

**THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**CASE NO. 17-1  
(Court Administration)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER  
NO. 17-01  
(Rescinding AO No. 01-1 and  
AO No. 97-24)**

**IN RE: SECURITY SCREENING &  
WEAPON POSSESSION WITHIN  
COURT FACILITIES**

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**WHEREAS**, it is necessary and appropriate to regulate the possession of firearms, weapons, and other hazardous devices within court facilities of Miami-Dade County, Florida, in order to protect court personnel and members of the public, and to ensure the peaceful and orderly administration of justice;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Chief Judge of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida by Rule 2.215, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, it is hereby **ORDERED** as follows:

A. No individual in possession of, or in control of, any firearm, weapon, explosive, hazardous device, mace or pepper spray, shall be permitted to enter and remain in any court facility within the Eleventh Judicial Circuit; except for the following individuals:

1. Federal Judges and Judges of the State of Florida;
2. General Magistrates;
3. State Attorney of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit;
4. Public Defender of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit;
5. Clerk of the Courts;
6. Trial Court Administrator;
7. Miami-Dade Police Court Liaison Officers;

8. Law Enforcement Officers. For purposes of this Order, a “law enforcement officer” is defined as a uniformed or undercover police officer of a Federal, State, County or City governmental entity, and officers of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Marshall's Office, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Department of Homeland Security, and officers of the Miami-Dade County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Such law enforcement officers who are on official duty may enter a court facility in possession of a firearm or weapon without being subject to electronic security screening provided that each respective law enforcement department or agency certifies the following conditions in writing:

a. Law enforcement officers shall use holsters that reasonably guard against their firearms being taken from them, and the department or agency conducts regular weapon retention training;

b. Law enforcement officers on official duty, whether uniformed or in plain clothes, will possess and display official department or agency credentials, i.e., Photo ID; and

c. Law enforcement officers who are in court on personal matters will surrender their firearms for safekeeping at the designated security stations within the court facility.

9. Persons expressly authorized in writing by the Chief Judge, may retain any firearm or weapon in their possession while on courthouse premises, and may enter court facilities without being subject to electronic and/or related security screening so long as these persons possess proper identification and are in full compliance with all applicable laws regarding weapons possession, as set forth in Chapter 790, Florida Statutes.

B. Assistant State Attorneys and Assistant Public Defenders may enter court facilities without being subject to electronic and/or related security screening so long as these persons possess security identification badges issued by the Administrative Office of the Courts. Such badges authorize the bypass of security screening, but do not authorize Assistant State Attorneys or Assistant Public Defenders to retain any firearm, weapon, explosive, hazardous device, mace or pepper spray in their possession while on courthouse premises.

C. Active members of The Florida Bar (“Members”) who are issued security access bypass identification cards by the Administrative Office of the Courts, pursuant to the criteria and procedures outlined in Administrative Order No. 13-01, are permitted to bypass security screening at the Richard E. Gerstein Justice Building during regular court hours. The Members who are issued such security access bypass identification cards are prohibited from retaining any firearm, weapon, explosive, hazardous device, mace or pepper spray in their possession while on courthouse premises.

D. All persons, other than those specifically excepted in the preceding paragraphs, and their briefcases, purses, packages, containers and other personal effects, including, but not limited to, cameras, cellular telephones, computers, food items and unmarked trial exhibits, shall be required to undergo electronic and/or related security screening upon entry to court facilities. The discovery of illegal weapons or contraband as described in Section 932.701, Florida Statutes, or other violations of criminal statutes occurring within this context will result in immediate notification to appropriate law enforcement authority so that an arrest and seizure may be effectuated.

E. Any individual willfully violating this Administrative Order shall be subject to punishment for contempt of court.

Administrative Order No. 01-1 and Administrative Order No. 97-24, and all authorizations issued pursuant thereto, are hereby rescinded in their entirety and held for naught.

This Administrative Order shall take effect on June 7, 2017 and remain in effect until further order of the Court.

**DONE AND ORDERED** in Chambers at Miami-Dade County, Florida, this 7th day of June, 2017.

**BERTILA SOTO, CHIEF JUDGE  
ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA**