

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF PRENTISS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

IN RE: DEFINING AND DESIGNATING THE  
COURTROOM OF THE PRENTISS  
COUNTY GOVERNMENT ANNEX

NO. \_\_\_\_\_

TO: THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF  
PRENTISS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI, THE  
CHANCERY CLERK OF PRENTISS  
COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI, AND THE SHERIFF  
OF PRENTISS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

PRENTISS COUNTY GOVERNMENT ANNEX SECURITY ORDER

Whereas, the Board of Supervisors of Prentiss County, Mississippi, on May 4, 2015, did enter an Order to Name the Former Blue Bell Building and to Designate the Courtroom as an Official Courtroom of Prentiss County; and

Whereas, the Order, while needed and appreciated, did not define or designate the location of the courtroom or recognize the circumstances of the use of the Chancery Court itself in certain particulars, which need to be addressed, and is done so hereafter.

The undersigned Chancellors, recognizing the need for courthouse security and related matters for protection of attorneys, parties to proceedings, witnesses and potential witnesses, court personnel, law enforcement, bailiffs, prisoners, detainees and the general public, and the facilities in part of the building shared by the Department of Human Services, and perhaps later other governmental bodies, and further recognizing the constitutional separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches of our government, as set forth in Article 1, Sections 1 and 2 of the Mississippi Constitution and the constitutional right to bear arms as set forth in Article 3, Section 12 of the Mississippi Constitution, we the undersigned Chancellors for and in behalf of the Chancery Court of the First Judicial District of the State of Mississippi, have considered said constitutional rights along with the provisions of Sections 45-9-101 (13)(14), 97-37-1, 97-37-7(2), 19-25-69, 45-9-51, 45-9-53 of the Mississippi Code 1972, as Amended, to date, and further, all the Attorney General Opinions on the subject of restrictions or prohibitions of concealed weapons, open carry weapons, licensed permit gun carriers, and enhanced permit gun carriers, including Opinions: No. 2014-0036 (BROOME) of February 6, 2015, back through No. 2011-0029 of August 31, 2011, the letter of the Attorney General to the Sheriff of Lee County, Mississippi, dated July 17, 2014, Re: EC-14-00023, the Amended Order of December 15, 2011, of all the Circuit and Chancery Court Judges of the First Judicial District, TYRONE v. HINDS COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT, 2015 WL 691293 (Miss.) decided February 19, 2015, the restriction against "weapons of any kind, including

pocket knives and mace” of the Mississippi Supreme Court, as set forth in the VISITOR’S GUIDE TO THE CARROLL GARTIN JUSTICE BUILDING and of the Mississippi Legislature, as set forth in Rule 37 of the JOINT RULES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE, and further, we have considered the actual diagram and layout of the Prentiss County Government Annex, and regarding all of same, we do hereby

**FIND, ORDER, ADJUDGE AND DECREE as follows:**

(1) Court proceedings are sensitive proceedings where peoples’ lives, liberty and property are at stake and as such, frequently passions and emotions run high, endangering life and limb of those around them.

(2) The judicial system daily creates persons held involuntarily in custody, care, treatment or study when under the supervision and control of law enforcement or the court or Department of Corrections or other authority such as prisoners from jails, convicts from the Corrections Department, juvenile delinquents, neglected, abandoned or deserted children, those committed for drugs, alcohol and mental defect, persons held in contempt and involuntary witnesses, all of whom are detained by or for the courts in administration of justice and equity, who are, as such, detainees, brought into and held in different places throughout the courthouse, where their detention requires secure custody for their own or the community’s protection, and as such, the Prentiss County Courthouse, including the Prentiss County Government Annex, is a detention facility, and the Court so adjudges and defines.

(3) What is a “courtroom” is an ambiguous term, which we define and adjudge as a matter of necessity as the courthouse entrance ways, lobbies, hallways, witness rooms, judges’ chambers, attorneys’ rooms and conference rooms and restrooms serving same, the judge’s offices, and wherever prisoners or detainees are held or transported to or from and as such, are effectively entrances into or part of the courtrooms and, therefore, should be and are hereby deemed and adjudged as a part of the courtroom of the Prentiss County Government Annex.

