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|  | MESQUITE POLICE DEPARTMENT |
| | 241.00 MUNICIPAL COURT OPERATIONS |
| | Effective Date: March, 2013 |
| | Approved: _____  Chief of Police |

I. Policy Statement

The safety and security of the citizens of Mesquite and the employees of the City of Mesquite are of primary concern, and this extends to the security of the City of Mesquite Municipal Court while it is in session. The purpose of this general order is to establish guidelines for the handling of emergencies, security measures, conduct, decorum and other courtroom procedures in order to provide a secure courtroom environment.

II. Procedure

A. Assignment:

1. The Operations Captain or his designee is responsible for assigning an officer to act as bailiff when court is in session.
2. The bailiff should arrive in the courtroom at least 30 minutes prior to the beginning of a Jury Trial docket. The bailiff should arrive in the courtroom at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of a Trial by Judge or other scheduled docket.

B. Courtroom Security:

1. Weapons of any kind are not permitted in the court. All persons and their property entering the court are subject to search of their person and any items in their possession (purses, briefcases, etc.). The decision to search persons and items in their possession will be at the discretion of the presiding judge or the bailiff. This policy does not apply to peace officers who are conducting official business with the court.
2. In the event that the bailiff needs assistance from other police officers, three means of communication are present in each courtroom. Those means of communication are:
 - a. Telephone
 - b. Panic buttons
 - c. Bailiff's police radio
3. Personal restraints (handcuffs, transport belt, etc.) shall be used when a physical arrest is made in the courtroom or when an arrested subject is brought before the court for arraignment. In cases where high-risk persons are brought to the court for any reason, such persons may be restrained as necessary.
4. When a person is arrested in the court or when an arrested person is brought before the court, the secure back entrance should be used.

C. Responsibilities During Court Sessions:

1. Before each session the bailiff will:
 - a. Check the courtroom for suspicious items, or potential hazards to any person conducting business in the courtroom (broken furniture, loose, carpeting, etc.). Any hazardous items will be reported to Building Maintenance or other department as necessary for resolution.
 - b. Verify the exit doors are in working order and there are no obstacles to prevent the evacuation of the courtroom in the event of an emergency.
 - c. Unlock the courtroom doors and allow the public inside.
2. During Judge or Jury Trials the bailiff will:
 - a. Preserve order and decorum while court is in session.

- b. Call complainants, witnesses and defendants to the bench when requested by the judge.
 - c. Maintain security of the jury room and see to the needs of the jury and witnesses.
- D. Emergency Incidents
 - 1. Medical Emergencies:
 - a. Requests for emergency medical assistance will be made by calling 911 on the court phone or by police radio.
 - 2. Fire Emergencies:
 - a. In the event of a fire, the bailiff will assume responsibility for courtroom evacuation. A fire alarm will be considered the same as an actual fire. Those persons present in the court will be instructed to exit the building through the nearest exit. No person will be allowed to re-enter the building until clearance is given by the Mesquite Fire Department.
 - b. Fire evacuation charts are permanently displayed in the courtroom lobby and in the lobby of the Court Clerk.
 - 3. Weather Emergencies:
 - a. The Director of Finance or his designee is responsible for operations within the Municipal Court and City Hall buildings. During a severe weather incident, the Director may declare an emergency and require all occupants of the building proceed to a safe location until the incident is over.
 - b. Unless instructed otherwise, the safe location is on the first floor of the building, in the hallway leading to the Judge's Chambers. Since this location is in an employee only area, members of the public must be kept under visual observation at all times. With the exception of the safe location, members of the public will not be allowed to enter any area where they would not otherwise be allowed to enter.
 - c. If a weather emergency is declared, the bailiff will assume control of evacuating the courtroom and directing people to the designated safe location.

EFFECTIVE: March, 2013