

Court Security

The Dorchester County Sheriff's Office is responsible for keeping Dorchester County Circuit Court a safe and secure environment. These security measures are for everyone that enters the courthouse and are not intended to harass, exclude or inconvenience anyone. Cooperation is requested of everyone in order to achieve this goal.

Person(s) entering the courthouse are subject to search of their person and belongings.

Metal Detectors/Fluoroscope (X-Ray Machine)

When you enter the courthouse you must go through a metal detector and X-ray machine operated by security personnel. You are required to empty your pockets and place the contents in a container for further inspection. In order for this to be an efficient process the following guidelines should be used. In general, any item(s) that could be used to harm or injure another person is not permitted and/or *any other item a member of the courthouse security staff perceives as a threat to the safety and security of the building and the persons within the courthouse.* **ANY PERSON FAILING TO FOLLOW THE ABOVE POLICY/PROCEDURE WILL BE DENIED ENTRY INTO THE COURTHOUSE.**

Prohibited Items Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- No weapons of any type
- No Firearms, ammunition and explosive devices
- No cutting instruments of any type - including knives, scissors, box cutters, work tools, and large metal nail files
- No handcuffs, handcuff keys, knitting needles, or anything with a cutting edge, etc.
- No Pepper spray, mace or any other chemical defense sprays
- No alcohol or illegal substances, including illegal drugs
- No toy guns, baseball bats, or flammable liquids

Individuals possessing any of the above prohibited items will be required to leave the courthouse and return without them in their possession. If being in possession of an item is a violation of the law the individual will be subject to criminal charges.

Procedure Upon Entering the Courthouse

All persons entering the courthouse are asked to:

- Empty their pockets and place the contents in a container for x-ray scanning
- Remove jewelry (watches, belts, etc.), and place the contents in a container for x-ray scanning
- Place overcoats, purses, briefcases, backpacks, and parcels on the belt of the x-ray machine
- Walk through the metal detector

If the x-ray or metal detector sets off an alert or alarm, security personnel may perform a scan using a hand-held wand. Security personnel may conduct a physical search of personal articles to determine the cause of the alert or alarm.

Before leaving the security screening area, persons are reminded to retrieve all personal possessions. Security personnel **WILL NOT** hold items while person(s) are in the courthouse. Security personnel are not responsible for anything left at the security screening area.

- Food items and drinks are prohibited from being brought into the courtrooms.
- **Thank you for your cooperation!**