

Recommended Court Security Measures for Cases Involving Domestic Violence

THE ISSUE:

According to The National Center for State Courts (NCSC), cases involving domestic violence can pose an acute risk to the safety in our nation's courthouses. Domestic violence can be an issue in family, supreme and criminal court cases. Below are some recommendations for courts to consider addressing the security needs of cases involving domestic violence (CIDVs).

BEST PRACTICES:

It is recommended that courts implement courtroom procedures that reduce the risk of potential violence or outbursts by abusive partners. Below are some suggestions for consideration:

- I. A formalized court security committee,
- II. Utilization of remote/virtual appearances to reduce the need for litigants to visit the courthouse in person when feasible,
- III. Utilize closed circuit tv to monitor courtroom and waiting rooms, and install signage informing litigants that they are "on camera,"
- IV. Provide easy access to the courtrooms by utilizing appropriate signage,
- V. Separate opposing parties prior to proceedings by providing separate waiting areas for parties outside of the courtroom, or if infeasible, provide a partition,
- VI. Provide childcare and/or a designated children's waiting area,
- VII. Provide regular security officer patrols around the building perimeter and parking areas.
- VIII. Provide security officer escorts for ingress and egress of DV (Domestic Violence) litigants into and out of the courtroom or courthouse,
- IX. Stagger ingress and egress of DV litigants into and out of the courtroom or courthouse.