



*A nonprofit organization improving justice through leadership and service to courts*

Mary Campbell McQueen  
*President*

**Daniel J. Hall**  
*Vice President*  
Court Consulting Services  
Denver Office

February 1, 2019  
Honorable Betsy F. Lambeth  
Judge, 425th Judicial District Court  
Williamson County, Texas  
710 Main Street  
Georgetown, Texas 78626

Dear Judge Lambeth:

In response to your recent request for a courthouse security review, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) Court Consulting Services division in Denver has prepared this proposal for your review. The proposal is in the form of a letter agreement that we often use when responding to a direct request for our services.

The NCSC is a non-profit corporation headquartered in Williamsburg, Virginia, that is dedicated to the modernization of the nation's courts. In past years and based on tragic incidents in Fulton County (Georgia) Superior Court and other courthouses, the concern of the judiciary regarding court security has resulted in it becoming a specialized priority for the NCSC. The Court Consulting Services division of the NCSC located in Denver, Colorado, specifically provides advanced consulting services in this area. In response to your expression of interest, the NCSC respectfully submits this proposal for a security assessment to be conducted at the building occupied by the 425<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court for Williamson County. The proposal is organized in the following sections:

- Understanding of Need
- Work Plan and Schedule
- Proposed Staffing
- Project Cost
- Appendix - Special Terms for Texas County Governmental Entities

## **Understanding of Need**

The Williamson County Courthouse is a three story (plus basement) building located in downtown Georgetown that was constructed in 1990. The building houses five district courts, four county courts, the district clerk's office, the county clerk's office, adult probation, district attorney, county attorney, sheriff transport and security operations, and other county government supporting services. It is estimated that it will take two NCSC project team

Headquarters  
300 Newport Avenue  
Williamsburg, VA 23185-4147  
(800) 616-6164

Court Consulting  
707 Seventeenth Street, Suite 2900  
Denver, CO 80202-3429  
(800) 466-3063

Washington Office  
2425 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 350  
Arlington, VA 22201-3326  
(800) 532-0204

members approximately two and one-half to three days, not including travel, to complete the proposed on-site assessment.

The NCSC proposes to conduct a thorough and comprehensive security assessment of the Williamson County Courthouse with a team of experienced court security professionals. The building assessment will reflect on both existing resource allocation and optimal allocation. The term “security” encompasses a variety of considerations, but has three basic facets:

- Architectural elements
- Operating procedures
- Equipment and technology

The NCSC also understands that you seek to cover all three facets of courthouse security through examination of governance issues, policies, and procedures that are used to protect employees and the public. All of the above will be incorporated within the assessment.

NCSC security assessments are made in relation to the presence of adequate countermeasures to assessed security vulnerability, threats, and risks. An overriding variable may be the presence and availability of weapons in the courthouse. Multiple other issues for site specific consideration are normally addressed and include:

- Building location and setback
- Site perimeter access and control
- Point-of-entry screening
- Staff/employee access via ingress and egress
- Central security
- Duress alarms
- Law enforcement and security officer staffing
- Prisoner transport and circulation
- Prisoner holding areas
- Surveillance cameras external and internal
- Retail space (if applicable)
- Central holding, sally ports
- Shipping, deliveries and loading dock areas
- Site security and safety lighting
- Controlled access systems
- Emergency power and generators
- Intrusion alarm systems
- Exit contingency plans

The NCSC is the leading national expert on court facility standards and has performed more than 275 security assessments of courthouses in the majority of states. Among the architectural enhancements that significantly impact security are:

- Single points of public entry egress.
- Weapons screening checkpoints with walk-through magnetometers, hand-held metal detectors, x-ray machines, and duress alarms available at all public entrances.
- Separate judicial entrances from secure parking areas with separate access to offices for court officials.
- Appropriate lobby and systems space design/layout to allow proper queuing at entry screening checkpoints and prevent excessive crowding and confusion.
- Defined separation of public, judicial/staff, and prisoner circulation (i.e., secured, restricted, and public) systems.

