



Board of Commissioners

Ann Coleman – Chair

William Finley Jr., Commissioner

Timothy M. McGonigle, Commissioner

Roni Shilling – Senior Chief Clerk

724-662-3800 x 2512

COUNTY OF MERCER

ACCESS TO THE COURTHOUSE EMPLOYEE POLICY

In the interest of enhancing security at the Courthouse, the following procedures have been updated and will be implemented effective September 1, 2025.

- A. All employees are required to pass through the security section of the entrance of the Courthouse (REFER TO SCREENING POLICY ON NEXT PAGE)**
- B. Those leaving the lobby area to use the basement public restrooms will be required to go back through security upon resuming entrance to the Courthouse.**
- C. The Courthouse closes for business at 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Employees are to enter through the main singular entrance (south side of the Courthouse) starting at 8 a.m. unless their work schedule is outside of the 8 a.m. hour.**
- D. Fobs have been distributed among employees and are to be used according to the work schedule authorized by each individual department.**
- E. MIS will supply each elected official or department head of the status of each fob within their office to ensure approved schedules are being followed.**
- F. Persons conducting personal business (attorneys, realtors etc.) shall not be permitted to remain after closing time unless they are accompanied by a member of the department in which they wish to continue working. A representative of the affected department must be present for the duration of the after-hours time that the person is in the Courthouse, and is responsible for personally escorting the person to the exit when the work is completed. The County shall not pay additional compensation or overtime to any employee for such accompaniment.**
- G. Any outside party booking a conference room to be used for meetings or depositions etc., shall vacate the Courthouse prior to 4:30 p.m. This is prior to the Sheriff making the rounds to close the Courthouse.**
- H. The on-duty Deputy Sheriff shall lock up the exterior doors at 4:30 p.m. unless DUI school is being held in the Assembly Room that day.**
- I. Those attending the DUI classes will have limited access to other areas of the Courthouse while their classes are in session.**
- J. In cases where there is still court in session, or there is ongoing court-related business after closing time, anyone affiliated with said business of court proceedings may remain at the discretion of the court until the conclusion of the activity for the day. In these situations, the Deputy Sheriff on duty shall ensure that the Courthouse is cleared of visitors and check the perimeter security of the facility upon departure. If no Deputy Sheriff is present, the responsible court officer shall ensure that their visitors depart the Courthouse and notify the lead custodian of the departure.**
- K. Any individual who is not a Courthouse employee and is found in the Courthouse after 4:30 p.m., is potentially subject to disciplinary action.**



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The purpose of this policy is to establish process, procedures, and best practices for employees as they relate to the Courthouse Central Security and Screening Check point. (a/o February 3, 2022)

Central Security and Screening – Employee Requirements

1. All Mercer County Employees must pass through the Courthouse screening station each time they enter the building during the normal workday. **(SPECIAL NOTE: For safety and security reasons, there are a few individuals that will be allowed to bypass security, and those individuals have been informed of that. If you have not been told that you have security exemption, you MUST pass through security. This exemption will also include known Law Enforcement Officers.)**
2. The entry door by the Fiscal office is normally locked and allows fob access into the facility, prior to 8:00 am and after 4:30 pm, on normal workdays, for all employees.
3. Employees utilizing their fob before or after the normal workdays shall never allow entrance of any other individuals. If the person entering is authorized to be in the building, they shall utilize their fob for entry so it can be documented that they are in the building. All other persons should be directed to the south entrance for proper screening.
4. Employees using restrooms in the basement **must** pass through the security screening every time they reenter. Employees may choose to utilize restrooms that are not on the basement level to avoid having to go back through screening each time.
5. Maintenance employees may pass outside of security to accept deliveries or respond to building emergencies, but they **MUST** pass through the screening station during normal and routine ingress during the workday.
6. MIS employees may pass outside of security to accept deliveries. They **MUST** pass through screening for normal and routine ingress during the workday.
7. The screening station will be closed at 4:30 pm, and Sheriff Deputies shall clear the Courthouse daily at 4:30 pm.
8. Tip Staff are responsible for escorting any persons from courtrooms to the exit after 4:30 pm. The south entrance shall not be kept open unattended for reentry of any individual.
9. In the evening, DUI School staff are responsible to monitor the south entrance to permit access to attendees. The south entrance shall not be kept open unattended for reentry of any individual.
10. Any employee with a visitor, guest, or member of the public present after 4:30 pm is responsible for escorting the person(s) to the south entrance exit.

Disclaimer: Nothing in this policy is intended to infringe upon any right guaranteed under the Constitution or any State or Federal law. This policy is also not intended to supersede any provision of any Collective Bargaining Agreements. To the extent there is a conflict, the terms of the Collective Bargaining Agreement shall apply.