Chapter 3 - Duties and Conduct

Duties and conduct for Security Officers and Security Assistants while in the performance of their duties.

• 4-03/010.00 Introduction

The provision and maintenance of adequate security measures throughout the County of Los Angeles Court System, and various other County facilities, is the primary responsibility of both Security Officers and Security Assistants.

The ever-present threats of courthouse disruption, violence, unauthorized access, theft, vandalism, and other crimes demands the implementation of a positive and effective security program to prevent or minimize these hazards.

In both its planning and procedural aspects, security is an operational problem with features unique to each facility and its occupants. To ensure adequate and effective security measures and procedures, responsibility must be delineated and individually placed within each facility.

• 4-03/015.00 Duties

It is the duty of each Security Officer and Security Assistant to be at their post of assignment during working hours, and remain highly visible at all times, and to follow the rules and guidelines established by Department Manual of Policy and Procedures, Court Services Division Manual, and Court Services Division Directives.

Security personnel will also be required to monitor the areas in and around their fixed post. Be observant for disturbances, violations of fire safety standards, and report hazards such as blocked exits, and slippery floors.

Security personnel should be aware of points of interest in and around the courthouse. It is not uncommon for an officer to be asked where such places are located. Provide this information in a polite manner.

• 4-03/020.00 Responsibilities

The major responsibility of the Security Officer and Security Assistant is prevention of incidents or offenses. A Security Officer and/or Security Assistant must be highly visible. By remaining visible, security personnel may discourage anyone who might be considering theft, damage, or personal injury to persons or property.

Security personnel must be alert, listen carefully, and be ever watchful. Prevention of entry of persons who are disruptive, abusive, and/or intoxicated is accomplished by being alert to all who enter your facility. Be aware of warning signs of various problems which may surface ahead of time, such as body language, tone of voice, slurred speech, manner and style of dress, eye movements, etc.

It is the responsibility of security personnel to be thoroughly familiar with the Security Plan of their facility. Only with complete knowledge and familiarity can security personnel act quickly and efficiently in any given

situation. If an offense or incident does occur, security personnel must remain calm, observe and remember events, and report the occurrence to their supervisor.

• 4-03/025.00 Authority

Security Officers and Security Assistants are not peace officers. Security personnel do not perform the same duties, receive the same training, or have the same powers under the California Penal Code as peace officers.

Security Officers and Security Assistants are public officers,(as defined in 831.4 PC), employed by the Sheriff of a County, whose primary duty is the security of a location or facility with respect to the patrons, employees, and properties of the employing County as directed by the Sheriff.

All security personnel should be reminded that the protection of people and property are their primary duties. Whereas, peace officers protect people, property, and enforce laws.

If a law is violated, peace officers are required to pursue and apprehend the responsible person(s). Security personnel's primary role is that of an observer and reporter. Under certain circumstances, it may become necessary for a Security Officer to pursue a violator only in tandem with a sworn Department member.

Refer to CSDM, 4-03/025.10 - Foot Pursuit Policy For Security Personnel.

Record all pertinent information and provide it to the proper law enforcement agency.

A Security Officer is responsible to observe, deter, pursue, and detain persons who have committed a crime on County property. However, they shall never independently place a person under arrest, but must detain the person for further investigation by peace officer personnel. The penal code defines "arrest" as the taking of a person(s) into custody, in a case and in the manner authorized by law. An arrest may be made by a peace officer or by a private person (834 PC).

• 4-03/025.05 Relations with Peace Officers

Security personnel should maintain a good working relationship with other Sheriff personnel and law enforcement agencies. Security personnel must avoid doing any of the following:

- Never play "cop".
- Do not mislead people. Because of the uniform, the public may perceive security personnel as peace officers. Security personnel are not to imply or represent that they are peace officers.
- During an emergency, security personnel should not interfere with peace officers who may be on the scene. However, do cooperate to the fullest extent possible when called upon to assist.

• 4-03/025.10 Foot Pursuit Policy for Security Personnel

Security officers shall not engage in a foot pursuit unless in tandem with a sworn Department member. If a security officer becomes involved as an assisting partner in a foot pursuit and is directed by the sworn member to put out a broadcast, the security officer shall be prepared to provide the following information in a timely manner:

- Officer identifier
- Suspect(s) exact location and description
- Reason for the foot pursuit
- Whether suspect is armed

Security Assistants shall not go in foot pursuit.

Refer to Manual of Policy and Procedures related to Foot Pursuits.

• 4-03/030.00 Attitude

Security personnel shall serve the Sheriff's Department loyally and discreetly, and will not display poor judgment or fail to support fellow employees in the lawful performance of their duties.

Security personnel shall always maintain a professional demeanor. They shall perform their duties in a calm, but firm manner, acting together to assist and protect each other and County property.

Security personnel shall direct and coordinate their efforts in a manner which will establish and maintain the highest level of professionalism. Watching television, reading newspapers, books, magazines, eating, and smoking are prohibited while working an assigned area except during a break or lunch. Breaks and lunch shall be taken in a designated area or away from assigned post and out of view of the public, especially if eating or talking on a cell phone.

Security personnel should be aware of points of interest in and around the courthouse. It is not uncommon for an officer to be asked where such places are located. Provide this information in a polite manner.

People will remember their encounters with you, both good and bad. This will be retained for weeks or even months. Security personnel should remember they are often the first contact many people have with the court system. The impression security personnel make may have a lasting impression, positive or negative on the public’s view or opinion of the Sheriff’s Department.
