




**2024 Nevada District Court
Judges Seminar**

**Judicial Security
Selected Court Security Topics**

Presented By
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Security Topics

- Threats
- Best practices for security in home and courts
- Recent AOC court security survey results
- Open Discussions - Comments and Concerns
- Where do we go from here?

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Threats against public persons, including judges, in fact-based perspective.

- A study of threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters to members of congress found a negative correlation between threatening and attacking.



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Threats against public persons, including judges, in fact-based perspective.

- A study of 143,000 threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters to Hollywood celebrities found no association between threatening and approaching



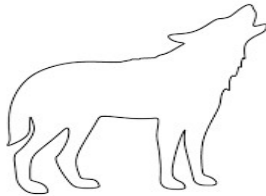
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There are extremes: •“The hunters hunt and rarely howl;

- One an actor
- One a talker
- One a doer
- One a writer

•the howlers howl and only rarely hunt”

Between them is a huge chasm, a clear distinction



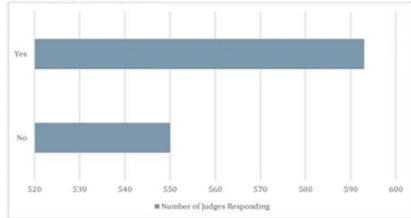
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Direct threats are not a reliable pre-incident indicator for assassination in America, as demonstrated by the fact that **“not one successful public-figure attacker in the history of the media age directly threatened his victim first”** (emphasis in the original) (de Becker, 1997,p.139).

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Have you ever been threatened as a result of your position as a judge?

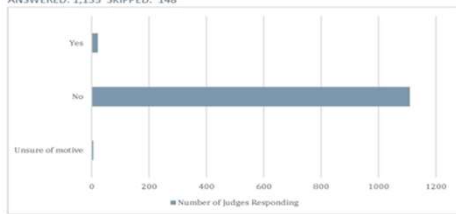
THREATS TO THE JUDGE
ANSWERED: 1,143 SKIPPED: 138



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Have you ever been physically attacked because of your position as a judge?

PHYSICAL ATTACKS
ANSWERED: 1,133 SKIPPED: 148



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A five-year study by the **US Marshals** service


- 5,744 inappropriate communications addressed to 2,200 federal judges and 5,250 federal prosecutors



- Resulted in 10 attempted and 3 actual attacks.

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The most likely tactical reason for a subject who stalks and attacks a public figure to not directly communicate a threat to the target is, of course,



to enhance his probability of success

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Magnetic resonance imaging shows that the receipt of a threat triggers reflexive brain responses that interfere with the ability to perform intended tasks



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Fusion Centers

- A fusion center is a collaborative effort of two or more agencies that provide resources, expertise and information to the center with the goal of maximizing their ability to detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to criminal and terrorist activity.
- The National network is comprised of 80 fusion centers
- The fusion center partner with federal, state and local agencies to respond to and effectively mitigate threats.



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Nevada has two fusion centers with different geographic responsibilities to ensure the most effective response to reports of suspicious activity

Nevada Threat Analysis Center (NTAC) Carson City
Department Public Safety/State Police serving 16 counties and State agencies

Southern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center (SNCTC)
LVMPD Multi-agency serving southern Nevada

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Northern Nevada Regional Intelligence Center (NNRIC)

Located in and operated by the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. NNRIC was established to collaborate in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence and other pertinent information regarding criminal activity in the region

NNRIC also collaborates with NTAC and SNCTC

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Personal Security Practices

Situational Awareness – **BE ALERT TO YOUR SURROUNDINGS**

Vehicles:

- Doors locked and windows closed
- Avoid vanity license plates that identify you
- Vary your travel routes
- If you sense you are being followed, call 911 and drive to a safe public location
- Avoid those family figures decals on windows
- Consider window tinting

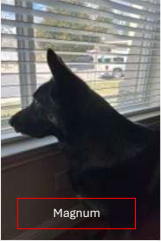
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Personal Security Practices

Situational Awareness – **BE ALERT TO YOUR SURROUNDINGS**

Residences:

- Avoid posting family name
- Alarm systems with signs
- Motion detection lights
- Good and secure door and window hardware
- Keep bushes and trees trimmed around house
- 4-legged mobile early alert and deterrent
- Cameras
- Weapons





Magnum

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Personal Security Practices

Situational Awareness – **BE ALERT TO YOUR SURROUNDINGS**

Social Media:

- Avoid it
- Limit your internet footprint
 - Family
 - Friends
 - Staff
- Remember that you can be found on Social Media



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Personal Security Practices

Situational Awareness – **BE ALERT TO YOUR SURROUNDINGS**

Personal Protection:

- Concealed Carry Permit
 - Keep current
- Weapons
 - Keep proficient (practice, practice, practice)
 - Properly handle
 - Keep secure



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Courthouse best practices

More than 90 percent of attacks on state and local judges occur at a courthouse

Courtrooms



- Weapons screening
- Virtual/Court appearances
- Utilize the distance between litigants and the bench
 - No one approach bench without approval
 - Obstructions between litigants and the bench
 - Require concerning litigants to remain seated
 - Prisoner constraints

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Courthouse best practices

More than 90 percent of attacks on state and local judges occur at a courthouse

Courtrooms



- Silent alarm buttons
- Elevated benches
- Minimize throwables
 - Water pitchers, flag poles, loose chairs, scissors, letter openers, full sized staplers
- Know where all the guns are
- Remove disruptive people
- Contempt

