

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT  
COURT SERVICES BUREAU  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

DATE	DISSEMINATION	CATEGORY	NUMBER
March 6, 2014	BUREAU-WIDE	NORMAL OPERATIONS	F.25
SUBJECT: BUREAU RESPONSE TO NATIONAL TERRORISM ADVISORY SYSTEM			PAGE 1 of 3

Purpose:

To establish staffing levels and security postures for all courthouses commensurate with the National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) threat alert levels.

Policy:

The Court Services Bureau (CSB) lieutenant/sergeant for each command will consult with the appropriate presiding/supervising judge for each courthouse as soon as practical after changes in the National Terrorism Advisory System have been announced. Additional security steps like those listed below will be implemented at the discretion of the court. These steps are not meant to be all encompassing; instead each command may request additional security precautions after approval of the appropriate presiding/supervising judge.

Procedure:

- I. Imminent Threat Alert – Warns of a credible, specific, and impending terrorist threat against the United States, but details may not be known.
  - A. Weapons screening procedures will be handled in accordance with CSB Policy and Procedure F.6.
  - B. The division lieutenant can authorize additional staff or security procedures as necessary. These steps will be subject to approval by the presiding/supervising judge in the affected courthouse.
- II. Elevated Threat Alert – Warns of a credible terrorist threat against the United States.

Once the National Terrorism Advisory System threat level has been raised to elevated, the courthouse lieutenant/sergeant shall speak to the supervising/presiding judge of the affected courthouse and recommend additional security steps or procedures. These may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Each Sheriff's command may notify the other tenant department heads in their courthouse of the change in security level and provide them with information to assist in the security posture of the courthouse. This may include asking staff to report all suspicious circumstances and/or packages

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to sheriff's personnel, abstain from leaving items unattended in public places and a review of the courthouse evacuation procedures.

- B. Staffing levels at the weapons screening stations may be increased;
  - C. Sheriff's personnel may conduct full weapons screening. All persons entering the courthouse, with the exception of judges, shall pass through weapons screening. All non-public entrances to the courthouse shall be secured.
  - D. A marked patrol car may be parked as near to the public entrance of the courthouse as possible while the public doors are open.
  - E. All courthouses may have 24-hour on-site security. This can be provided by private security contracted by the court or Sheriff's personnel if necessary.
  - F. All deliveries through the public doors may be required to pass through the x-ray machines in weapons screening. If the package or object is too large to pass through the x-ray machine, a manual inspection of the items may be conducted or weapons screening personnel can refuse the delivery.
  - G. Sheriff's staff members may be assigned to rooftop observation posts, parking lot or perimeter rovers, loading dock security, visitor escort or any other duty that will increase the security level of the courthouse.
  - H. Some non-essential court functions may be cancelled.
  - I. Public parking shall be prohibited within 500 feet of the courthouse building where possible.
  - J. Other measures as agreed upon between the Sheriff's command and the supervising/presiding judge.
- III. The security measures agreed upon shall be documented by the lieutenant/sergeant in the form of an Interoffice Memorandum and routed through the affected supervising/presiding judge for endorsement. The completed correspondence shall be forwarded to the Area Captain, then to the Area 3 Captain for archiving.

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- IV. Alert Sunset Provision – An individual threat alert is issued for a specific time period and then automatically expires. It may be extended if new information becomes available or the threat evolves.

Once the threat level reduces or expires, the command lieutenant/sergeant shall ensure that extra security measures are reduced to those listed above under section I in a timely manner.