

3-04/025.00 - Control of Spectators/Audience to Enhance the Safety and Security of Court Staff

The control of spectators in all court proceedings is very important for the safety and security of the court, staff, victims and witnesses. Emotions may be high and lead to unpredictable actions. Requiring people entering the courtroom to check in with the bailiff will enable better control of the audience. Defendants and their families should always be seated separately from victims and/or witnesses in a case.

Victims shall be entitled to the following rights:

- The right to be treated with fairness and respect for his or her privacy and dignity.
- The right to be free from intimidation, harassment and abuse, throughout the criminal or juvenile justice process.

Refer to the Victim's Bill of Rights, Marsey's Law. (California Constitution, Article 1, Section 28 (b)) Advise all spectators before opening court that there shall be no talking, eating, drinking, chewing gum or tobacco, smoking, or reading while court is in session.

Attorneys should interview their clients and witnesses outside of the courtroom. The bailiff is responsible for the control of all spectators in a courtroom. Anyone who is disruptive, disrespectful to the court, or fails to follow the direction of the bailiff shall be removed from the courtroom and not allowed to reenter without the permission of the judge. A bailiff has the right to perform a search on any individual or group who wishes to enter a courtroom. If a search is to be performed, it is advisable to obtain backup from the office or another bailiff from an adjacent courtroom. Call for a supervisor's assistance if a spectator refuses to comply with directions.

The bailiff shall immediately advise parents with small children to remove the children from the courtroom, if they become restless or noisy. If the parent or custodian of the child must be present in the courtroom and cannot take the child into the hall, the bailiff shall notify a supervisor and request assistance. All minor children are excluded from family law courtrooms when court is in session.
