



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
INTER-OFFICE

MEMO 2013-50

TO: Honorable Carolyn Timmann
Honorable Sharon Robertson
Honorable Joseph E. Smith
Honorable J.R. Smith

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "TAG", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

FROM: Thomas A. Genung, Trial Court Administrator

DATE: September 13, 2013

RE: **Administrative Order 2013-07 Criminal Background Investigation
For Employees, Contractors and Volunteers Working in the
Okeechobee County Courthouse**

Attached please find an original **Administrative Order 2013-07** for filing with the Court.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

TAG/js
Attachment

cc w/attach: All Judges in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit
All Magistrates and Hearing Officers in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit
All Staff Attorneys in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit
Honorable Bruce Colton, State Attorney's Office
Honorable Diamond Litty, Public Defender's Office
All County Attorneys in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit
All Local Law Libraries
All Local Bar Presidents
IT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR
OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA

IN RE:

Administrative Order: 2013 - 07

Criminal Background Investigation For
Employees, Contractors and Volunteers
Working in the Okeechobee County Courthouse

WHEREAS, it is a common interest of the judges and administration of the 19th Judicial Circuit, Okeechobee County Commissioners and Sheriffs of Okeechobee County that all persons attending court or working in the Okeechobee County Court facilities are reasonably safe and secure while in those facilities; and

WHEREAS, in recent years there has been an escalation of violence in and around courthouses and against judges throughout the United States and in Florida; and

WHEREAS, matters coming before the court are wrought with emotion and life changing issues and outcomes; and

WHEREAS, to maintain a secure environment at the Okeechobee County Courthouse, it is important that all employees and contractors conducting work in the courthouse undergo a criminal background investigation to verify that the employee/contractor does not have any pending first degree misdemeanor or felony cases, or prior first degree misdemeanor or felony withholds or convictions; and

WHEREAS, the Sheriff of Okeechobee County in the 19th Judicial Circuit is funded by the Okeechobee County commission to provide for courthouse security and attend all terms of the circuit and county courts in Okeechobee County; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with and pursuant to rule 2.215 Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, it is therefore:

ORDERED:

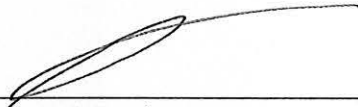
1. That all employees, contractors and volunteers working in the Okeechobee County Courthouse shall submit to a criminal background investigation prior to working in the facility, and shall be free of any convictions or withholds of adjudication for first degree misdemeanors or felonies, and shall not have any pending first degree misdemeanor or felony case. Prior first degree misdemeanor or felony convictions or withholds of adjudication, or pending first degree misdemeanor or felony charges shall preclude an employee, contractor or volunteer from access to the secure areas of the Okeechobee County Courthouse.

2. If a criminal background investigation shows a prior first degree misdemeanor or felony conviction or withhold of adjudication for a current employee, contractor or volunteer, the information detailing the conviction(s) or withhold(s) must be provided to that individual's manager, who shall immediately provide the information to the Chief Judge. The Chief Judge will determine if the employee, contractor or volunteer will be allowed access to the secure areas of Okeechobee County Courthouse.

3. In the event that a current employee, contractor or volunteer is arrested for a misdemeanor or felony, that individual must inform management in writing of the pending charges and nature of the charges. The manager must provide that information to the Chief Judge. The Chief Judge will determine if the employee, contractor or volunteer will be allowed access to the secure areas of the Okeechobee County Courthouse.

4. Upon written request, and on a case-by-case basis, the Chief Judge may allow an employee, contractor or volunteer with a prior conviction or withhold of adjudication for a first degree misdemeanor or felony, or pending misdemeanor or felony charge to conduct work in the secure areas of the courthouse.

DONE AND ORDERED at Stuart, Martin County, Florida this 13th day of
September, 2013.



Steven J. Levin
Chief Judge