

AZ JUDICIAL CONFERENCE

*Court Security:
Hot Topics &
Lessons Learned*



COURT SECURITY: BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

PowerPoint1
Best Practices..... 15

***COURT
SECURITY:
HOT TOPICS
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INTRODUCTIONS



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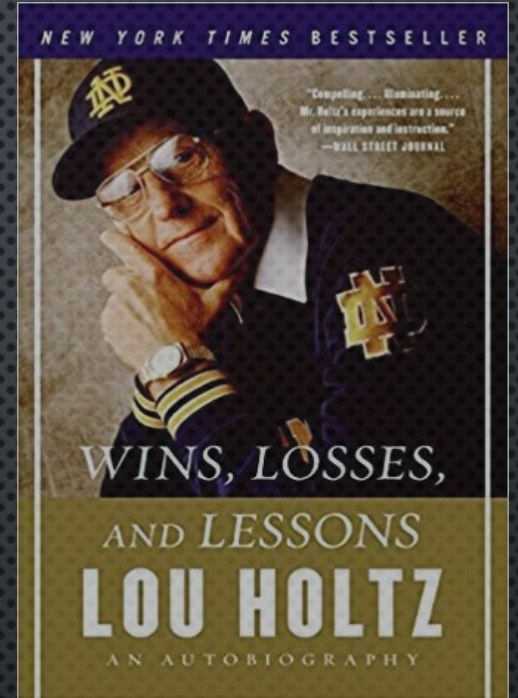
SECURITY DIRECTOR –
UTAH JUDICIAL BRANCH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- SCENARIO-BASED PROBLEM SOLVING (BASED ON ACTUAL INCIDENTS).
 - IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS THAT ALIGN WITH YOUR CURRENT SECURITY STRENGTHS AND VULNERABILITIES – IN THE COURTHOUSE, AT HOME OR IN PUBLIC.
 - IDENTIFY WAYS TO MITIGATE YOUR VULNERABILITIES.
- DISCUSS CURRENT AND PENDING SECURITY INITIATIVES.
- VOICE OF CUSTOMER.

PROBLEM SOLVING

- “WHAT’S IMPORTANT NOW” = W.I.N. PRINCIPAL
 - PREVENT INJURY
 - PRESERVE LIFE
 - CREATE TIME AND SPACE WHILE AWAITING FIRST RESPONDERS
- NO PERFECT SOLUTION TO EVERY SITUATION.



SCENARIO #1

YOU ARE NOTIFIED BY COURT SECURITY THAT A MAN HAS JUST BEEN DETAINED AFTER WALKING UP TO YOUR COURT'S SCREENING STATION WITH A BACKPACK CONTAINING A POTENTIAL HAND GRENADE.

THE POTENTIAL EXPLOSIVE DEVICE IS STILL LOCATED AT THE LOBBY SCREENING STATION, AND YOUR BUILDING IS FILLED WITH STAFF AND CUSTOMERS GOING ABOUT THEIR DAILY COURT BUSINESS.

SCENARIO #2

YOU ARE NOTIFIED THAT A COURT CLERK OPENED A PACKAGE CONTAINING SEVERAL VIALS OF SUSPICIOUS CLEAR LIQUID AND A NONSENSICAL GREETING CARD.

THE PACKAGE CONTAINS AN EXCESSIVE AMOUNT OF POSTAGE AND IS ADDRESSED TO “*ARIZONA COURTS (WITH YOUR COURT’S ADDRESS)*” WITH A RETURN ADDRESS OF “*UNITED STATES FLAG JUDGE*”.

THE PACKAGE IS STILL LOCATED IN THE CLERK’S OFFICE AREA.

SCENARIO #3

YOU ARE AT HOME WITH YOUR FAMILY IN THE EVENING WHEN YOU HEAR A KNOCK ON THE FRONT DOOR. YOU LOOK OUTSIDE THROUGH A WINDOW TO SEE THREE MASKED INDIVIDUALS WEARING FACE MASKS WITH THEIR HANDS OBSCURED BEHIND THEIR BACKS.

THE DOOR IS STILL SHUT AND LOCKED.

SCENARIO #4

YOU ARE IN THE GROCERY STORE SHOPPING WITH YOUR FAMILY WHEN A RECENT LITIGANT APPROACHES YOU AND SHOUTS “*THE JUDGE SHALL BE JUDGED!*”

THE PERSON ISN'T HOLDING ANY VISIBLE WEAPONS BUT IS OBVIOUSLY HIGHLY IRATE AND FOCUSED ON YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

SCENARIO #5

YOU ARE IN YOUR COURT CHAMBERS WHEN STAFF NOTIFY YOU THAT A DEFENDANT IS IN THE LOBBY IRATE OVER A PREVIOUS TRAFFIC VIOLATION CONVICTION.

