



**IN THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUDGE
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2026-04**

IN RE: COURTHOUSE SECURITY

WHEREAS, citizens should have a reasonable expectation of safety and security when they choose to seek resolution of their disputes or to conduct business in the Court Facilities in the Second Judicial Circuit; and,

WHEREAS, the health, safety, and welfare of all citizens in Court Facilities and on the grounds of such facilities are a primary concern of the Second Judicial Circuit; and,

WHEREAS, all cases in circuit and county court have the potential for violence or to threaten the participants, witnesses, observers, staff, and judges; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to Rule 2.215(b)(7), Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration, the Chief Judge must regulate the use of all Court Facilities; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 29.008(1), Florida Statutes, and section 14, Article V of the State Constitution, counties are required to fund the cost of security of facilities for the circuit and county courts, to include security for all judicial officers, staff, jurors, volunteers of a tenant agency, and the public for the circuit and county courts; and,

WHEREAS, section 29.008(1)(e), Florida Statutes, defines security as including, but not limited to, all reasonable and necessary costs of services of law enforcement officers or licensed security guards and all electronic, cellular, or digital monitoring and screening devices necessary to ensure the safety and security of all persons visiting or working in a facility; to provide for security of the facility, including protection of property owned by the county or state; and for security of prisoners brought to any facility. This includes bailiffs while providing courtroom and other security for each judge and other quasi-judicial officers; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 30.15(1)(c), Florida Statutes, Sheriffs, in their respective counties, in person or by deputy, shall attend all sessions of the circuit court and county court held in their counties; and,

WHEREAS, it is necessary and appropriate to regulate the possession of firearms, weapons, and other destructive devices within and on the grounds of any Court Facility in the Second Judicial Circuit to protect members of the public and court employees, to ensure a safe forum for the redress of legal issues, and to provide for the orderly and safe administration of justice; and,

WHEREAS, section 790.06 (12), Florida Statutes, prohibits any person to openly carry a handgun or carry a concealed weapon or concealed firearm into any Courthouse or courtroom, regardless of a license to carry concealed weapons under that chapter; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to the authority provided to the Chief Judge by the Florida Constitution, section 2(d), Article V; section 43.26, Florida Statutes; and Rule 2.215(b), Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration the Chief Judge is responsible for the administrative supervision of the courts, and to promote the prompt and efficient administration of justice in all courts within the circuit; it is therefore:

ORDERED, effective immediately:

1. This administrative order directs reasonable and necessary Courthouse¹ security in the Second Judicial Circuit in order to ensure the safety and security of: (a) all members of the public seeking a resolution to their disputes through the courts, (b) all persons seeking to conduct business in a Court Facility, (c) the judiciary and their staff, (d) court employees, and (e) property owned by the county or state.
2. All visitors entering any Courthouse, courtroom, hearing room, or chambers will be screened by a bailiff prior to entering. The bailiff's unit is responsible for conducting screenings. Screenings shall be sufficient to ensure that no firearms, weapons, destructive devices, hazardous materials, chemical agents, or other items deemed dangerous by the bailiff's unit enter the Courthouse. Minimum screening requirements shall include a bailiff to conduct the screening, use of a metal detector, a barrier to limit free ingress, and a search of personal articles of sufficient size to hide a weapon. An x-ray machine may be used in lieu of a personal search.
3. All circuit and county judges, general magistrates, and hearing officers shall have a bailiff in attendance, at all times while conducting hearings in courtrooms, and hearing rooms. This bailiff shall remain in attendance until the docket is completed and they are dismissed by the presiding judge, general magistrate, or hearing officer. For proceedings in chambers, it is within the discretion of the presiding judge, general magistrate, or hearing officer to require the presence of a bailiff.
4. All circuit and county judges, general magistrates, hearing officers, their judicial assistants, and chamber receptionists shall have personal and continuously monitored panic alarms to call for immediate law enforcement assistance if necessary. The panic alarms will be wireless and transmit an alarm to the county 911 office or the Courthouse bailiff station. The panic alarm system will be tested, with prior coordination between the judicial officer and the bailiff's unit, once per quarter. Results of the test will be given to the Chief Judge or his designee by the bailiff unit.
5. Each courtroom, hearing room, judicial chambers, and general magistrate and hearing officer offices shall have a functional telephone and a panic alarm.

