



# 2022

## COUNTY COURTROOM SECURITY REPORT

Per statute, this survey must be completed each year. Completion of this survey will require input from multiple people, including court clerks, court officers, and judges.

### COURTHOUSE(S) AND COURTROOMS

1. How many <b>courthouses</b> are in your county, including criminal justice centers with courtrooms?	2*
a. If there is more than one courthouse, please explain what types of court are held in which locations (where is circuit court, chancery court, general sessions, and juvenile court held?)	
2. Number of <b>courtrooms</b> used only for state Circuit Court, state Criminal Court, Chancery Court, or Probate Court.	2
3. Number of courtrooms used only for General Sessions Court and/or Juvenile Court.	6
4. Number of courtrooms used for both state court and county courts.	8
5. Number of courtrooms in your county that are no longer used for official state or county proceedings (ex. Ceremonial or historical courtrooms that are no longer in use for official proceedings).	0
6. <b>Total number of courtrooms in your county.</b> Do <b>NOT</b> include ceremonial courtrooms no longer in use for official proceedings. <i>Please note the total number of courtrooms in your county is used to evaluate whether your county meets the minimum security standards.</i>	8





**SILENT BENCH PANIC BUTTONS (MCSS #1)**

1. Number of courtrooms equipped with a silent bench panic button connected to law enforcement.	<b>7</b>
2. Number of court clerk public transaction counter areas in all of your courthouses. Please include public transaction counters for Circuit, Criminal, Chancery, General Sessions and/or Juvenile Court clerks.	<b>9</b>
a. Number of court clerk public transaction counters equipped with a silent bench panic button connected to law enforcement.	<b>9</b>

**BULLET-PROOF BENCHES/WORK AREAS (MCSS # 2)**

1. Number of courtrooms equipped with a bullet-proof bench.	<b>8</b>
2. Number of courtrooms with bullet-proof court clerk work area.	<b>8</b>

**COURT OFFICERS (MCSS #3 and #4)**

1. Is an armed, uniformed guard in each courtroom during court?	<b>No</b>
a. If no, is a court officer available in the courthouse?	<b>Yes</b>
2. Does your county have dedicated court officers or does it utilize on-duty law enforcement when there are court proceedings? (dedicated, mix, on-duty)	<b>Dedicated</b>
3. Do court proceedings impact your county’s ability to respond to emergencies in other areas of your county?	<b>No</b>
4. Did your court officers attend court security training in 2022?	<b>Yes</b>
a. If no, how often do court officers in your county attend training?	
5. Have the judicial staff and courthouse personnel from your county attended a court security briefing in 2022?	<b>No</b>

**HAND-HELD DETECTORS/MAGNETOMETERS (MCSS # 5)**

1. Total number of hand-held detectors in your county courthouse(s).	<b>9</b>
2. Total number of stand-alone magnetometers in each county courthouse.	<b>4</b>
3. Does your county have sufficient security staff to operate magnetometers during regular business hours?	<b>Yes</b>





**SIGNAGE (MCSS # 6)**

1. Does each of the court buildings in your county have signage posted at each court access entrance stating that persons are subject to search by security personnel, that prohibited items are subject to seizure and forfeiture, and include a listing of the prohibited items?	<b>Yes</b>
--	------------

**HAND-HELD INSPECTION MIRRORS (MCSS # 7)**

1. Do you have at least one hand-held inspection security mirror per county courthouse?	<b>Yes</b>
---	------------

**COURT SECURITY COMMITTEE**

1. Does your county have a court security committee?	<b>Yes</b>
a. If yes, did the committee meet this year to review security issues and make recommendations?	<b>Yes</b>

**VIDEO ARRAIGNMENT & CONFERENCING**

1. Does your county utilize video arraignment and conferencing?	<b>Yes</b>
a. If yes, how many courtrooms have video arraignment and conferencing capabilities?	<b>9</b>
b. What type of video arraignment system do you utilize (i.e. BIS, Zoom)?	<b>Zoom</b>
c. Can your county consistently connect with TDOC facilities for virtual proceedings?	<b>Yes</b>
d. If you cannot consistently connect with TDOC facilities, would doing so decrease the amount of inmate transfers to your county?	
2. Does your county utilize video conferencing for hearings, conferences, and other types of judicial proceedings (not just criminal court)?	<b>Yes</b>
a. If yes, how many courtrooms have the capability to hold video conference proceedings?	<b>9</b>
b. What type of video conferencing systems do you utilize?	<b>Zoom</b>





c. Does your county need additional or upgraded video conferencing capabilities for judicial proceedings?	Yes
---	-----

Please list any security measures that you have taken to improve your facilities and/or to protect personnel between **December 1, 2021 and November 30, 2022.**

- (1) We have updated the current security camera system at the Justice Center, including electronic access control; (2) we have equipped the new Juvenile Court courtroom with a bullet-proof bench and a bullet-proof court clerk work area; (3) we have reconstructed the front entrance area into the Justice Center to give court security officers a better view of incoming patrons; and (4) the judges have entered a new order prohibiting the use of portable electronic devices to take photographs, make audio or video recordings or to transmit live audio or video streaming on all floors of the Justice Center without prior written authorization by a judge, and banning other electronic devices from the Justice Center without prior written authorization by a judge.**
- (2) The electronic devices order was adopted after the county attorney rendered an opinion that there are numerous federal cases holding that the interior of a courthouse or justice center is not a public forum, and in order to protect the safety and security of litigants, witnesses, jurors, and Blount County Justice Center employees, including but not limited to the use and publication of photographs and/or videos of jurors, victims, and witnesses to intimidate or harass those persons.**

Please describe any recent court security incidents in your county or unique court security issues facing your county.

**A self-described "First Amendment auditor" has entered the Justice Center with a camera to record activities within the Justice Center and was stopped at the entrance area. He has recorded all interactions with court security personnel and telephone calls to various offices. He has protested the denial of his alleged right to record.**





Please explain if and how security staffing issues have impacted court security in your county.

**While this is not a “security staffing issue,” the use of technology, including video proceedings, has reduced the amount of inmate movement and thus enhanced security.**

What are your highest priority needs related to improving court security in your county?

- (1) Equip the new Juvenile Court courtroom with a silent bench panic button;
- (2) Provision of a uniformed guard for the new Juvenile Court courtroom;
- (3) Holding a court security briefing in 2022 for judicial staff and courthouse personnel;
- (4) Installation of cameras or Zoom access to victim-witness rooms so that they may watch courtroom proceedings while in the rooms;
- (5) Secure access for the digital evidence room;
- (6) Secure parking for assistant district attorneys.

\*Referring back to question 1, depending on court dockets on any given day, occasionally the Chancery Court and/or the child support referee will meet in a sessions courtroom, or in the jury pool room, to hold court.

2022

**COUNTY COURTROOM SECURITY REPORT**

Please include the name of the PERSON preparing this report, the COUNTY that you represent, and your full contact information.

This report was prepared by: David R. Duggan

Date: January 4, 2023





Please print title: **Circuit Judge, Division II**\_\_\_\_\_

County: **Blount**\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: **865/273-5585**\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: **dduggan@blounttn.org**\_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form by email, fax, or mail  
no later than January 6, 2023 to:**

Barbara Peck  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
Nashville City Center  
511 Union Street, Suite 600  
Nashville, TN 37219  
Phone – (615) 741-2687 Ext. 1090  
Fax – (615) 741-6285  
Email – [barbara.peck@tncourts.gov](mailto:barbara.peck@tncourts.gov)