Chapter 12 - Dependency Court

This court deals primarily with children who are wards of the court. Dependency hearing can become highly volatile. Bailiffs working in this court should always be aware of the presence of the minor and relatives. Cases involving adoptions, child custody, foster care or removal of a child from the parents often create a unique situation that involves tact, control and professionalism.

• 3-12/010.00 - Bailiff Responsibilities with Shelter Care Children

It is the primary responsibility of Shelter Care Workers to maintain security of minors. The bailiffs merely assist the personnel should any situation arise which would compromise the security of the court, such as a violent outbreak by the minor. It is the Department of Children Services (DCS) policy not to chase a minor that runs away from court. DCS will simply issue a runaway report. Bailiffs shall not chase minors who run from the court unless the judge orders the minor pursued and returned to the court by the bailiff. In this instance the bailiff shall activate the Court Security Alarm System or alert other deputies by radio.

Refer to the Manual of Policy and Procedures relating to foot pursuits.

• 3-12/015.00 - Detention of Minor in Dependency Court

The detention of minors in a courtroom is the responsibility of the DCS Court Officer. The bailiffs shall assist the DCS Court Officer should any situation arise which would compromise the security of the court, such as a violent outbreak by the minor and/or parents. The bailiff shall immediately assist in removing the minor from court. The bailiff shall immediately contact their supervisor by radio and request assistance, if needed.

• 3-12/020.00 - Child Visitation with In-Custody Parents

A visitation with in-custody parents, at a dependency court, is for minor children only. Relatives, of the minor, are not permitted to visit with in-custody individuals. Minors may have a face to face visit, in the lockup area only, if ordered by the judge, at the request of the DCS staff. Visitation passes are issued by DCS. If the judge requests that the bailiff allow physical contact, explain that it is not permitted by Sheriff's Department policy due to the hazards of contraband being passed to the in-custody parent or the possibility of physical harm to the minor. If the minor is not in shelter care, every attempt should be made to ensure that the monitor of the visit is not related to the inmate. An attorney, social worker or shelter care staff members are the only monitors allowed.

• 3-12/020.05 - Visiting Time

Visits shall be started within one-half hour of the end of the child's hearing, unless the time has an effect on the operation of the lock-up. In such event, a new time shall be scheduled by all parties concerned. Immediate supervisors shall be notified to advise the affected courts. Visitations shall take place only in the locked attorney interview room with a physical separation between the minor and the inmate. The visit shall be for a

fifteen (15) minute period only.

• 3-12/025.00 - Responsibility to Bring Minor to Courtroom

The shelter care staff or Child Advocates (CASA) shall be responsible to bring the minor to court, stay with the minor through the proceeding, and escort the minor back to the shelter care facility. Should the minor be left unattended in the courtroom at any time, the bailiff shall immediately contact the shelter care operations manager or the program director.