- Secured vehicular sally port for transfer of in-custody defendants to and from the facility.
- Central and court floor holding areas accessed by secured in-custody defendants circulation for transporting prisoners to courtrooms safely/securely and effectively.
- Sufficient public waiting space and attorney client conference to permit separation of opposing parties, particularly in domestic cases.
- Elimination of areas on-site and within the facility where persons and/or illegal activities can be concealed.

Due to the range of actions that can be taken to improve security and the costs associated with these improvements, there is always a need for prioritization and assessment of risk. The NCSC understands the financial implications and the almost inevitable need to seek budget resources – resulting in a number of cost-effective recommendations and solutions.

## **Work Plan and Schedule**

The NCSC will organize its work plan into the following tasks.

### **Task 1 - Information Gathering, Analysis, and Site Visit Preparation**

As a first step, the NCSC project team proposes to conduct an initial conference call with the judge and court staff to discuss the purpose and details of the project. A primary point of discussion will be the logistics and timing of the site visit. Important items include the need for a client-appointed project liaison to facilitate collection of data materials and documents, set interview schedules, and help gain access to all areas of the courthouse during the NCSC project team's on-site visit. Typically, and in order to formulate baseline data, the NCSC project team requests information in advance, including diagrams of the courthouse design and layout, security manuals, security protocols, security training manuals, security force information, and any previous court facility assessments.

### **Task 2 - On-site Visit**

The two-person NCSC project team will spend approximately four days on-site, including travel to and from the Williamson County Courthouse. During this period, the NCSC will perform an internal and external walk-through of the courthouse, make its assessment of security shortcomings, as well as interview a representative sample of judges, court staff, security officers, and other related officials such as prosecutors and sheriff's personnel. Interviews will be coordinated by the court's appointed project liaison(s) who will also work with the NCSC project team to develop a plan to expedite the physical review of the courthouse.

NCSC security on-site assessments are made in relation to the presence of adequate countermeasures to security vulnerability, threats, and risks. These include architectural elements, operating procedures, and equipment/technology. In assessing the courthouse, the NCSC may consider the remodeling potential of selected areas inside the courthouse if such recommendations may be feasible and contribute to the enhancement of security and safety.

It is the practice of the NCSC project team to provide a debriefing during an (optional) luncheon meeting on the last day of the on-site visit. This meeting involves a brief rundown of overall observations and initial impressions. Comments during the debriefing are also often helpful in framing the final draft report. The court should determine exactly who should attend this debriefing meeting.

### **Task 3 - Prepare Final Draft Report**

The NCSC project team will provide the court with a final draft report that contains observations, recommendations, and preliminary cost opinions regarding security issues facing the court. After seven to ten days for the court to examine the draft report, the NCSC project team will review the final draft report with the court via a conference call to answer questions and to hear the court's views. The NCSC project team will consider changes to the report based on those comments and/or any factual corrections received.

As part of the proposed courthouse building assessment, the NCSC project team will develop a probable cost opinion on recommended security enhancements at the courthouse, based on comparable courthouse improvements and construction projects observed by the NCSC in courts of similar jurisdiction. This cost opinion may be useful for exploring the scale of magnitude of various security enhancements regarding renovation recommendations. Cost opinions are not construction estimates as the actual cost of renovations and improvements vary considerably based on existing building conditions and security infrastructure which should be evaluated by professional construction and security contractor estimators.

### **Task 4 - Delivery of Final Report**

Once any changes to the draft report have been made, the NCSC project team will provide an electronic copy of the final report. Printed copies can be provided upon request. All draft and final reports will be marked "confidential" due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter.

### ***Project Schedule***

After the contract is accepted and signed by all parties, the project is expected to be completed in approximately 12 weeks. To meet this deadline, task performance has to be an almost continuous sequence with some breaks between tasks. The schedule is dependent on the timing of project initiation, pace of client feedback, and logistical preparation. The project schedule, in terms of weeks, would be roughly as follows:

Task	<i>Weeks from start of project</i>									
	1-2	3-4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Information Gathering, Analysis, and Site Visit Preparation	XX	XX								
2. On-site Visit			XX							
3. Prepare Final Draft Report				XX	XX	XX	XX			
3. Client Review of Final Draft Report								XX	XX	
4. Delivery of Final Report										XX

**Proposed Staffing**

The NCSC has an experienced team of security experts who have court administration expertise, correctional and law enforcement backgrounds, architectural backgrounds, as well as external security consultants who bring experience from other court and justice system components from around the country. NCSC security consultants will conduct the on-site visit and develop the report. Senior Court Management Consultant and Architect, Nathan Hall, will direct the project and be fully responsible for the NCSC’s conduct and success of the project. Mr. Hall will be assisted by NCSC Court Management Consultants James O’Neil and Steve Berson.

