

STATE OF MICHIGAN



ISABELLA COUNTY TRIAL COURT

300 NORTH MAIN STREET

Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858

TEL. (989) 772-0911 FAX (989) 772-7337

HON. ERIC R. JANES  
CHIEF JUDGE  
KERRI R. CURTISS  
COURT ADMINISTRATOR

HON. STUART BLACK  
TRIAL JUDGE  
HON. MARK H. DUTHIE  
TRIAL JUDGE  
HON. SARA SPENCER-NOGGLE  
TRIAL JUDGE

Administrative Order 2022-1

**SECURITY POLICY FOR COURT FACILITIES**

This administrative order is issued in accordance with Michigan Supreme Court Administrative Order No. 2001-1. The purpose of this order is to address security in the court facility.

**IT IS ORDERED:**

**A. BUILDING ACCESS/KEY CARDS**

1. Unless otherwise ordered by the Chief Judge, the main entry doors will be unlocked for normal operations, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except for holidays.
2. Staff are allowed to access the building during their designated working hours and at other times during regular business hours by approval of their supervisor, the Court Administrator, or the Chief Judge.
3. After hours and weekend access must be authorized by the Court Administrator or Chief Judge after staff have received approval from their supervisor to work overtime (not applicable to salaried staff).
4. Key card access to secure areas of the building is determined by the Chief Judge and/or Court Administrator and is based upon assigned roles. Staff needing access to additional areas should make the request to their

supervisor, who will contact the Court Administrator.

5. Lost or stolen key cards must immediately be reported to the Court Administrator at 989.621.0090. This includes after hours and on weekends.
6. Key cards may not be shared with other staff. Each staff member is responsible for the use of their key card.

## **B. SCREENING**

1. All persons, their belongings, and all hand carried items including parcels are subject to screening by Court Officers upon entry and in accordance with the Isabella County Trial Court Weapons Control Policy. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of the x-ray machine, magnetometer, hand-wand devices, and/or visual inspection.
2. During the screening process, all persons shall empty their pockets of all contents and remove belts, heavy jackets, watches and any other metallic jewelry if requested by Court Officers. Any persons who refuse will be denied entry to the courthouse.
3. All bags, boxes, briefcases, purses and containers brought into the courthouse are subject to a scan through the x-ray machine. If the x-ray machine is not available, Court Officers shall conduct visual inspections (hand search) of the contents of all bags, boxes, briefcases, purses and containers.
4. Individuals with an internal medical device who cannot be screened by a metal detector may be screened by a pat down.
5. Wheelchair patrons and others who are unable to be screened by the magnetometer shall be screened using the hand-held wand device.
6. If at any time there is an articulable suspicion that a weapon or other impermissible item may be found, a person or object may be subject to additional search. The search shall be no more intrusive than necessary to protect against the dangers presented.
7. Law enforcement personnel are not subject to screening when conducting official business.

8. Weapons, contraband, or prohibited goods found shall not be held by the Court Officers unless there is an immediate danger in returning the item to the owner. The individual shall be denied entrance. Law enforcement and the Court Administrator shall immediately be notified if illegal items are discovered, such as firearms or other such items.

## **C. PROHIBITED ITEMS**

### **1. Weapons**

- a. Prohibited weapons include, but are not limited to, the following list of items:
  - Firearms of any kind
  - Explosives of any kind, including fireworks.
  - Knives, box cutters, razor blades, scissors, knitting needles, or other cutting devices or edged instruments.
  - Bludgeons, bats, batons, clubs, saps.
  - Tools such as hammers, screwdrivers, pliers, wrenches, nails, chains or any other tool that may be construed as a weapon.
  - Slingshots.
  - Metal knuckles.
  - Chemical sprays such as OC, mace, pepper spray or any other spray that may be harmful.
  - Caustic or flammable substances.
  - Any item deemed dangerous by security personnel.
- b. No firearms shall be permitted in the court except:
  - Authorized court staff.
  - Those carried by law enforcement personnel who are acting in their official capacity.
  - Authorized MDOC agents acting in their official capacity.
- c. Any person who is a party to a judicial proceeding as a plaintiff, defendant, witness or interested party outside the scope of his/her

employment shall not be permitted to bring a weapon into the court facility.

- d. All persons and their belongings, including all parcels, are subject to screening by Court Officers for the purpose of keeping weapons and restricted items from entering the facility.
- e. Notice shall be posted that "No weapons are permitted in the Courthouse. All persons and parcels are subject to a search for weapons and other prohibited or restricted items as a condition of entry. Persons in violation of this order may be held in contempt of court."

2. Other Prohibited Items (exceptions are noted below)

- a. Unless authorized by the Chief Judge or Court Administrator, the following items are prohibited within the court facility:
  - Outside food and beverages.
  - Tobacco products of any kind.
  - E-cigarettes, any type of electronic vaporizer, lighters, matches, or any other flammable devices.
  - Animals (except service animals).
  - Any other item not specifically listed here may be deemed prohibited at the discretion of Court Officers.
- b. Jurors seated on a jury for a case may be allowed to bring in food and beverages upon approval of the presiding judge.
- c. State law does not change policies prohibiting the use or possession of marijuana on any county property. The courts are subject to the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988. Therefore, Isabella County Trial Court officials, staff, contractors and court users are prohibited from bringing marijuana into the courthouse.
- d. No one shall possess, distribute, use or be impaired by alcohol, marijuana or any illegal prohibited drugs in the Court facility at any time. "Illegal prohibited drugs" are those substances that are illegal to sell or possess.