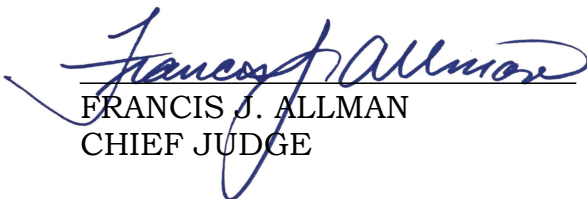
¹ "Courthouse" or "Court Facility" is defined as any County Courthouse, Courthouse Annex, or other building designated by the Chief Judge, where court is held in the Second Judicial Circuit. Facility is further defined in section 29.008(1)(a).

6. All persons are prohibited from bringing any firearms, weapons, destructive devices, hazardous materials, chemical agents, or other items deemed dangerous by the bailiff's unit into any Courthouse except as provided herein. Any person who carries these items into the Courthouse and refuses to surrender the item shall be denied entry and may be subject to arrest in accordance with applicable provisions of Florida Statutes. Firearms, weapons, and destructive devices are defined in accordance with the Florida Statutes.
7. Federal, state, and local law enforcement officers in uniform are authorized to carry weapons or firearms into and within a Courthouse. Nothing herein shall be interpreted as countermanding any policy of the agency employing the officer. Any law enforcement officer entering the Courthouse in plain clothes may be subject to screening and other bailiff's unit security protocols.
8. However, no federal, state, or local law enforcement officer who is a party to a case shall bring weapons or firearms into, or possess within, a Courthouse. All officers who are a party to a case shall leave all weapons and firearms outside the Courthouse. However, the bailiff's unit may, in an exercise of discretion, allow such officers to relinquish weapons and firearms at the bailiff station for temporary safekeeping.
9. Notwithstanding any other provision in this Administrative Order, presiding judges have the absolute discretion, pursuant to section 790.06(12), Florida Statutes, to prohibit any person, including federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, from bringing weapons or firearms into the presiding judge's courtroom. If the presiding judge requires a law enforcement officer to relinquish the officer's weapons or firearms prior to entering the judge's courtroom, the officer shall surrender any such weapons or firearms to the bailiff for temporary safekeeping.
10. Armored car service personnel on official business for the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court are authorized to carry weapons or firearms into and within the Courthouse and in secure areas within the Courthouse.
11. All circuit and county judges, as authorized by law, have the authority to carry concealed weapons or firearms into any Courthouse in the Second Judicial Circuit. The Chief Judge may authorize in writing any officer of the court or other similar person to carry a weapon or firearm into a Courthouse in the Second Judicial Circuit.
12. All circuit judges, Leon County judges, general magistrates, circuit hearing officers, judicial assistants, and designated court administration staff shall have secure parking spaces in the underground parking garage of the Leon County Courthouse.

Judges, general magistrates, and judicial assistants in Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, and Wakulla Counties shall have reserved, but unmarked, parking spaces in close proximity to the Courthouse when they are scheduled to be in a particular Courthouse.

13. Procedures for natural disasters, terrorist or criminal incidents, bomb threats, emergency medical response, hazardous material release, fire, evacuation, and workplace violence in any Courthouse shall be in accordance with the Emergency Operational Procedures & Continuity of Operations Plan developed by the Court Emergency Management Group (CEMG) for each county.
14. The presiding judge in a pending cause has the authority to determine the specific security measures in their respective courtroom or chambers to: (a) control the conduct of proceedings before the court; (b) ensure decorum and prevent distractions; and (c) ensure the fair administration of justice.
15. The Chief Judge, or designee, shall be responsible for directing standard operating procedures to limit disruption to court events in the public areas of a Courthouse and outside the courtroom. In cases of significant public interest, the standard operating procedures may include reasonable limits on the media, protests on Courthouse grounds, location of press conferences, and seating for court events. The standard operating procedures shall be enforced by the Sheriff or their designee.
16. The Chief Judge or his designee will work with each individual county sheriff's office to coordinate all security matters which impact the court.
17. The Chief Judge may, in an exercise of discretion, authorize the adjustment of the requirements of this order to accommodate the specific needs of a Courthouse. Any such authorization shall be in writing and kept on file in the Office of the Trial Court Administrator.
18. This administrative order rescinds and supersedes Administrative Order 2004-15, effective immediately. Nothing in this administrative order limits a judge's authority or discretion as found in rule, statute, or common law.

DONE AND ORDERED in chambers in Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida, this 5th day of October 2026.


FRANCIS J. ALLMAN
CHIEF JUDGE