**Nathan Hall** is a LEED® certified Architect and Principal Court Security Consultant for the NCSC. Since joining the NCSC in 2008, he has been involved in over 50 court facility and security assessment projects for state and local courts across the nation. Presently, he is directing security projects in Florida, Wyoming, Minnesota, Ohio, and Guam. His expertise includes court security assessment, facility planning and design, and court technology planning. Mr. Hall provides training to court and security professionals regarding court security design and has published multiple articles on the subject of innovation in courthouse planning appearing in Courts Today and in the NCSC Future Trends series. Mr. Hall was a staff editor of the NCSC *Retrospective of Courthouse Design: 2001-2010* and serves as a national resource for trends and best practices in courthouse architecture. Previous to his employment at the NCSC, Mr. Hall spent six years as a design project manager for David Wise Architects in Denver, Colorado. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and his Master of Architecture degree from the University of Colorado College of Architecture and Planning.

**James F. O’Neil** has conducted over 150 security assessments with the NCSC since 2004. Previously, Mr. O’Neil served, from 1994-2006, in a dual role in the New Hampshire court system. He was Court Systems Security Manager and also District Court Regional Administrator. In his security role, he was responsible for all policies and procedures relating to the security of the 60 courts throughout the State of New Hampshire. He trained and certified all court security officers in courthouse security, including security screening, courtroom security, building physical security, prisoner handling and control, judicial protection, and firearms. He conducted security evaluations and was responsible for choosing the technology supporting security operations.

As District Court Regional Administrator, Mr. O'Neil was responsible for the supervision of 21 district court clerks. He provided guidance and direction on court operations, case management, and court personnel programs, including selection, supervision and evaluation of court staff. He formulated and implemented system-wide, long range plans and participated in design and up-grade of court facilities, and technology programs for the district court. Prior to joining the New Hampshire court system, Mr. O'Neil was a security manager in the private sector, serving from 1983-85 as the security manager for the North Andover, Massachusetts, plant of Raytheon Corporation. As Security Manager of the Special Compartment Information Facility, he was responsible for management of the facility operations and control and accountability of classified documents.

From 1961-1983, he served as a U.S. Army Counterintelligence Special Agent, responsible for conducting training for and training others in physical, operational, personnel, document, photographic, lock, and electronic security. He is experienced in overall security operations for both military and commercial installations and implemented operations security support and anti-terrorist programs that were integrated into military plans and policies.

**Steve Berson**, a long-time court security consultant to the NCSC, will coordinate the project. Mr. Berson, a graduate of Harvard Law School, is a former State Court Administrator for Colorado (1993 to 1999). Prior to that, he had extensive experience in managing state agencies in Colorado, serving in four different cabinet positions under two Colorado Governors. Since 2006, Mr. Berson has worked extensively as a consultant to the NCSC, serving as project coordinator for the hundreds of court security assessments that the NCSC has conducted during the past several years. In his role as project coordinator, he has been responsible for gathering the data collected by other members of the NCSC project team in the course of the security assessments and then drafting the security reports. Mr. Berson has also served as an on-site security consultant for many of the NCSC's assessments. He has conducted security assessments throughout the country, from Maryland to California, from Minnesota to Louisiana. Mr. Berson has also been integrally involved in writing and publishing of several of the NCSC essential offerings on courthouse security. These include the following: *Steps to Best Practices in Court Security*; *Guidelines for Implementing Best Practices in Court Building Security - Costs, Priorities, Funding Strategies, and Accountability*, a State Justice Institute (SJI) publication; the SJI-funded report "*Courthouse Violence 2010-2012 - Lessons Learned*"; and the Bureau of Justice Assistance-funded report, "*Status of Security in State Courts - A National Perspective.*"

