



A Few Thoughts on Safety From Your Security Committee

Security Tip #24: Annual Security Assessment—Maintaining a Security Conscious Workplace

For most courts, fall is a time of transition with new law clerks coming on board. Along with educating incoming clerks and new personnel on security procedures, it is an excellent opportunity to work with the United States Marshals Service (USMS) in reviewing security plans presently in place. This annual review should encompass the adequacy of entry screening procedures, restrictions on cell phones and computers within the courthouse, and emergency evacuations and responses. Of particular importance is familiarizing new law clerks on reacting to disturbances in the courtroom. This should include sheltering in place, activating alarms, communication with security personnel, and evacuation, if necessary.

It is particularly important to review the court's active shooter plan annually with all personnel. Individuals should be familiar with secure locations within chambers to shelter, the necessity of turning lights off, and which doors to secure with wedges or furniture. It should be emphasized that personnel should remain secure until told otherwise by USMS personnel. If available, new courthouse employees should view the

video produced by the USMS on surviving active shooter incidents. They should be reminded that it can happen in an instant without warning or time to plan.

Also as part of the annual security assessment, courts may wish to determine if there are adequate personnel trained in operating the Automated External Defibrillator (AED), performing CPR, and administering First Aid. In a crisis, their expertise can be critical.

The security presentation should also include reinforcing the importance of reporting suspicious individuals, activities, telephone calls, or correspondence to the USMS. “If you see something—say something.”

Security Committee
Federal Judges Association

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