

**MARIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
COURT SERVICES POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

**CHAPTER 06 – EMERGENCY OPERATIONS**  
CRT 06-06  
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**DATE**  
10/22/10

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**CIVIL DISTURBANCES**

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**POLICY**

It is the policy of the Marin County Sheriff's Office to provide Court Services personnel with guidelines for handling civil disturbances occurring in or near court facilities.

Note: Civil disturbances are, by design, intended to provoke reactions from individuals or organizations, and to receive or manipulate media attention. The objective of Court Security is to safeguard the court, and those attending it from criminal acts or interference from the participants of a civil disturbance. (Ref. P.C. 169)

**PROCEDURE**

Jurisdictional authority

Investigations of crimes or disturbances occurring outside of a court facility are established by jurisdictional agreement.

The foregoing lines of authority are not meant to infer that additional assistance from another agency may not be sought. It is intended to draw primary lines of jurisdiction for the enforcement of criminal statutes.

Should a civil disturbance occur upon the premises of a court facility, Court Security needs to assess the situation with special attention to the following:

The cause of the disturbance

The size of the crowd

The crowd leaders

The potential for violence

The degree to which the disturbance will interfere with normal business.

Once the parameters of the disturbance are assessed:

- Contact the Court Security Sergeant and advise him/her of the situation.
- The Court Security Sergeant will initiate chain of command notifications as necessary.
- The Court Security Sergeant or appropriate staff officer may contact Sheriff's Communications and coordinate the response of additional assistance to the disturbance.

The Court Security Sergeant and/or Commander should contact the Court Executive Officer or his/her designee and advise them of the situation.

When possible, individual deputies should refrain from contact with the participants of a civil disturbance because:

- The appearance of a deputy may serve only to incite a violent reaction from the participants of the civil disturbance.
- Without proper support, the deputy exposes himself to unreasonable risk.
- Deputies should be cognizant of the high media profile of civil disturbances.

When backup units arrive, the initial deputy will provide the responding officer(s) with all pertinent information.

The bailiff's job remains the security of the court. Let any available Court Security units or other responsible agency(s) handle the disturbance when possible.

When demonstrators are attempting to enter a court facility, the Court Executive Officer or his/her designee shall be informed and he/she will determine the conditions upon which the demonstrators may be admitted.

The Court Executive Officer or his/her designee shall be the principal liaison contact between the Courts and the Sheriff.

Each judge is responsible for the orderly conduct of judicial business in his/her courtroom and may make such decisions as he/she deems necessary in that courtroom regarding security matters in coordination with security personnel.

Court Security deputies shall keep their Sergeant advised of any court orders pertaining to security of the court.

**RELATED STANDARDS:**

Penal Code Section 169

**AFFECTED DIVISIONS:**

None

**DATE OF REVISIONS:**

6/1/01

By order of:

CAPTAIN  
BUREAU OF DETENTION SERVICES