in the metropolitan area.
 - g. Investitures normally follow the same process as any court proceeding: a primary bailiff will be assigned to open and close the court. Care must be made to ensure that the Judge(s) who actually preside over the investiture are announced properly.
 - h. Once an investiture has been completed, deputies assigned will make a check of the courtroom to be sure that no items were left behind and that the courtroom is prepared for the next use for a court case.
3. Other Events
- a. If presented with any other type of event, a Court Security Supervisor will make any necessary plans and staff assignments necessary to provide for the safety of citizens and the security of the building.
 - b. After any special event, a deputy will be assigned to make an inspection for damage and to ensure that the courtroom is prepared for future use.