(4) Those portions of the Prentiss County Government Annex which are deemed and adjudged to be the courtroom and detention facilities thereof are shown on the attachment hereto, marked Exhibit A, colored in yellow, being an excerpt of Sheet 9 of the Floor Plan of Project No. 5-08166-08C dated February 27, 2014, as provided to the undersigned Chancellors by the Chancery Clerk of Prentiss County, Mississippi, the terms of which are to be considered as a part hereof by and through incorporation by reference, as if copied fully herein in words and figures, and the remaining portion of said facility is not determined to be part of the courtroom, as defined above.

(5) Court for the Prentiss County Government Annex shall be deemed in session each and every day that the Prentiss County Government Annex is open from the time it is opened until closed, unless otherwise ordered by any Judge who has court in the Prentiss County Government Annex on a given day and until all parties, witnesses, attorneys, Judges, detainees, participants, prisoners, bailiffs, riding bailiffs, law enforcement and the public have departed the premises.

**(6) Sworn law enforcement shall include, but not be limited to, the sheriff, sheriff's deputies, police, bailiffs, riding bailiffs, constables, Department of Corrections officials, prosecuting attorneys, judges, youth court referees, judges or masters and commissioners appointed by the court.**

**(7) In each place where court is held is a courtroom and courthouse, and the courthouse lobbies, doorways, entrances, hallways, witness rooms, judge's chambers, attorney's rooms, conference rooms and restrooms serving same, the judge's offices, and wherever prisoners or detainees are held or transported to and from, are designated and defined as entrances into and/or part of the courtrooms and, therefore, are a part of each courtroom.**

**(8) Weapons of any kind, including but not limited to firearms, whether open, concealed in whole or in part, handguns, pistols, rifles, shotguns, stun guns, knives of any sort, mace, pepper spray or other items, whether licensed or with enhanced carrier permit or license of any kind or nature that could or may be used as a weapon shall be and hereby prohibited from being brought into any courtroom as defined above and shown on Exhibit A, except when in the possession of a sworn law enforcement officer authorized to carry same into the courtroom.**

**(9) Consistent with the Sheriff's statutory duties relative to courthouse security and the Sheriff's duty to "... execute all orders and decrees of said courts directed to him be executed," as set forth in Section 19-25-35 of the Mississippi Code 1972, as Amended, the Sheriff's deputies, bailiffs and the Court's riding bailiffs shall be and are hereby required to carry out all the terms hereof and to implement electronic screening procedures as soon as practicable to enforce compliance with this Order in the courtroom of the Prentiss County Government Annex.**

**(10) Backpacks, bags, briefcases, attache' cases, luggage, cameras, recording devices of any kind and cellular telephones shall be and are hereby prohibited from being brought into any courtroom thereof except ladies' purses or when in possession of a sworn law enforcement officer, a public employee who is working at the courthouse, attorneys, members of their staff and members of the press, and licensed professional media.**

**(11) All permit holders and holders of all type licenses for firearms shall display to the first law enforcement officer or bailiff on duty at the courthouse or where court is held their permit or license, valid, proper identification and all firearms, stun guns and other weapons in their possession, answer all questions relative to their reasons for court attendance, and then to await further instruction from said officer, who shall first notify the sitting Judge for those instructions before proceeding; otherwise, the firearm shall not be permitted in the courtroom.**

**(12) The Sheriff and the Board of Supervisors of Prentiss County, Mississippi, are authorized and empowered to post signage outside entrances of the Prentiss County Government Annex consistent with the definitions and prohibitions herein, particularly signs displaying the days when court is in session or not in session, under order of the Chancery Court.**


(13) A copy of this Prentiss County Government Annex Security Order shall be posted on the bulletin boards of the Prentiss County Courthouse and the Prentiss County Government Annex, distributed to the press and licensed professional media, the Clerk and Administrators of the Court, the Sheriff, Bailiffs, Riding Bailiffs, and placed on the minutes of the Court and on the web sites of each of the Chancellors and to the Board of Supervisors for their Minutes, who, as stated before, are authorized and empowered to take such actions necessary under the authority of the order of this Court to comply with the terms hereof, including entering a supplemental Order to their Order of May 4, 2015.

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED, this the 6th day of August, 2015.

