



# 2022

## COUNTY COURTHOUSE 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?	<b>4</b>
<b>a.</b> 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?)  <i>Bristol Justice Center – Circuit (civil only), Chancery, Probate, General Sessions, Juvenile, Municipal</i>  <i>Blountville Justice Center – Circuit (civil and Criminal) Chancery, Probate, Juvenile</i>  <i>Kingsport Justice Center - Circuit (civil only), General Sessions, Juvenile, Municipal</i>  <i>225 W. Center Street- Circuit (civil only), Chancery, Probate</i>	
2. Number of <b>courtrooms</b> used only for state Circuit Court, state Criminal Court, Chancery Court, or Probate Court.	<b>5</b>
3. Number of courtrooms used only for General Sessions Court and/or Juvenile Court.	<b>6</b>
4. Number of courtrooms used for both state court and county courts.	<b>6</b>
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).	<b>1</b>
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>	<b>13</b>



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

1. Number of courtrooms equipped with a silent bench panic button connected to law enforcement.	<b>13</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>10</b>
a. Number of court clerk public transaction counters equipped with a silent bench panic button connected to law enforcement.	<b>10</b>

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

1. Number of courtrooms equipped with a bullet-proof bench.	<b>13</b>
2. Number of courtrooms with bullet-proof court clerk work area.	<b>0</b>

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

1. Is an armed, uniformed guard in each courtroom during court?	<b>Yes</b>
a. If no, is a court officer available in the courthouse?	
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>Yes</b>

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

1. Total number of hand-held detectors in your county courthouse(s).	<b>8</b>
2. Total number of stand-alone magnetometers in each county courthouse.	<b>1</b>
3. Does your county have sufficient security staff to operate magnetometers during regular business hours?	<b>Yes (dedicated)</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>
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**HAND-HELD INSPECTION MIRRORS (MCSS # 7)**

1. Do you have at least one hand-held inspection security mirror per county courthouse?	<b>Yes</b>
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**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>13</b>
b. What type of video arraignment system do you utilize (i.e. BIS, Zoom)?	<b>Zoom/Cisco</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?	<b>Yes</b>
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>13</b>
b. What type of video conferencing systems do you utilize?	<b>Logitech, Polycom (primarily)</b>
c. Does your county need additional or upgraded video conferencing capabilities for judicial proceedings?	<b>Yes</b>



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.

*Updated video conferencing equipment was obtained through the CESF Grant for General Sessions, Chancery and Support Enforcement courtrooms as well as the Sullivan County Jail. Utilization of video conferencing has continued to reduce the number of inmates being transported for judicial proceedings.*

*The existing equipment from these courtrooms has been setup for use in the remaining courtrooms.*

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

*First amendment auditors are becoming more of an issue with our prohibition on any electronic device to include phones, cameras and recording devices in judicial facilities. Proper signage with accompanying court order has allowed these restrictions to be enforced. An appeal process has been setup with our Court Security Committee to address any grievances.*

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

*Sullivan County is unique in that it has three distinct locations for judicial proceeding located in three separate cities within the county. Dedicated personnel are used for security screening and court officer responsibilities at each location. There is one officer assigned to each judge / court. Every court that deals with in-custody defendants has a need for, at a minimum, two officers to address necessary security needs during a court proceeding, if it is a jury trial with an in-custody defendant the minimum number will increase to three. The utilization of video conferencing equipment has alleviated this issue to some degree, it has also reduced the overall number of officers readily available at each facility when issues arise.*

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

*Moving courts and related offices out of the building located at 225 West Center Street. The City of Kingsport had rented available office space within that building to a private business with no consideration being given to the security issues created by this decision.*



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:

  
G. Kyle Carter

Date: 01-03-2023

Please print title: Deputy Sheriff

County: Sullivan County

Telephone Number: O: 423-224-1739 C: 423-571-8941

Email Address: [kcarter@scsotn.com](mailto:kcarter@scsotn.com)

**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)