

Ord.
2013-0440

**INTRODUCED BY: V. J. ST. PIERRE, JR., PARISH PRESIDENT
(DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS)**

ORDINANCE NO. 13-12-10

An ordinance to amend the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2 Administration Article I In General to insert Section 2-9, Courthouse Security.

WHEREAS, it is the desire of St Charles Parish officials to work together to enhance security for all employees and for the general public visiting the Courthouse; and,

WHEREAS, the following Courthouse Security Procedures are designed to maintain a safe and contraband-free environment.

THE ST. CHARLES PARISH COUNCIL HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION I. That the Code of Ordinances be amended by inserting Chapter 2-9 Courthouse Security to read as follows:.

Section I. Purpose.

These courthouse security procedures are designed to maintain a safe and contraband-free environment within the St. Charles Parish Courthouse and to provide guidelines for the day-to-day operations therein.

Section II. Hours of Operation.

A. Normal Hours of Operation.

The courthouse will be open from 7:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday for all employees. The courthouse will be open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Monday- Friday to the general public. The St. Charles Parish Government will provide security for the courthouse from 7:00 a.m. until actual close of business, Monday-Friday.

B. Exceptions to Normal Hours of Operation.

1. On Early Voting Days and Election Days, the Courthouse shall remain open in accordance with the requirements of Federal, State and local election laws as determined by the St. Charles Parish Registrar of Voters.
2. In the event that a public meeting or a court or special hearing is set or must continue beyond normal hours, the appropriate personnel and court deputies will be on staff to work said event. In the event that an agency which is not based at the St. Charles Parish Courthouse schedules a meeting outside of normal business hours said agency will be responsible for any costs incurred as per Parish guidelines.
3. Courthouse Security Personnel must be notified of all after hour events at the courthouse by the agency/official in charge of said event within 24 hours of said event.

Section III. Courthouse Security Plan.

Pursuant to this section, Courthouse Security Personnel shall be responsible for:

- A. Screening of all persons entering the courthouse through the main entrance. This procedure will be accomplished in accordance with procedures set forth by the Courthouse Security Personnel.
- B. Walk-through search of all secure areas prior to admittance of staff or public.
- C. Monitoring of all public lobbies and exit doors by use of CCTV.
- D. Walking patrols of all secure areas and response to areas inside or outside the courthouse where problems arise.
- E. Response to activations of panic alarms or door alarms at various locations.
Advisory Panel
- F. Walk-through search of all areas to ensure building is empty after lockdown.

Section IV. Screening.

- A. The Screening Procedure and Steps will be established by Courthouse Security Personnel.
- B. The Screening Procedure and Steps will be posted at the main entrance, as well as online on the St. Charles Parish Government website.

- C. Unless in possession of a properly functioning ID badge and authorized to enter via a controlled entry, all persons seeking entry to the courthouse must submit to the Screening Procedure at the Main Entrance to the building.

Section V. Identification and Confiscation of Contraband.

- A. Items such as illegal narcotics, firearms, knives, scissors, carpet or box cutters, letter openers or other edged weapons are considered contraband unless it can be shown that the person has a legitimate need to possess the item inside the courthouse.
- B. When individuals are found with contraband which constitutes a criminal violation, the items shall be seized and the person taken into custody or issued a criminal citation, depending on the circumstances and at discretion of Courthouse Security Personnel.
- C. Individuals found with items that would otherwise be legal to carry, such as small pocketknives and pepper spray, will be advised that they will not be allowed entrance with said items in their possession. **Courthouse Security Personnel will not store items for individuals nor accept them as discarded property.**
- D. The general public will not be allowed to bring cell phones into any court room. Only court personnel or attorneys appearing before the court will be allowed to retain their cell phones while in court. Any authorized cell phones must remain on 'silent' mode while court is in session. In addition to any other penalties provided herein, failure to comply with this provision may subject the violating party to contempt of court proceedings.

Section VI. Courthouse Access.

- A. No one is allowed access through secured courthouse entrances unless in possession of a properly functioning ID badge, specifically assigned to that person, issued in accordance with the specifications provided by the St. Charles Parish Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.
- B. Special Visitor or Vendor passes may be applied for and issued provided that the party demonstrates a legitimate need to possess said ID badge and provided that said application request is sponsored by an ID badge holder. A Special Visitor or Vendor pass shall be limited in scope and shall only provide access necessary to accomplish the legitimate purpose shown.

Section VII. Penalties.

- A. Any person violating a provision of this section may be issued a misdemeanor summons. A finding of guilt will result in a misdemeanor conviction and subject the offending party to a fine not exceeding one-hundred dollars (\$100.00) plus court costs and/or imprisoned for a term not exceeding thirty (30) days, or both.
- B. In addition to the foregoing penalties, any violations of this ordinance by personnel authorized to have an ID access card may result in revocation of that individual's ID access card by the Courthouse Security Supervisor. ("Courthouse Security Supervisor" as used herein is that member of the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office who is supervisor of Courthouse Security.) Any such revocation of an ID access card may be appealed to the Courthouse Security Advisory Panel in accordance with procedures to be established by said panel. Any appeal from a decision of the Courthouse Security Advisory Panel shall be filed within fifteen (15) days of the date of said decision. Said appeals must be filed with the Clerk of Court for the 29th Judicial District Court and shall be allotted to and heard by any division of said Court in accordance with Court Rules and Louisiana law.

Section VIII. Courthouse Security Advisory Panel.

- A. There is hereby created a Courthouse Security Advisory Panel which shall constitute a division of the St. Charles Parish Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and shall be governed and function in accordance with the law governing said Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. Said Courthouse Security Advisory Panel shall consist of the St. Charles Parish President, the Sheriff for the Parish of St. Charles, the District Attorney for the 29th Judicial District Court, the Clerk of Court for the 29th Judicial District Court, the St. Charles Parish Assessor, the St. Charles Parish Registrar of Voters, and the St. Charles Parish Council Chairman, or their designees.

B. The Courthouse Security Advisory Panel will oversee the drafting, enforcement and administration of the Courthouse Security Plan and regulations promulgated in connection therewith, will provide ongoing review of said plan and regulations, will provide recommendations of future amendments to said plan and regulations, and act on appeals of ID Access card revocations.

The foregoing ordinance having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: SCHEXNAYDRE, TASTET, WILSON, BENEDETTO, HOGAN,
COCHRAN, FLETCHER, FISHER-PERRIER

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: WOODRUFF

And the ordinance was declared adopted this 16th day of December, 2013, to become effective (5) days after publication in the Official Journal.

CHAIRMAN: Murphy Benedetto
SECRETARY: [Signature]
DLVD/PARISH PRESIDENT: 12-18-13
APPROVED: DISAPPROVED:
PARISH PRESIDENT: [Signature]
RETD/SECRETARY: 12-18-13
AT: 10:05 a RECD BY: [Signature]