

14.1 Security of the Circuit Court

The Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County adjudicates civil, criminal, and juvenile cases, penalizes those found guilty of violating the law, and protects the constitutional rights of those brought before them. Violence, or a threat of violence, in the courtroom or elsewhere in the facility would have a profound negative impact on the court's functioning. Accordingly, appropriate levels of security should prevail to protect the integrity of court procedures, to sustain the rights of individuals before it, and to deter those who would take violent action against the court, its participants, and the public. Efforts should be undertaken to intercept and remove individuals and items that may represent a threat to the peace, order, and integrity of the court.

14.1.1 Functional Responsibility

The Sheriff has a historic duty to protect judicial activities. In Anne Arundel County, the Sheriff has the day-to-day responsibility of protecting the Circuit Court. The Sheriff carries out this responsibility primarily through personnel assigned to the Security Bureau. The District Courts in this County provide their own security in the form of *bailiffs* who report directly to the District Court *administrative judge*.

14.1.2 Firearms

Absent special consent by the commander of the Security Bureau, only deputies of the Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Office and uniformed peace officers from other agencies are customarily permitted to carry a firearm into the courthouse. Regardless, any deputy or officer who is a defendant or respondent in a criminal or civil case is prohibited from carrying a firearm into the courthouse for the duration of that proceeding. *Lock-boxes* are provided at primary courthouse entrances to permit the secure storage of weapons (e.g., the firearm of a plain-clothed police officer).

14.1.3 Other Policies and Procedures

In adherence to the direction given in Chapter 7.1, *Written Directives*, of this General Orders Manual, the commander of the Security Bureau will promulgate specific policies and procedures as become necessary to fulfill the security function for the Circuit Court (e.g., SOPs). These directives will address, at a minimum: interior and exterior doors and windows, interior and exterior lighting, emergency lighting and power, fire and smoke detection and suppression equipment, intrusion, fire, and duress alarms, secure and restricted areas, key control, and accessibility to the facility for disabled individuals.

The commander of the Security Bureau will also institute a *security survey* of the facility every three (3) years in an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of current practices and equipment. Results will be documented and used to effect positive change.