

# Instructor Resource Guide



## **Court Security Officer**

Course ID# 10999  
Continuing Education

Updated: May 2024

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) approved course for the Court Security Officer class is to give the court security officer a basic understanding of the threats associated with court settings as well as technology and techniques for court security operations in compliance with Government Sec. 158.002.

To qualify for a Court Security Certificate, an applicant must meet all proficiency requirements per Texas Administrative Code Title 37, Part 7, Chapter 221, as well as completion of course #10999.

This course consists of basic information on court security. The committee recommends continuing education in court security up to and including the TCOLE court security specialist certification curriculum.

### **Instructor Resource Guide:**

This is an Instructor Resource Guide (IRG), not a lesson plan. The purpose of the IRG is to outline the minimum state requirements of what must be taught for a course to be considered compliant and receive TCOLE credit.

- A qualified instructor shall develop the IRG into a lesson plan that meets their organization and student needs.

Please note: It is up to each Academy and/or Training Contractor to create a lesson plan based on the requirements outlined in the IRG for a particular topic.

### **Lesson Plan:**

Each organization is charged with creating their own lesson plan for how the organization will disseminate the information in the IRG.

- The IRG is designed to assist the instructor/subject matter expert in developing comprehensive lesson plans. The use of current statistics and best practices should be included in the lesson plan. Instructors are encouraged to add additional activities, videos, scenarios, they deem applicable to their topic area and target population.
- The institutions and instructors will determine how much time is spent on each topic/module, how many/what kind of examples or exercises are used during their presentation, and how in-depth they review each topic in the course they present.
- Any activity that is **suggested** is just that, an example or suggestion, and is not mandated for inclusion.
- Anything that is **required** must be included in the instructor's lesson plan.

### **Note to Trainers:**

It is the responsibility of the Academy and/or Training Coordinator to ensure this curriculum and its materials are kept up to date. Refer to curriculum and legal resources for changes in subject matter or laws relating to this topic as well as the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement website at [www.tcole.texas.gov](http://www.tcole.texas.gov) for edits due to course review.

**Student Prerequisites:**

An instructor must be a subject matter expert in the topic, must have documented knowledge/training/education, and provide an instructor's biography that documents subject matter expertise. It is the responsibility of the training academy/training coordinator to select qualified instructors. A TCOLE instructor certification does not certify someone to teach any topic.

- None are required

**Instructor Prerequisites:**

- TCOLE Court Security Specialist and/or
- Documented subject matter expert to include experience in content area of court security or similar security areas.

**Equivalency:** TCOLE Court Security Specialist Certification

**Length of Course:**

It is the training coordinator's responsibility to ensure the minimum hours are being met. Students are required to attend all classroom hours as listed in this instructor resource guide, there is no 10% attendance rule. TCOLE Rule 218.1 (C)(4) states that failure to meet the minimum course length may be grounds for denial of training. This course shall be taught the minimum hours that are listed in this guide and the student shall attend the entire class to receive credit.

- 8 hours minimum, no more than 16 hours.

**Assessment:**

- Training providers are responsible for creating student assessments and documenting the mastery of all objectives in this course using various testing assessment opportunities.
  - Assessment opportunities include oral or written testing, interaction with instructor and students, case study and scenario, and other means of testing student's application of the skills taught as the instructor or department deems appropriate.
  - The minimum passing score shall be 70%.

## **Unit 1 Introduction into court security**

**Goal:** Provide the student with the history of court security and the recent legislation affecting court security.

### **1.1 Summarize the history of court security.**

- A. Overview of significant events affecting court security
  - i. Assassination of U.S. District Judge John Wood in San Antonio (significance – origination of the Federal Court Security Program)
  - ii. Attack at the Smith County Courthouse Tyler, TX February 2005 (significance – lack of long guns available to court security screeners to defend against an attack of this magnitude)
  - iii. Prisoner attack and escape resulting in 4 deaths at the Fulton County Courthouse, GA March 2005 (significance – liability related to mandatory attendance in court by law enforcement as required by law as it relates to Texas statutes)
  - iv. Attack on Travis County Judge Julie Kocurek at her home (significance – the origination of Senate Bill 42)