## **Project Cost**

The total cost for this project to assess and systemically report the court building described herein, as proposed in Tasks 1 through 4, is a fixed price to not-exceed \$23,350. The project cost includes all professional and administrative time, travel expenses, and indirect costs. **Please note that as a fixed fee, the project cost will include all personnel costs, travel expenses and any indirect costs with no overage.** An example of some of the costs included in NCSC's indirect cost rates are equipment, supplies, telephone, printing/ photocopying, postage,

audits, and other items. they are based on the NCSC policy that utilizes the federal policies as guidelines.

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**Williamson County Courthouse Security Assessment  
Budget Summary**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Estimated Hours</b>	<b>Hourly Project Director Rate</b>	<b>Hourly Consultant Rate</b>	<b>Budget Amount (\$)</b>
<b>Task 1: Information Gathering, Analysis, and Site Visit Preparation</b>	4	\$181	\$127	\$550
<b>Task 2: On-site Visit</b>	64	\$181	\$127	\$8,800
<b>Estimated Travel Expenses (2 persons)</b>				\$3,000
<b>Task 3: Prepare Final Draft Report</b>	60	\$181	\$127	\$8,050
<b>Task 4: Delivery of Final Report</b>	9	\$181	\$127	\$1,100
<b>Total Budget</b>				<b>\$23,350</b>

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the proposal, please contact me at (303) 293-3063 or by e-mail at [klaversma@ncsc.org](mailto:klaversma@ncsc.org).

Sincerely,



Laura Klaversma  
Court Services Director


cc: Nathan Hall

ACCEPTED:

**Williamson County, Texas,  
Commissioners Court**

**National Center for State Courts**

By \_\_\_\_\_

By   
Laura Klaversma

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Title Court Services Director

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date February 1, 2019

## Appendix:

### Special Terms for Texas County Governmental Entities

The NCSC accepts the following special terms for Texas county governmental entities:

- No Waiver of Sovereign Immunity or Powers: Nothing in this agreement will be deemed to constitute a waiver of sovereign immunity or powers of licensee, the Williamson County Commissioners Court, or the Williamson County Judge.
- Termination for Convenience: This agreement may be terminated at any time at the option of either party, without future or prospective liability for performance upon giving thirty (30) days written notice thereof. **In the event of termination, The County will only be liable for its pro rata share of services rendered and goods actually received.**
- Texas Prompt Payment Act Compliance: Payment for goods and services shall be governed by Chapter 2251 of the Texas Government Code. An invoice shall be deemed overdue the 31st day after the later of (1) the date licensee receives the goods under the contract; (2) the date the performance of the service under the contract is completed; or (3) the date the Williamson County Auditor receives an invoice for the goods or services. Interest charges for any overdue payments shall be paid by licensee in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 2251.025. More specifically, the rate of interest that shall accrue on a late payment is the rate in effect on September 1 of licensee's fiscal year in which the payment becomes due. The said rate in effect on September 1 shall be equal to the sum of one percent (1%); and (2) the prime rate published in the Wall Street Journal on the first day of July of the preceding fiscal year that does not fall on a Saturday or Sunday.
- Mediation: The parties agree to use mediation for dispute resolution prior to and formal legal action being taken on this Contract.
- Venue and Governing Law: Venue of this contract shall be Williamson County, Texas, and the law of the State of Texas shall govern.
- Right to Audit: SERVICE PROVIDER agrees that licensee or its duly authorized representatives shall, until the expiration of three (3) years after final payment under this Agreement, have access to and the right to examine and photocopy any and all books, documents, papers and records of SERVICE PROVIDER which are directly pertinent to the services to be performed under this Agreement for the purposes of making audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcriptions. SERVICE PROVIDER agrees that licensee shall have access during normal working hours to all necessary SERVICE PROVIDER facilities and shall be provided adequate and appropriate work space in order to conduct audits in compliance with the provisions of this section. licensee shall give SERVICE PROVIDER reasonable advance notice of intended audits.