



COURT SECURITY COSTS

2024 Legislative Proposal

Court security costs incurred by counties are exceeding reimbursements from the state for security services.

Addressing this imbalance not only protects the budgets of other county services, but ensures that counties are well-prepared, staff is well trained, and that the judicial system remains safe for all participants.

WHO is responsible for court security in Utah?

A: By Judicial Rule 3-414, county sheriffs are responsible for court security for all courts in Utah except for the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals when they are in session in Salt Lake County and a municipal justice court in a municipality with local law enforcement. To make this possible, the state court administrator enters into contracts with county sheriffs.

HOW much are counties paid for the security they provide?

By law, the contracts between counties and the courts cannot exceed costs appropriated by the legislature, and the county assumes all costs related to security, supervision, travel, equipment, and training. Over time, based on JRI, personnel costs, and a variety of other factors, payment to counties from the state has covered less of the actual costs incurred by counties for providing security at district courts.

WHY is court security reimbursement important?

Adequate court security funding ensures that county security can be well-trained and ready to address difficult security challenges. Without adequate funding, counties have had to subsidize from their own General Funds, stretching resources in other areas.

Rather than a set point determined by the legislature, the amount counties are reimbursed for services rendered should be based on the actual cost for services rendered by the county. A formula or determination based on the previous year could address the challenge.

PROPOSAL

- Require court security reimbursement to take into consideration the actual cost of providing the security through a formula, rather than a price point set by the legislature.