### **1.2 Analyze Senate Bill 42 and its provisions.**

- A. Training Mandates
  - i. Government Code, Chapter 158
  - ii. Occupations Code 1701.267
- B. Court Security Committees
  - i. Government Code 29.014
  - ii. Government Code 30.00007
  - iii. Government Code 74.092(13)
- C. Protection of judges outside of jurisdiction
  - i. Government Code, Sec. 411.0485
- D. Mandatory Court Security Reporting
  - i. Code of Criminal Procedure 102.017(f)
- E. Protection of judges' personal information
  - i. Government Code 72.016
  - ii. Government Code 552.117
  - iii. Government Code 572.002
  - iv. Government Code 572.035
  - v. Election Code 13.0021
  - vi. Election Code 15.0215
  - vii. Local Government Code 133.058
  - viii. Property Code 11.008
  - ix. Tax Code 25.025
- F. Establishment of fees and grants for Court Security Training
  - i. Government Code 51.791
  - ii. Government Code 101.06111
  - iii. Government Code 106.08111

- iv. Government Code 101.10111
  - v. Government Code 101.12121
  - vi. Government Code 101.1411
  - vii. Government Code 56.003 (h)
  - viii. Government Code 56.004(b)(3)
  - G. Establishment of Court Security Division
    - i. Government Code 72.015
- 1.3** List allowable collection and uses of the Court Security Fund
- A. Code of Criminal Procedure 102.017

## **Unit 2 Bailiff function in court security**

**Goal:** Review basic information of the bailiff's role in court security and their respective duties to the court.

### **2.1 Explain basic bailiff duties and security practices.**

- A. Basic Bailiff duties
  - i. Search the courtroom prior to use, after use, and after breaks
    - Look for anything that should not be there or looks suspicious.
- B. Positioning
  - i. Three components of tactical positioning in the courtroom:
    - Be visible to everyone in the courtroom
    - Have a visual on all entrances to the courtroom
    - Ability to intervene if anyone rushes the bench or jury box
- C. Securing of unruly prisoners during trial
  - i. Deck vs. Missouri 544 U.S. 622 (2005)
  - ii. Illinois vs. Allen 397 U.S. 337 (1970)
  - iii. Prevent jurors from seeing defendant in restraints
- D. The rule
  - i. Monitoring of witnesses in the courtroom
- E. Threat assessment
  - i. Preplanning and research of upcoming dockets
  - ii. Communication with court staff on known issues with subjects
  - iii. Victim impact statements

### **2.2 Explain jury protection.**

- A. Jury protection
  - i. During jury selection
  - ii. During trial
  - iii. During deliberations

- iv. After trial
- v. Prevention of mistrial from improper conduct

## **2.3 Outline emergency plans and considerations.**

- A. Emergency plan considerations
  - i. Disruption
    - Inside courthouse
    - Outside courthouse
  - ii. Active shooter
    - Inside courthouse
    - Outside courthouse
  - iii. Communication
    - Adequate emergency communication
      - (i) Duress buttons
      - (ii) Radio
      - (iii) Phone
  - iv. Evacuation
    - Fire
    - Weather
    - Bomb threat

## **Unit 3 Court security screening basics**

**Goal:** Review basic methods and implementation of security screening.

### **3.1 Explain legal aspects of court security screening.**

- A. Case law
  - i. *Downing v. Kunzig*, 454 F.2d 1230 (1972)
  - ii. *Barrett v. Kunzig*, 331 F.Supp 266 (1971)
  - iii. *McMorris v. Alioto*, 567 F.2d 897 (1978)
  - iv. *Jensen v. City of Pontiac*, 113 Mich App 341; 317 NW2d 619 (1982)
  - v. *People v. Alba*, 440 NYS2d 230 (1981), app dismd 450 NYS2d 787, 436 NE2d 193
  - vi. *Commonwealth v. Harris*, (Mass 1981) 421 NE2d 447
  - vii. Administrative search test
- B. Mandatory signage as required by case law on screening
  - i. Implied consent to search based on signage
- C. Require identification as condition of entry into courthouse

- i. United States v. Wendell Smith, Docket No. 03-1588-cr (2d Cir. Oct. 17, 2005)  
(Winter, Sotomayor, Parker)
- ii. Waller v. Georgia, 467 U.S. 39, 45 (1984)

### **3.2 Identify available court security screening equipment.**

#### **A. Equipment**

- i. Magnetometers
- ii. X-ray machines
- iii. Hand-held screening devices
- iv. Trace detectors
- v. Identification card systems

#### **B. Procedures**

- i. Policy
- ii. Who do you search
  - Employees
  - Law enforcement

#### **C. Prohibited items**

- i. Weapons
  - Penal Code 46.03
  - Penal Code 46.035
- ii. Contraband
  - Illegal drugs
  - Cuff keys
  - Items harmful to court environment
  - Etc.
- iii. Items prohibited by court order or rules
  - Weapons that are legal to possess but restricted by court rules
    - (i) Legal knives
    - (ii) Scissors
    - (iii) Crochet needles
    - (iv) Chemical sprays
    - (v) Electronic weapons
    - (vi) Etc.

