

Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts

David L. Ratley
Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Chiefs of Police serving Municipal Courts in Georgia

From: Yolanda L. Lewis
Assistant Director of Judicial Liaison

Re: Court Security in Municipal Court

Date: January 8, 2008

The Council of Municipal Court Judges has recently convened a committee to review the current status of security in Georgia's municipal courts. This is a joint effort with a diverse advisory committee made up of the following representatives:

Judge Thomas Bobbitt, Municipal Court of Alamo, Chairperson
Mr. Ted Baggett, Georgia Municipal Association
Chief David Anderson, Fort Valley Police Dept.
Mr. John Vasquez, former Police Chief and retired FBI
Chief Dwayne Orrick, Cordele Police Department
Judge Annie Doris Holder, Probate Court of Calhoun County (and Magistrate and Municipal)
Judge John Edwards, Jr., State Court of Lowndes County
Judge John Cicala, Municipal Court of Auburn
Judge Samuel Ozburn, Alcovy Circuit Superior Court
Judge Robert Sneed, Municipal Court of Helen and others
Mr. Alex Lamback, Security Program Administrator, Fulton County
Judge Kimberly Warden, Magistrate Court of Fulton County and Municipal Court
Ms. Judy Cramer, District Court Administrator, Fulton Superior Court

Please find attached a survey concerning the current status of security in your local court. Please take a moment to complete it as your feedback is of great importance. In order to ensure that we have an accurate view of court security in Georgia's Municipal Courts, we ask that you return this survey to our office no later than January 31, 2008. You may forward the survey back by mail to the address below or by fax at 404-651-6449. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at lewis@gaoc.us or Ms. Leslie Johnson at johnsonl@gaoc.us.

Thank you for your time and participation in this endeavor.

Enclosure: Municipal Court Security Survey

cc: Municipal Court Security Committee

Security Equipment

11 Please indicate whether the following security equipment is available in your court.

Metal Detector or Hand Wand	Yes	No	NA
Magnetron	Yes	No	NA
Duress Alarm	Yes	No	NA
Cameras or Video Monitoring Systems	Yes	No	NA
Controlled Access Systems	Yes	No	NA
Door Hardware	Yes	No	NA
Fluoroscopes (x-ray machines)	Yes	No	NA
Other			

Court Access

12 Are there separate courtroom entrances and exits for:

Judges	Yes	No	NA
In-custody Defendants	Yes	No	NA
Court employee such as the Clerk	Yes	No	NA
General Public	Yes	No	NA

13 Are judicial chambers locked and secured when not occupied?

Yes No NA

14 When chambers are occupied are the doors usually:

Open	Yes	No	NA
Closed and Unlocked	Yes	No	NA
Closed and Locked	Yes	No	NA
Other			

15 Is there a secure area to hold defendants in custody?

Yes No NA

16 Do prisoners or defendants in custody enter the courthouse through:

Public Entrances	Yes	No	NA
Private Entrances	Yes	No	NA
Secured Sallyport	Yes	No	NA
Other			

17 Are defendants in custody restricted from public contact and view?

Yes No NA

18 Are victim/witness rooms provided?

Yes No NA

19 Do you separate prosecution and defense witnesses?

Yes No NA

20 Are public waiting areas routinely searched?

Yes No NA

21 Do judicial and court officers have a private entrance into the courthouse?

Yes No NA

Security Presence			
--------------------------	--	--	--

22	Is there at least one Officer or Bailiff present for each calendar/session?	Yes	No	NA
23	Are court officers armed in the courtroom?	Yes	No	NA
24	Are court security officers uniformed?	Yes	No	NA
25	Are there emergency evacuation procedures for:			
	Judicial Officers	Yes	No	NA
	Jurors	Yes	No	NA
	Prisoners/Defendants	Yes	No	NA

Emergency Communications			
---------------------------------	--	--	--

26	Are emergency communication system in place in your court?	Yes	No	NA
27	What courthouse communications are available?			
	Telephone	Yes	No	NA
	Interoffice Mail	Yes	No	NA
	Radio	Yes	No	NA
	Teletype	Yes	No	NA
	Email	Yes	No	NA
	Other			
28	Is there more than one communications system used exclusively by security personnel?	Yes	No	NA
29	Communication in the courthouse consist of:			
	A central station (Police or Sheriff's Office)	Yes	No	NA
	Hand held portable radios	Yes	No	NA
	Cellular and/or hard wired telephones	Yes	No	NA
	Other			
30	To what departments are duress alarms (panic buttons) linked?			
	Local Police	Yes	No	NA
	State Police	Yes	No	NA
	Other Sheriff's	Yes	No	NA
31	Does your court have an unauthorized intrusion alarm system?	Yes	No	NA
	If yes, who receives the notice of unauthorized entry?			