

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, FOURTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA, IN AND FOR BAY COUNTY

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 90-11

IN RE: COURTHOUSE SECURITY

In accordance with the authority vested in the Chief Judge by Rule 2.050 of the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, and whereas,

Threats and acts of violence directed at courthouses, witnesses, jurors, litigants, lawyers, judges and court personnel have given rise to an urgent need for security protection. Such security measures shall be accomplished by means of a search of persons entering the Bay County Courthouse for firearms, weapons and destructive devices, hereinafter referred to as Weapons, and by a restriction upon the possession of Weapons within the courthouse.

The intent of this Administrative Order is to restrict the carrying or possession of Weapons within the Bay County Courthouse located at 300 East 4th Street, Panama City, Florida, hereinafter referred to as Courthouse, and to protect the people who work in and visit said Courthouse by authorizing a limited search for Weapons by the least intrusive method possible, and whereas searches conducted pursuant to this Administrative Order are not conducted for the purpose of gathering evidence to be used in criminal prosecutions; however, any illegal weapons or other contraband discovered in the course of these search procedures will be seized. Now therefore, it is

ORDERED as follows:

Searches of Persons Entering Courthouse.

1. Any person who wishes to enter upon Courthouse premises shall enter through authorized entrances and shall pass through a magnetometer (metal detector).
2. Any person who activates the device shall be free to leave without further search or questioning.
3. However, any person who activates the device and still wishes to enter the Courthouse may empty his or her pockets and pass through the device a second time. If, after this second pass through, the device is again activated, the person will not be allowed to enter the Courthouse unless the person gives express consent to a "pat-down" search.
4. Prior to passing through the magnetometer, any person

carrying a package, briefcase, pocketbook or any other item which, in the opinion of the personnel stationed at the magnetometer, could contain a weapon shall place such package, briefcase, pocketbook or item on the x-ray conveyor belt.

5. Should the x-ray machine disclose what may be a Weapon, such item shall be subject to a manual search.

6. In the examination of any item carried by such person, the personnel conducting the search shall not examine written materials.

7. If any illegal Weapons, explosives, hazardous materials or contraband are discovered, the proper law enforcement officials or officers shall be immediately notified for appropriate action.

8. Prior to gaining entry to the Courthouse, any person carrying a legally authorized firearm or knife shall return that firearm or knife to their vehicle. Said firearms or knives are not allowed in the Courthouse. No ammunition of any kind is allowed.

Signs To Be Posted At Entrance Of Courthouse

The following sign shall be posted in a conspicuous place at all entrances to the Courthouse:

FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC, ALL PERSONS ENTERING THESE PREMISES MUST PASS THROUGH THE MAGNETOMETER (METAL DETECTOR). IF THE DETECTOR REGISTERS, THAT PERSON WILL BE SUBJECT TO A LIMITED SEARCH. ALL PACKAGES, BRIEFCASES, POCKETBOOKS OR OTHER ITEMS CARRIED BY A PERSON MUST BE OFFERED FOR INSPECTION IF SUCH PERSON WISHES TO ENTER THE BUILDING. ALL LEGALLY AUTHORIZED FIREARMS AND KNIVES MUST BE LEFT IN YOUR VEHICLE. ANY ILLEGAL WEAPONS OR OTHER CONTRABAND DISCOVERED IN THE COURSE OF THESE SEARCH PROCEDURES WILL BE SEIZED.

Definitions.

As used in this Administrative Order, the definition of "destructive device," "firearm," legally authorized firearm," and "weapon" shall be the definition as set forth within Section 790.001, Florida Statutes, as amended from time to time.

Exemptions.

Judges and law enforcement officers as fully certified pursuant to Section 943, Florida Statutes, are exempt from the procedures set forth herein.

Emergencies.

It is the intent of this Administrative Order that

Courthouse security personnel in their discretion allow access to the Courthouse without compliance with the procedures set forth herein to authorized persons responding to emergencies, including but not limited to law enforcement, fire protection, EMS technical and transport personnel.

Construction.

This Administrative Order shall be construed in a manner consistent with the requirements, spirit and interest of the Florida Statutes.

DONE AND ORDERED this 14th day of May, 1990, at Panama City, Bay County, Florida.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don T. Sirmons". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font. The first name "Don" is written with a large, looped initial "D". The last name "Sirmons" is written with a large, looped initial "S".

DON T. SIRMONS, Chief Judge