



COURT SECURITY BULLETIN

COURTROOM SEATING/POSITIONING

It has been advocated that deputies should always remain within “arms-reach” of prisoners in court. This is both a correct and incorrect policy and procedure. Just as assessed situational aspects dictate when you should be within “arms-reach” they also dictate when you should not. There are a number of situations where you are better served positioning deputies between prisoners and avenues of escape and avenues of threat. Action being faster than reaction is not just a saying - in a courtroom environment it means prisoners always get to make the first move and deputies subsequently react and respond to it. Consequently it is imperative that the appropriate level/type/extent of response be provided. Without specialized training/experience always being within “arms-reach” or “hands-on” can result in reactions where verbal (low-threat/risk) confrontations suddenly escalate into physical (high-threat/risk) ones.

COURTROOM PROTECTEES: Safety/Security Responsibility of

- JUDGE
- PRISONER DEFENDANTS
- PRISONER WITNESSES
- JURORS
- ATTORNEY'S
- COURT OFFICIALS/EMPLOYEES

4-PRIMARY/CRITICAL FACTORS OF CONSIDERATION:

- ARMED/UNARMED DEPUTIES (w/intermediate weapons)
- PRISONER COMMAND and CONTROL
- AVENUES OF ESCAPE - set distance between prisoner and exits (reaction zone).
- AVENUES OF THREAT - set distance between prisoner and protectees (reaction zone).

SECONDARY/CRITICAL FACTORS OF CONSIDERATION:

- PRISONER TYPE - high threat, high profile, prior history, martial arts skills, ...
- PRISONER RESTRAINTS - type, extent, authority, ...
- HEARING TYPE - initial, detention, revocation, change of plea, trial, sentencing, ...
- COURTROOM SPACE DESIGN/LAYOUT - bench/gallery/well areas, ingress/egress, ...
- COURTROOM SYSTEMS/FURNITURE - lighting, benches, chairs, tables, ...
- THREAT SOURCE INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS - identified threat/risk
- PRISONER SPECIAL HANDLING - medical concerns
- INTRODUCTION OF EVIDENCE - firearms, rifles, edged weapons, ...
- GALLERY - prisoner and victims family, friends, and associates
- COURT DECORUM - set by presiding judge (deputies on prisoner should not enforce)
- OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS - court security officers, case agents, ...
- COURTROOM SECURITY SYSTEMS - CCTV, duress/panic alarms, ...