

COURT FACILITY STANDARDS

APPENDIX D

Court Facility Standards

These standards apply to all courts of record in Ohio except as otherwise indicated. The standards represent the minimum requirements to ensure the efficient and effective administration of justice and are intended to complement federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and standards pertaining to building construction, safety, security, and access.

(A) General considerations. In order to maintain suitable judicial atmosphere and properly serve the public, clean, well-lighted, adequately heated and air-conditioned court facilities shall be provided and maintained.

(B) Location. The facilities should be located in a courthouse or county or municipal building. The location within the building should be separate from the location of non-judicial governmental agencies. Court facilities should be located in a building that is dignified and properly maintained.

(C) Courtroom. Every trial judge should have a separate courtroom.

The courtroom should have adequate seating capacity so that litigants and others are not required to stand or wait in hallways and areas adjacent to the courtroom.

All participants must be able to hear and to be heard. If the room acoustics are not satisfactory, an efficient public address system shall be provided.

Every courtroom should have an elevated bench. Adequate shelving should be provided adjacent to the bench for legal reference materials. United States and Ohio flags should flank the bench.

The witness chair should be near the bench, slightly elevated, and situated in an appropriate enclosure.

Desks, tables, and chairs should be provided for all court personnel regularly present in the courtroom.

Tables and chairs should be provided for parties and counsel. Tables shall be situated to enable all participants to hear and to allow private interchanges between litigants and counsel.

Each trial courtroom should be equipped with a jury box, suitable for seating jurors and alternates sufficient to meet the demands of the court. The jury box should be situated so that jurors may observe the demeanor of witnesses and hear all proceedings.

A blackboard and other necessary demonstrative aids should be readily available. Unnecessary material or equipment should not be kept in the courtroom.

Each judge should have private chambers convenient to the courtroom. Access from chambers to the courtroom should be private. Chambers should be decorated and equipped in appropriate fashion.

(D) Library. Each court shall be provided an adequate law library comprised of those materials, including electronic media, considered necessary by the court.

(E) Magistrate. Magistrates should have courtroom and office facilities similar to those of a judge.

(F) Juror and witness facilities. Each trial courtroom shall have a soundproof jury deliberation room located in a quiet area as near the courtroom as possible. Access from the jury deliberation room to the courtroom should be private. Private personal convenience facilities should be available for the jurors.

An adequate waiting room must be provided for jurors. Reading material of general interest, television, and telephones should be provided.

A waiting room comparable to the jurors' waiting room should be provided for witnesses.

(G) Consultation room. A room should be provided for use of attorneys.

(H) Violations Bureaus and pay-in windows. Facilities for violations bureaus and pay-in windows should be located near public parking areas.

(I) Court staff and court-related personnel facilities. Adequate space and equipment shall be provided for court personnel to prepare, maintain, and store necessary court records. Space and equipment should be utilized to ensure efficiency, security, and confidentiality.

Adequate restroom facilities separate from public restroom facilities should be provided for all court personnel.

(J) Public convenience facilities. Clean, modern restroom facilities should be available in the vicinity of the public areas of the court. Public telephones should be available and afford privacy.