#### **D. ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

In accordance with MCR 8.115, electronic devices will be allowed within the courthouse subject to the following guidelines:

1. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, any equipment capable of electronically storing, accessing, recording, sending, receiving, or transmitting electronic information.
2. Devices may be used in the courthouse. Their use may be prohibited, as needed, at the discretion of the judiciary or Court Administrator.
3. Photography, video recording, audio recording, and/or other audio or video broadcasting, livestreaming, or transmission from inside the courthouse are strictly prohibited without permission of the Chief Judge or Court Administrator.
4. Electronic devices and/or cell phones must have the devices set to 'silent' or 'vibrate' mode.
5. In a courtroom, the use of the device is prohibited unless authorized by the presiding judicial officer.
6. This policy is not intended to interfere with media coverage provided in Supreme Court Administrative Order 1989-1, Film or Electronic Media Coverage of Court Proceedings.
7. Exceptions are generally allowed without permission for ceremonial events including adoptions, marriages, and swearings-in.

#### **E. SERVICE ANIMALS**

1. Except for service animals, no animals are allowed in the court facility.
2. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines service animal as a guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance with a disability.
3. Emotional support animals, comfort animals, and therapy dogs are not considered service animals under the ADA, but may be allowed in the court facility at the discretion of the Chief Judge or Court Administrator.
4. Court Officers may not inquire about an individual's disability, require medical documentation, or any identification card or training

documentation for the service animal. However, the following questions may be asked regarding a service animal:

- i. Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?
  - ii. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?
5. Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed or tethered, unless such devices interfere with the animal's work or the individual's disability prevents the use of these devices. In that situation, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal or other effective means. If a service animal is deemed to be disruptive or out of control, the owner may be asked to remove the animal from the facility.

## **F. COURT DECORUM**

Court proceedings, whether virtual or in-person, shall be conducted in a manner that protects the dignity and seriousness of the court's purpose. Conduct by any person that may interfere with the decorum of the court is prohibited and may result in contempt proceedings, incarceration, and/or removal of that person from the court proceedings.

### **1. General**

- a. Distribution of printed materials, such as brochures or fliers, is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the Chief Judge.
- b. Solicitation is not allowed in any area of the court facility.
- c. Smoking, using tobacco products, drinking (except as allowed by the presiding judge), eating, and gum chewing are not allowed in any proceeding, whether in-person or virtual.

### **2. Attire**

- a. Attorneys shall wear proper business attire while attending court, whether virtually or in-person.
- b. All persons participating in court proceedings, whether virtually or in-person, should wear proper attire.
- c. Shirts, shoes and proper attire are required.
- d. Items such as hats (except those worn in accordance with religious customs), sunglasses, pajamas, swimwear, offensive language on

attire and revealing garments may not be permitted for court hearings at the discretion of the presiding judicial officer.

**3. Conduct**

- a. Court proceedings are recorded and used to confirm an official record of the event. Therefore, it is essential that everyone is heard and that there is minimal disruption of the proceedings.
- b. If participating in a hearing virtually, it is important to find a location that is quiet and private.
- c. Parties are expected to let others finish before responding and to respond in an appropriate manner using acceptable language.
- d. Disruptive behavior or non-compliance with the judicial officer's direction will not be tolerated and may result in contempt proceedings, incarceration, and/or removal of that person from the courthouse or court proceedings.

**4. Discretion**

- a. It is within the judicial officer's discretion to have an individual removed from the courtroom if the individual's conduct or dress does not comport with policy.

**G. INCIDENT REPORTS**

- 1. All incidents, actions, and behaviors requiring a report that occur within the Isabella County Trial Court must be reported using the "Accident/Incident Report" form. Forms can be obtained on the desktop under Trial Court Policies or by contacting a supervisor or the Court Administrator. This report is for administration purposes only and does not take the place of any required law enforcement reporting. Types of incidents that require an incident report include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Bomb threats.
  - b. Disorderly behavior requiring intervention.
  - c. Fire.
  - d. Hostage situation.
  - e. Personal injury.

- f. Physical assaults.
- g. Written and verbal threats.
- h. Accidents.
- i. Illegal or prohibited activity or behavior.

#### H. ADHERENCE

1. Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Failure to follow established guidelines and protocols may result in:
  - a. Denial of entry into the courthouse.
  - b. Contempt of court proceedings.
  - c. Confiscation of property.
  - d. Removal from the court facility or proceeding.
  - e. Other sanctions by the Chief Judge.

**This Administrative Order rescinds and replaces Local Administrative Order 2001-3: Security Policy for Court Facility and Isabella County Trial Court Policy 2001-3: Card Access. This Administrative Order is supplemental to Isabella County Trial Court Policy 2015-3: Weapons Control.**

Date:

3-4-22

  
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CHIEF JUDGE ERIC R. JANES



# **NOTICE!**

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