

NORTH CAROLINA  
ROBESON COUNTY

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE  
SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION  
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF }  
PROMULGATING LOCAL }  
RULES RELATING TO }  
COURTHOUSE SECURITY }  
}

**ORDER**

THIS CAUSE, coming on to be heard and being heard before the undersigned Senior Resident Superior Court Judge and Chief District Court Judge of Judicial District 16B. After careful consideration of the matter of courthouse security, pursuant to the authority of our respective offices, the undersigned--acting jointly and separately--do hereby adopt this order.

IT IS NOW, THEREFORE, ORDERED:

01. The Local Rules of Courthouse Security for Judicial District 16B, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, are hereby adopted as the official rules or policy relating to security in the Robeson County Courthouse.

02. These rules supersede all prior such rules, policies and customs, and shall be effective immediately.

03. The Robeson County Sheriff shall post copies of these rules in appropriate places in the county courthouse.

ENTERED in our respective chambers in the Robeson County Courthouse on this the 1st day of September, 1998.

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THE HONORABLE DEXTER BROOKS  
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge

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THE HONORABLE HERBERT L. RICHARDSON  
Chief District Court Judge

**LOCAL RULES OF COURTHOUSE SECURITY FOR JUDICIAL DISTRICT 16B**

**Rule 1. Policy.**

Courtrooms, courthouses, court personnel, litigants and the general public are increasingly being targeted for violence by extremist groups and individuals, even when their cause has nothing to do with any trials or proceedings taking place within the courthouse.

**Rule 2. Definitions.**

a) **Baliff.** A law enforcement officer assigned to the courthouse or a courtroom to provide security.

b) **Child Support Enforcement Agent.** An employee of the Robeson County Department of Social Services assigned to the Child Support enforcement Section.

c) **Court Personnel.** 1) Judges, Judicial Assistants and Court Reporters; 2) Clerk of Superior Court and staff; 3) Magistrates; 4) District Attorney and staff; 5) Public Defender and staff; 6) Attorneys at Law and staff; and 7) Baliffs and Detention Officers.

d) **Detention Officer.** A law enforcement officer assigned to the detention facility for prisoners in the basement of the courthouse.

e) **Law Enforcement Officer.** A sworn law enforcement officer employed by any federal agency or the State or any subdivision thereof, including counties or towns.

f) **Probation/Parole Officer.** A probation/parole officer--or any administrator supervising such officers--employed by the Division of Adult Probation and Parole of the North Carolina Department of Correction.

**Rule 3. Sheriff.**

The Robeson County Sheriff shall assign officers to the county courthouse to provide security and enforce these rules.

#### **Rule 4. Security Sweeps.**

Prior to the unlocking of the public doors to the courtrooms in which public proceedings are to be conducted, baliffs shall conduct security sweeps of the courtrooms to detect explosives, bombs or other prohibited items.

#### **Rule 5. Identification.**

All persons desiring entry into or wishing to remain in a courtroom shall produce valid and satisfactory identification, containing a photograph, upon demand by the baliffs. Failure to produce such identification upon such demand shall result in denial of entry into or removal from the courtroom.

#### **Rule 6. Searches.**

a) **Courtrooms.** The baliffs are authorized to deny entry into any courtroom to any person--except court personnel, law enforcement officers, probation/parole officers, and child support enforcement agents--who, upon the baliff's request, refuses to consent to be searched for weapons, explosives or other prohibited items--including a search of their person, briefcases, handbags, packages, and containers of all description. The search may be conducted with electronic screening devices or otherwise.

b) **Courthouse.** The Sheriff is authorized, in his or her discretion, at any time, to implement a uniform search procedure, using electronic screening devices or otherwise, to conduct a search of all persons entering the courthouse--with the exception of court personnel, law enforcement officers, probation/parole officers, and child support enforcement agents.

#### **Rule 7. Packages.**

No person, other than court personnel--as well as law enforcement officers, probation/parole officers, and child support enforcement agents--is permitted to carry packages, bundles, or bags (except small ladies' handbags) into any courtroom.

