

Comanche County

Office of County Commissioners & Public Information

Press Release

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Courthouse to Increase Security in March, 2017

In the interest of public safety, the Comanche County Courthouse will be improving security procedures for the building. This process began last year at the direction of Commissioner Johnny Owens and elected county officials. It started with the installation of better cameras and monitoring software, in addition to a new alarm system for evacuations, sheltering in place, and other emergencies.

To further our goal in keeping the courthouse a safe place for both employees and the public, we are prohibiting certain items from entering the building. These items include: guns, knives (of any size), tazers, pepper spray, and any other form of weapon. We understand that many times people carry these items for their own personal defense, however, we cannot allow them to be brought into the facility. We will have deputies patrolling the halls and offices during

business hours for your protection.

To assist with our public safety initiatives, we are modifying public entrance to the courthouse. Currently, there are 4 public entrances, all located on the second floor. Starting in March, the public will not be able to enter the north, south, and east doors. Public entrance will be through the west door only. This decision is to facilitate a metal detector that Sheriff's deputies will use to ensure prohibited items are not brought into the building. They may use a metal detector wand or physical pat down, only if necessary. Bags, purses, backpacks, briefcases, and similar items will be sent through an x-ray machine and be subject to search. If a prohibited item is found on your person or in your bags, the deputy will request you take the item out to your car. With your permission, they may keep the item at their station until you are ready to leave the courthouse.

Comanche County has spent a considerable amount of time researching how other courthouses handle security. Many of these new procedures are modeled after courthouses such as the Federal Building here in Lawton, the State Capitol, and other courthouses. These facilities all have one thing in mind: the safety and well-being of their employees and visiting constituents.

If you have any concerns, you may call the Commissioners' Office at 580-353-3717, or email johnny.owens@comanchecounty.us . News and media questions should be directed to Ashleigh Hensch by calling 580-355-0535, or emailing pio@comanchecounty.us.