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Courthouse best practices

More than 90 percent of attacks on state and local judges occur at a courthouse

Courtrooms



- Most powerfully, strive to eliminate any perception of injustice or hopelessness
 - Utilize mediation and settlement conferences
 - Help in navigating the judicial process
 - Make it clear in oral and written decisions that the outcome is required by law
 - Identify rights to appeal
 - Order participation in anger management programs

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Courthouse best practices

More than 90 percent of attacks on state and local judges occur at a courthouse

Chambers

- Limit those who can visit in chambers
- Family photographs
- Window coverings
- Be aware that maintenance and cleaning personnel may be present when you are not
- Silent alarm buttons

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Courthouse best practices

More than 90 percent of attacks on state and local judges occur at a courthouse

Staff

- No discussion of your schedule or travel plans
- Identify in advance proceedings that may involve a violent or unstable person
- Court security officers at entry points
- Court security officers at hearings

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Courthouse best practices

More than 90 percent of attacks on state and local judges occur at a courthouse

Visualize possible incidents

- Where will I stay or go?
- Will staff stay or go?
- How will we get there?



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Nevada Incidents

2006: Nevada Judge shot and survived an assassination attempt from an angry individual over a divorce ruling

Individual kills his wife then shoots the judge overseeing their divorce through a window

Individual escapes to Mexico then turned himself in a few weeks later

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Nevada Incidents

2012: fired shots through a Judges front door. Rounds passed through the home and shattered a glass door to the backyard.

2013: death threats on Christmas card.

2015: firebomb placed at Judges residence, failed to ignite.

DNA results finally linked to individual and charged with firing into an occupied dwelling, 4th degree arson and aggravated stalking.

Individual died while in prison where he was serving 28 to 90 months for possession of a short-barreled firearm and carrying a concealed weapon prior to the Court date for the crimes against the Judge

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Nevada Incident

2024: Nevada Judge attacked in courtroom during sentencing

Individual leaped over the judicial bench attacking the judge
Criminal history included convictions for three felonies and nine misdemeanors, mostly involving violent acts.

Individual charged with attempted murder for the attack against the Judge along with other charges

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Regarding Threats to our Nevada Judiciary

- Sent to Nevada Judges, Court Administrators, and Court Staff
- Purpose is begin gathering information to assess, track, and share threats statewide as the US Marshals do with Federal Courts
- The following is a summary of 71 survey responses

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 1 – Within the last 6 to 12 months have your courts Judges, or court staff received any threats?

- Yes 50.70% No 49.30%

Question 2 – If so, how was threats received?

- Phone calls, Emails, Verbal, Letters, Physical

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 3 – Who was the threat reported to and what was disposition?

- Court Marshals / Local Law Enforcement

Disposition responses varied from was kept informed to no follow-up

Question 4 – Who provided your court with security?

- Marshals, Bailiffs, Police, Sheriffs, Part time security, Private security, Fend for yourself

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 5 – What security issues do you currently have or see?

- Understaffed security
- Hiring/retention of officers
- No safety infrastructure / privacy fencing for secured parking areas
- Barriers/Bollards to protect entries

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 5 cont.– What security issues do you currently have or see?

- No ballistic panels or bullet proof windows in court room and clerks' office
- Marshals/Bailiffs not paying attention during court proceedings busy using phone or talking to others
- Marshal qualifications and experience
- Not enough Marshals for courtroom

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 5 cont. – What security issues do you currently have or see?

- Concerns about bench height
- No security cameras
- Correctional officers not paying attention and not closely monitoring in custody inmates in court room
- No panic alarms
- Lax attitude about security

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 6 – Are your courts in need of personnel or equipment for court security?

- Yes 73.91% No 23.19% N/A 2.90%

Question 7 – Do you currently have court procedure for dealing with threats?

- Yes 68.66% No 31.34%

Question 8 – Would you like to receive training from security threats? If so, for whom and what if any special topics?

- Yes 78.26% No 21.74%

1. Training staff
2. Training Judges
3. Training court Bailiffs and Marshals

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 9 – Are your courts dealing with First Amendment Auditors?

- Yes 46.77% No 53.23%

Question 10 – What security concerns do you have with First Amendment Auditors?

- Filming and intimidating court staff
- Disruptive behavior
- Debating with officers about constitutional law – who knows more
- Rude and disrespectful
- Why do they need to film

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 11 – Would you like training for First Amendment Auditors?

- Yes 78.67% No 18.33% Unknown 3%

1. Training for court staff
2. Training for Judges
3. Training for Bailiffs and Marshals

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 12 – Any additional comments or requests?

- Happy and trust of Marshal staff
- Security infrastructure needs – Secured parking, alarms or intercom in court
- Need additional Marshals
- Training for Marshals

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

Question 12 Cont– Any additional comments or requests?

- Annual training on security for all court staff. Judges, Bailiffs/Marshals
- Hiring of Marshals due to competition for peace officer candidates
- Information about security grants
- More training

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AOC Court Security Survey January 2024

A big thank you to all of you who took the time to respond to this survey

Thank you!

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Proposal for a committee to study Nevada's Judicial branch security

- 1. Obtain from each Judicial district copies of all court security recommendations made during the past two decades, including costs for obtaining those recommendations
- 2. Study and make recommendations about:
 - a) Information gathering
 - b) Information sharing
 - Courthouse security studies
 - Local law enforcement training

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Proposal for a committee to study Nevada's Judicial branch security

- c) Uniform response to threats and to violence
- d) Monitoring response to threats and violence and Providing feedback to expressed security concerns
- e) Interface with government funding bodies
- f) Legislation
 - Personal information security
 - Penalty enhancement for crimes against the Judicial branch A.B. 99 (2008)

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Conclusion

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE???

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