  
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JACQUELINE ESTES MASK, Chancery Judge

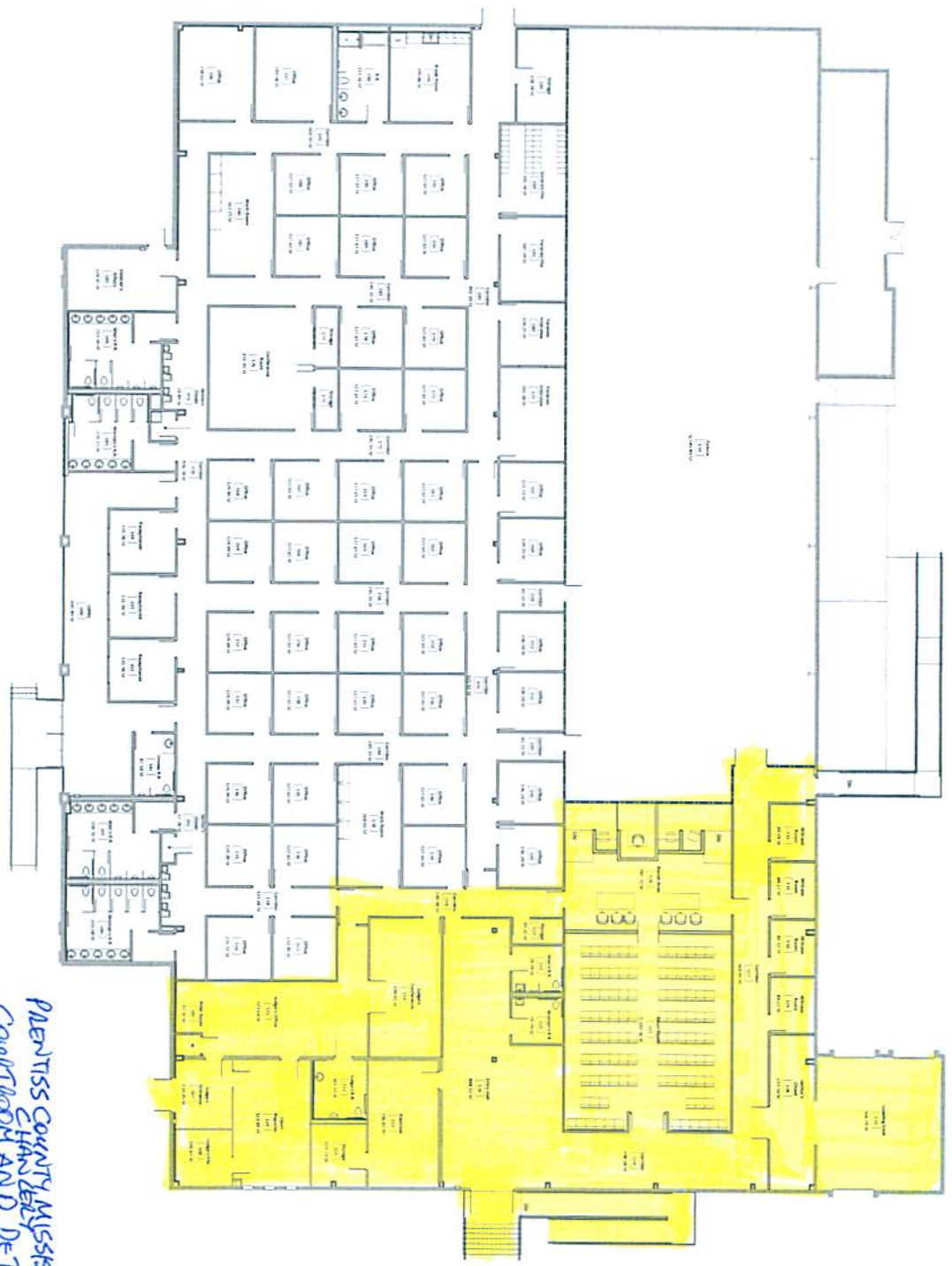
  
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TALMADGE D. LITTLEJOHN, Chancery Judge

  
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MICHAEL MALSKI, Chancery Judge

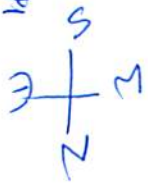
  
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JOHN A. HATCHER, Chancery Judge

1F Floor Plan - 1st Floor W Areas

PREPARED BY: COOK-COBBEN ENGINEERS, INC.  
 PROJECT NO: 5-08166-08C  
 DATE: 02/27/2014  
 PRENTISS COUNTY OFFICE  
 BOONEVILLE, MISSISSIPPI  
 DRAWING NO: A003  
 SHEET NO: 9



PRENTISS COUNTY MISSISSIPPI  
 CHANGELY  
 COURTROOM AND DETENTION  
 FACILITIES IN PRENTISS  
 COUNTY GOVERNMENT ANNEX



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