#### **Rule 8. Trial Areas.**

No one except court personnel--as well as law enforcement officers, probation/parole officers, child support enforcement agents, and witnesses--will be permitted within the trial area or bar of any courtroom unless the person has first requested and obtained the permission of the Judge to enter such area.

## **Rule 9. Approaching Court Officials.**

a) **During Proceedings.** No person shall approach the Judge except upon an express request for such an approach being granted by the Judge.

b) **During Recess.** At least one baliff shall be in the courtroom while the Judge is present. No person shall approach the Judge except upon an express request for such an approach being granted by the Judge.

## **Rule 10. Loitering.**

Persons will not be permitted to congregate or loiter in the halls near to the doors of any courtroom.

## **Rule 11. Secure Hallways.**

The rear hallways on the second and third floors of the courthouse are private, secured areas. No person, except court personnel--as well as law enforcement officers, probation/parole officers, and child support enforcement agents--are permitted in these hallways except by invitation of an authorized official.

## **Rule 12. Entry into Judicial Offices.**

a) **Superior Court Judges.** No person--except court personnel, and probation/parole officers--shall seek to enter any office of a superior court judge without first obtaining permission to do so from the Superior Court Judicial Assistant who shall convey the request to enter to the individual judge and secure the judge's assent to the request prior to granting such permission.

b) **District Court Judges.** No person--except court personnel, and probation/parole officers--shall seek to enter any office of a district court judge without first obtaining permission to do so from the District Court Judicial Assistant who shall convey the request to enter to the individual judge and secure the judge's assent to the request prior to granting such permission.

## **Rule 13. Rear Elevator.**

a) **Priority Use.** The priority use of the rear elevator is transporting criminal defendants, who are in custody, between the courtrooms and the basement detention facility. While the elevator is being so utilized by the baliffs, detention officers or other appropriate law enforcement officers no other person shall occupy or attempt to enter the elevator.

b) **Secondary Use.** The secondary use of the rear elevator is to afford a secure and private means for court personnel--as well as law enforcement officers, probation/parole officers, and child support enforcement agents--to enter and exit the courthouse and to travel between the floors of the courthouse. No criminal defendant shall use this elevator unless he/she is in the custody of the baliffs, detention officers or other appropriate law enforcement.

#### **Rule 14. County Housekeeping and Maintenance Personnel.**

These rules are not designed to prevent county housekeeping and maintenance personnel from performing their assigned duties. Such personnel may enter the secure hallways on the second and third floors of the courthouse and may seek to enter judicial offices without first contacting the appropriate judicial assistant. They may use the rear elevator when it is not being utilized by the baliffs or detention officers for transporting criminal defendants in custody. The other rules shall apply to such housekeeping and maintenance personnel.

#### **Rule 15. Parking.**

a) **Authorized Parking.** All persons shall observe the posted signs regulating parking behind the courthouse, around the courthouse square, and the parking lot across the street to the south. The judicial parking spaces are reserved for judges, judicial assistants and court reporters.

b) **Unauthorized Parking.** The baliffs shall monitor the parking areas for unauthorized vehicles. Such unauthorized vehicles shall be towed away and the operators or owners identified and brought before the court.

#### **Rule 16. Judicial Authorization.**

Notwithstanding any other rule, it is sometimes necessary for the Senior Resident Judge and the Chief District Court Judge, in the discharge of their administrative and supervisory duties and authority, to need the services of specially-qualified individuals in important and sometimes confidential matters. Such a person needs access to the secured areas and rear elevator of the courthouse. The Senior Resident Superior Court Judge or the Chief District Court Judge may grant written, specified authority relating to access to the courtrooms, courthouse and the rear elevator.

#### **Rule 17. Posting.**

The baliffs shall post copies of these rules in appropriate places in the county courthouse.

**Rule 18. Violations.**

A violation of these rules will subject the guilty person to the contempt powers of the court.

**Rule 19. Effective Date.**

These rules shall be effective on 1 September, 1998.