

# SECURITY FUNDING IS NEEDED FOR PUBLIC SAFETY IN WASHINGTON COURTHOUSES

**The Washington Judiciary is requesting \$2.5 M in ongoing annual funding for security personnel and equipment for small and rural courts that do not meet General Rule 36 minimum standards for court security.**

## All Individuals Need To Feel Safe When Accessing Courts

A recent assessment of courts' security measures found that over one-third of courthouses lack the basic security equipment necessary to protect citizens coming into courthouses in their communities. Many more courts have gaps in their security that need to be addressed. Court users, witnesses, and jurors must feel safe while accessing justice.

## Personnel, Entry Screening, & Security Equipment Are Lacking

The presence of security personnel is needed to ensure the safety of courthouses. Preventing dangerous items from entering the premises is fundamental to adequate security. Funding for personnel, entry screening, and other security technology that are vital to responding to security incidents is especially challenging for smaller courts that often do not have adequate technology.

## Training Is Fundamental To Courthouse Security

Ongoing staff safety training is key to developing adequate and competent responses to security incidents. Courts have requested additional training be provided so staff can be prepared to respond to situations to keep court users safe.

## Small and Rural Court Security Matching Program

Courts will have the option to access security funding by contributing a small percentage of the overall cost and making existing taxpayer dollars go further by sharing the cost with the State. Shared cost is determined by need factors such as poverty rate, median income, and revenue.

## THE FACTS

**2020 2021 2022**

**28% 25% 47%**

The frequency of incidents presenting a significant threat to the public or staff continues to increase.



The number of verbal or written threats to Washington State judicial personnel has increased drastically. Threats to Federal Judges are up 400% over the past 5 years nationwide.

**85%**

Percentage of victim advocates who work in courthouses without entry screening and indicated their clients have expressed concerns about their safety. Advocates reported their top three concerns are lack of weapon screening, security officers, and security monitoring of entrances and parking lots.



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