- Phones
- Electronic devices
- Backpacks
- Large handbags
- Etc.

D. Methods

- i. Hand searches
- ii. Metal detector searches
- iii. X-ray machine searches

**3.3 Summarize incident reports and screening evidence.**

A. Follow departmental policy

B. Reports must contain the following questions at minimum

- i. Who
- ii. What
- iii. When
- iv. Where
- v. Why/How

C. Reports should also contain the following information

- i. Information on security signage
- ii. Verbiage included on security signage

D. Photographing evidence

- i. Security signage
- ii. Screening area
- iii. Items seized
- iv. Images on X-ray equipment
- v. Equipment used to make detection

E. Follow department policy on chain of custody and evidence submission

**Unit 4 Explosives recognition and awareness**

**Goal:** Basic familiarization with explosives and their connection with the court security function.

**4.1 Familiarize court security personnel with explosives and their illicit uses.**



- 4.2 Familiarize court security personnel with basic methods of prevention and detection of explosive devices in a court security setting.**
- 4.3 Familiarize court security personnel with basic methods of responding to potential or actual explosive devices.**

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Due to the nature of explosive detection and handling, all students should be reminded this is not an EOD tactics or explosives handling class. This is only basic explosives information.

- Recent incidents at court facilities (bomb threats and explosive incidents)
- Improvised explosive devices
- Home grown terrorism
- Detection and response to possible known explosive devices

## **Unit 5 Court security technology**

**Goal:** Basic understanding of current technology as it relates to court protection practices.

- 5.1 Familiarize court security personnel with available technology related to court security.**
- 5.2 Familiarize court security personnel with relevant purchasing, repair, and installation information.**
  - A. Equipment
    - i. CCTV
    - ii. Body cameras
      - Establish judge's policy on use of cameras in courtroom
    - iii. Access control
    - iv. Identification systems
    - v. Alarms
      - Intrusion
      - Fire
      - Panic/Duress

## **Unit 6 Judicial protection**

**Goal:** Basic understanding of judicial protection practices.

- 6.1 Discuss suggested practices to enhance judicial security.**
  - A. Parking lot
    - i. CCTV coverage of judicial parking lot

- ii. CCTV coverages of routes to and from the court building
  - iii. Fenced parking (if possible)
  - iv. Bailiffs should escort judges to and from vehicles
  - v. Keep parking lot well lit
  - vi. Do not mark judicial parking spaces with “judge” or any other identifier that would indicate the space is assigned to a judge.
  - vii. Always inspect interior of vehicle before getting inside
  - viii. Provide judge with personal duress alarm
- B. Building
- i. Bailiffs should escort the judge to and from the courtroom
  - ii. Chambers should always remain locked
  - iii. Courtrooms should remain locked when not in use
  - iv. Judges should have emergency plans in place for the following:
    - Active shooter
    - Disturbances
    - Severe weather
    - Bomb threat
    - Evacuation
  - v. Security equipment
    - Panic/Duress alarms
    - CCTV systems
    - Access control systems
    - Designated safe rooms
- C. Judicial threats
- i. Threat assessment
  - ii. Home security
  - iii. Transportation security
  - iv. Is the judge armed?
    - Qualification with officers

**6.2 Analyze suggested personal protection information for judges.**

- A. U.S. Marshals self-assessment for judges

- B. Judicial personal safety checklist
- C. Protection of judges' personal information
  - i. Government Code 72.016
  - ii. Government Code 552.117
  - iii. Government Code 572.002
  - iv. Government Code 572.035
  - v. Election Code 13.0021
  - vi. Election Code 15.0215
  - vii. Local Government Code 133.058
  - viii. Property Code 11.008
  - ix. Tax Code 25.025

## **Unit 7 Suggested/Optional Case Studies: High-risk/Profile trials**

**Goal:** Analyze known incidents in court security and review for education and solutions.

### **7.1 Define a high-risk trial.**

- A. A trial, that because of a special set of circumstances, results in extraordinary security measures be put in place. This can be due to the participants, location, type of trial, and local or national media attention.

