



# Berrien County Trial Court

Courthouse – 811 Port Street, St. Joseph, MI 49085  
(616) 983-7111, Ext. 8453; FAX (616) 982-8634

Paul L. Maloney  
Chief Judge

Sandy Belter  
Administrator

Reviewed January 2004

Administrative Order 2001-002D

## SECURITY POLICY FOR COURT FACILITIES

### IT IS ORDERED:

This Administrative order is issued in accordance with Michigan Supreme Court Administrative Order 2001-001.

### I. POLICY:

- a. No firearms, gas ejecting devices or other dangerous weapons are allowed within or on the premises of any Berrien County court facility or area used for official court business. This prohibition does not apply to persons specifically exempted in Paragraphs b, c and d of this section, including court security, law enforcement and transporting corrections officers of any state or county penal institution or juvenile detention facility who would be authorized to carry concealed weapons, but for this Administrative Order.
- b. As used herein, “bailiff” means: Berrien County Trial Court Court Security Officers and Berrien County Trial Court Courtroom Officers. Bailiffs may, with the permission of the judge presiding in the courtroom, carry or possess a firearm if licensed to do so under the provisions of Act 372 of the Public Acts of 1927, as amended, or if exempt from said Act under its terms. Bailiffs shall adhere to Berrien County Trial Court Administrative Policy 001-96.
- c. As used herein, “law enforcement officer” means: A peace officer of a duly authorized police agency of the United States, of this state, or of any political subdivision of this state, who is regularly employed and paid by the United States, this state, or a political subdivision of this state, as a peace officer, Motor Carrier Officers of the Department of the State Police while on duty, and all judicial officers who are designated by law as “conservators of the peace” in this state.
- d. Unless otherwise ordered by the presiding judge of the courtroom, law enforcement officers and transporting corrections officers may carry a firearm in compliance with Section II, Paragraphs a and b of this order.

### II. PROCEDURE:

Reviewed January 2004

- a. Uniformed law enforcement officers who are armed with a visible firearm in a holster shall ensure the firearm is secured by a safety holster, fastened strap or cover.
- b. Law enforcement officers dressed in civilian clothing or a non-traditional uniform shall conceal their firearm with a jacket or other appropriate clothing.
- c. Uniformed law enforcement officers and law enforcement officers in civilian clothing or non-traditional uniform who are entering a holding cell area or who do not comply with Paragraphs a and b of Section II shall, before entering any courtroom or security area, deposit their firearm in a lock box maintained for this purpose in the appropriate area of the court. Each officer depositing a firearm in a lock box shall retain the key in the officer's possession until the firearm is retrieved following the court appearance. Any law enforcement officer in possession of a firearm who is appearing in court on a personal matter shall lock any firearm in a court lock box.
- d. All persons, their belongings and parcels, unless specifically exempted, are subject to screening by sheriff deputies, bailiffs or other security personnel for the purpose of prohibiting transportation of excluded items into the facility.
- e. If at any time there is an articulable and reasonable suspicion that contraband, firearms or other weapons may be found, a person, their belongings and parcels are subject to search. The search shall be no more intrusive than necessary to protect against the dangers presented. Court officers and sheriff deputies have the right to identify a potentially excluded item and prohibit the transportation of the item into the facility. The individual shall return the item to their vehicle or not enter the premises.
- f. Notices shall be posted stating that "No firearms, gas ejecting devices or other dangerous weapons shall be permitted in this Berrien County court facility or any area or building used for official court business. All persons, their belongings and parcels are subject to search for firearms and excluded items as a condition of entry. Persons in violation of this order may be held in contempt of court."

Effective Date: June 7, 2001

January 21, 2004

Dated



Paul L. Maloney, Trial Court Chief Judge