THE SAME DEFENDANT HAS MADE REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO SPEAK TO YOU OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL WEEKS AND IS ALARMING COURT STAFF EVERY TIME HE COMES IN UNEXPECTEDLY AND ATTEMPTS TO MEET WITH YOU IN PERSON TO CONTEST THE VIOLATION.

CURRENT AND PENDING INITIATIVES

- ARIZONA JUDICIAL BRANCH
 - HOME ASSESSMENT SERVICES – LOCAL COURT DRIVEN
 - JUDICIAL OFFICER DEFENSIVE TACTICS TRAINING PROGRAM
 - ACCELERATED COURT SECURITY OFFICER TRAINING CADENCE.
 - INCREASED COMMITTEE AND WORKGROUP PRESENCE.

CURRENT AND PENDING INITIATIVES

- NATIONAL LEVEL
 - NCSC SAFER COURTS INITIATIVE
 - MULTI-YEAR PROJECT
 - NATIONAL CONVENING – FALL 2026
 - H.R. 4602 – COUNTERING THREATS AND ATTACKS ON OUR JUDGES ACT
 - INTRODUCED BY REP. LUCY MCBATH (D-GA-6).

VOICE OF CUSTOMER

WHAT'S NEXT

CONTACT INFO



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Judicial Security Best Practices



At Home

- Coordinate with local law enforcement for flagging of home address within their computer-aided-dispatch (CAD) system.
 - Consider enrollment within [Haystax](#) system if local PD is so equipped.
- Restrict access to all house keys and door/gate codes.
 - Routinely update codes as they become known by local delivery drivers.
- Leverage home security survey and assessment services offered by AOC or your local court security team.
 - Proper lighting
 - Adequate doors/locks/windows
 - Potential hiding or ambush locations
- Get to know your neighbors.
 - They are an extra set of eyes!
- Never open the door for unexpected utility workers, deliveries, or unknown persons.
 - [Judge Esther Salas](#)
- Invest in a home surveillance system and lighting timers.
 - [Ring](#) doorbell and cameras
 - [Home monitoring services](#)
- Teach children how to contact 911 in case of an emergency.
 - Ability to recite their home address.
 - Rehearse anticipated questions posed by 911 operator.
- Establish a family code word or phrase to indicate that you are under duress.
 - May be used in-person, via chat, or phone conversation.
- Establish a family rally-point in case you have to evacuate your home for any reason.
- Do not place your judicial name or title on your mailbox.
- Remove or blackout the address label on all mail or magazines if taking them to the courthouse for any reason.
- Shred mail and unwanted documents which contain your name, address, and/or title prior to placing them in the trash or recycle receptacles.
- Consider utilizing [locker delivery locations](#) or fictitious name for all incoming Amazon and similar deliveries.
- Never open suspicious mail or packages which offer the following potential threat indicators. When in doubt, report to your local law enforcement agency.
 - No return address
 - Unusual/unknown place of origin
 - Unexpected delivery
 - Excessive amount of postage
 - Incorrect spelling
 - Uneven balance or shape
- Avoid participating in judicial related topics, forums, or discussions on personal social media accounts
 - Includes immediate family members who reside within your household.



Judicial Security Best Practices



- Opt-out/web scrubbing services
[DeleteMe](#)

In Public

- Avoid traveling the same route to/from the courthouse every day.
- Immediately summon 911 in the event you think you are being followed.
Do not drive directly to your residence.
Proceed to the nearest law enforcement station or location provided by the 911 operator.
- Avoid using your judicial title in public.
Discourage local court staff from using your title in public settings such as grocery store, gas station, etc.
Keyword such as “judge” will attract attention from anyone in close proximity to the conversation.
- Do not wear your judicial branch credentials (badge) outside of the courthouse.
- Do not use personalized license plates or brand your vehicle with unique identifiers which make it easy to recognize.
- Avoid bumper stickers or other vehicle paraphernalia which identify your children’s school.
- Have a rehearsed cover story in case you or immediate family members are asked what you do for a living by unsolicited sources (i.e. Rideshare drivers, home repair vendors, etc.)
- Park in well-lit areas and have your key ready before approaching your vehicle.
Be familiar with the location of the duress button on your key fob if so equipped.
Never hesitate to visually scan the area or walk away if something doesn’t feel right (e.g., vehicle parked close to your vehicle in a wide-open parking lot).
- Enable GPS-location services on all family smart devices.
Working knowledge of the “*find my device*” or similar app functionality in the event you cannot locate a family member for any reason.
- Avoid carrying a firearm or other self-defense tool unless trained in its proper use.
- Consider enrollment in an upcoming AOC Judicial Officer Defensive Tactics class.