### **7.2 Identify examples of a high-risk trial.**

- A. Types of trials
  - i. Criminal
    - Murder
    - Kidnapping
    - Terrorism
    - Sexual assault
    - Organized crime
    - Animal cruelty
  - ii. Civil

### **7.3 Identify individuals involved in high-risk trials.**

- A. Celebrity
  - i. Bill Cosby
  - ii. Johnny Depp
  - iii. Michael Jackson

- iv. Harvey Weinstein
- B. Politicians
  - i. Steve Stockman
  - ii. Tom Delay
  - iii. Christopher Collins
- C. Sports figures
  - i. O.J. Simpson
  - ii. Aaron Hernandez
  - iii. Michael Vick
- D. Local dignitaries
  - i. Mayors
  - ii. Judges
  - iii. Council members
- E. Law enforcement
  - i. Derek Chauvin
  - ii. Amber Guyger
  - iii. Kim Potter

**7.4 Identify risks associated with high-risk trials.**

- A. Witness tampering
  - i. Can lead to mistrial
  - ii. Costly to taxpayers
- B. Jury tampering
  - i. Security must protect jury from outside influence
- C. Threats against judicial members
  - i. Criminals threaten judges to impede trials and sentencing
- D. Escape attempts
  - i. Prisoners
- E. Prisoner transport
  - i. Must be maintained during transport route to guard against escape attempts
- F. Inadequate security at court facility

- i. High-risk trials cause courts to either bolster current security measure or create security protocols.

## **7.5 Identify trial operation support teams.**

### **A. Intelligence team**

- i. In place to keep eyes and ears open to any chatter involving the trial, which may indicate security threats and provide information to other teams.

### **B. Counterintelligence team**

- i. Crucial part of trial planning and operations
- ii. Pre-trial operations
  - Surveillance
  - Vulnerability assessment
- iii. Trial operations
  - Surveillance
  - Fast response back up (last resort)

### **C. Court security team**

- i. Already existing court security division/officers
- ii. Takes on additional duties as well as enhance existing duties
- iii. Should conduct an overall review of trial location and facilities
  - Assess limitations

### **D. Prisoner transport team**

- i. Responsible for getting in-custody defendant to trial
- ii. Should always be ready for any threats during transport

### **E. Witness protection team**

- i. Witness security should employ same techniques as judicial security
  - Threats may necessitate protection of witnesses to ensure justice is served
- ii. Witness security should employ the same techniques as judicial security

### **F. Jury security team**

- i. Integrity of jury can come under threat with high-risk/profile trial
- ii. Undue influence or intimidation of jury can become a factor
- iii. Jury plan should be in place

### **G. Judicial security team**

- i. Judges may come under threat during trial

- ii. Even if there is not a known threat, some level of judicial protection should be considered for a high risk or high profile trial
- H. Media team
- i. Media automatically drawn to high-risk/profile court settings
  - ii. Proper management is necessary to ensure freedom of the press is protected and prevent security issues caused by media

# COURSE REFERENCES

Department of the Treasury – Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, “Letter and Package BOMB Detection Techniques,”

[http://www3.cutr.usf.edu/security/documents/ATF%5Cbomb\\_broch.pdf](http://www3.cutr.usf.edu/security/documents/ATF%5Cbomb_broch.pdf)

CCJ/COSCA, “Court Security Handbook: Ten Essential Elements for Court Security and Emergency Preparedness”

Rob DeGroot, “The Customer is not Always Right: A Common Sense Approach to Safety and Security in the Courthouse”

Timothy F. Fautsko, (2008) “Entry Screening: The Court’s First Line of Defense”

<http://www.ncsc.org/topics/courthouse-facilities/court-security/resource-guide.aspx>

Court Security for Judges, Officers and other Court Personnel, Judge Richard Carter, and Constable Randy Harris, History of Court Security, <http://www.sheriffs.org/publications/brief-history-of-court-security>

Manuals and Standards, [www.courtsecurityconcepts.com](http://www.courtsecurityconcepts.com)

National Center for State Courts, “Court Security Resource Guide,”

National Center for State Courts (2010), “Guidelines for Implementing Best Practices in Court Building Security

National Incident Management System (NIMS) (2011), “Overview”

National Institute of Justice, “Court Security and the Transportation of Prisoners,”

<http://www.sheriffs.org/sites/default/files/tb/images/benefits/fs000165.pdf>

PoliceOne.com, “Courthouse Security,” <http://www.policeone.com/courthouse-security/>

Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 102 – Cost Paid by Defendants

U.S. Department of Justice, United States Marshal Service, “Strategic Plan: Online Edition”

[www.usmarshals.gov](http://www.usmarshals.gov)