

**NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA**

**COURT SECURITY ACT 1998**

As in force at 1 July 1998

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# NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

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As in force at 1 July 1998

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## COURT SECURITY ACT 1998

**An Act to provide for the security of courts and for related purposes**

### **Part 1            Preliminary**

#### **1            Short title**

This Act may be cited as the *Court Security Act 1998*.

#### **2            Commencement**

This Act comes into operation on the date fixed by the Administrator by notice in the *Gazette*.

#### **3            Application**

- (1) This Act is in addition to and does not derogate from any other power that a court, judge or person has relating to the conduct of proceedings in a court or regulating the conduct of persons on court premises.
- (2) This Act does not affect any power of a court relating to contempt of the court or any other similar power.
- (3) Except as provided in this Act, a person has a right to enter and remain on court premises, where there is room for the person on the court premises, if the person:
  - (a) has a proper reason for being on or about the court premises or has indicated that he or she wishes to see the proceedings of a court; and
  - (b) has complied with the requirements, if any, of a judge or security officer.

#### 4 Definitions

In this Act, unless the contrary intention appears:

**Chief Executive Officer** means the Chief Executive Officer of the Agency allotted responsibility by an Administrative Arrangements Order for the administration of courts.

**court** means:

- (a) the Supreme Court;
- (b) the Local Court;
- (c) the Court of Summary Jurisdiction established by section 41A of the *Justices Act*;
- (d) the Juvenile Court established by section 14 of the *Juvenile Justice Act*;
- (e) the Work Health Court established by section 93 of the *Work Health Act*;
- (f) a warden's court established by section 141 of the *Mining Act*;
- (g) a justice conducting a preliminary examination under Part V of the *Justices Act*;
- (h) a prescribed court; or
- (j) a tribunal, body or person that is by law entitled to hear, receive and examine evidence and is prescribed.

**court premises** means the premises or place where a court is held or that are used in connection with the operations of a court and includes:

- (a) a forecourt, courtyard, yard or area used in conjunction with the premises or place; and
- (b) a part of premises that is used to provide entry to or exit from court premises.

**explosive** means a substance or article manufactured, designed or ordinarily used to produce an explosion or a pyrotechnic effect and includes:

- (a) fireworks and gunpowder;
- (b) a gaseous substance so compressed that it is capable of exploding;

- (c) material or a substance used to produce an explosion or pyrotechnic effect; and
- (d) an apparatus, machine, implement or material, or a part of an apparatus, machine, implement or material, used or able to be used or adapted to cause or aid in causing an explosion or a pyrotechnic effect.

**firearm** has the meaning it has in the *Firearms Act*.

**frisk search** means a search conducted by a person running his or her hands over the outer clothing of the person being searched.

**judge** means a Judge within the meaning of the *Supreme Court Act*, a Justice, a magistrate, a warden within the meaning of the *Mining Act* and a prescribed person.

**offensive weapon** has the same meaning it has in section 56A(4) of the *Summary Offences Act*.

**screening search** means:

- (a) in relation to a search of a person – a search by equipment that is designed to carry out the search without touching the person; and
- (b) in relation to the search of an object – a search by equipment that is designed to carry out the search without touching the object or requiring it to be opened.

**security officer**, in relation to a court, means a person appointed under section 5(2) in relation to the court and person referred to in section 5(1)(a) or (b).

## **Part 2            Entry to and exclusion from Court**

### **Division 1        Security Officers**

#### **5                Security officers**

- (1) The following persons are security officers for the purpose of this Act:
  - (a) a member of the Police Force;
  - (b) a sheriff, or an officer of the sheriff, within the meaning of the *Sheriff Act*;
  - (c) a person appointed under subsection (2).

- (2) The Chief Executive Officer may, in writing, appoint a person to be a security officer.
- (3) A person is not to be appointed a security officer unless:
  - (a) he or she is an employee within the meaning of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*; or
  - (b) he or she holds a crowd controller's licence within the meaning of the *Private Security Act* (not being a crowd controller's transitional licence or a crowd controller's provisional licence within the meaning of that Act).
- (4) The instrument appointing a security officer is to specify his or her employer, if any.
- (5) A person may be appointed a security officer under subsection (2) in relation to all courts, or a particular court, as is specified in the instrument appointing the person.

## **6            Termination of appointment**

- (1) The Chief Executive Officer may, in writing, terminate the appointment of a person as a security officer.
- (2) A person appointed under section 5(2) ceases to be a security officer if:
  - (a) he or she ceases to be an employee of the employer specified in his or her instrument of appointment;
  - (b) the employer of the security officer ceases to be engaged to provide the services of crowd controllers to the court in relation to which the security officer is appointed; or
  - (c) he or she ceases to hold a crowd controller's licence within the meaning of the *Private Security Act*.

## **Division 2            Court security**

### **7            Person may be required to state name and address, &c.**

- (1) A security officer may require a person who is entering or who is on court premises:
  - (a) to tell the security officer the person's name and address;
  - (b) to tell the security officer the person's reason for entering or being on the premises; and

(c) to provide to the security officer proof of the person's identity.

- (2) A person must not fail to provide, when required to do so by a security officer, his or her name and address, his or her reason for entering or being on court premises or any proof of identity the person is carrying.

Penalty:        \$2,000.

- (3) A person must not provide to a security officer a false name, a false address, false information as to why the person is entering or on court premises or a false proof of identity.

Penalty:        \$5,000.

## **8            Searches**

- (1) A security officer may require a person who is entering or who is on court premises to submit himself or herself and any object in the possession of the person to a screening search.

- (2) Where a security officer believes, on reasonable grounds, that it is necessary to do so in the interests of security, he or she may require a person who is entering or who is on court premises:

(a) to submit to a frisk search or to remove a jacket or coat and submit to a frisk search; and

(b) to open and empty out the person's pockets, to open or empty a container, briefcase, bag, box, carton or other receptacle in the possession of the person or otherwise to permit the security officer to search an object in the possession of the person.

- (3) A frisk search may only be performed by:

(a) a security officer of the same sex as the person being searched; or

(b) where a security officer of the same sex as the person being searched is not available to perform the search – by any other person of the same sex who agrees to a request by a security officer to perform the frisk search.

- (4) A person of whom a requirement is made under subsection (1) or (2) must, as soon as practicable after the requirement is made:

(a) comply with the requirement; or

(b) leave the court premises.

Penalty:        \$5,000.

- (5) An action or proceeding, whether civil or criminal, is not to be commenced or lie against a person authorised for the purposes of subsection (3)(b) for or in respect of an act or thing done in good faith by the person performing a frisk search of the person in accordance with the request of a security officer.

**9            No firearms, explosives or offensive weapons on court premises**

- (1) A person must not be in possession of a firearm, explosives or an offensive weapon on court premises.

Penalty:        \$25,000 or imprisonment for 5 years.

- (2) Subsection (1) does not apply in relation to:
- (a) a member of the Police Force acting in the course of his or her duties;
  - (b) a security officer acting in the course of his or her duties; or
  - (c) a person in possession of a firearm, explosives or an offensive weapon for the purposes of proceedings in a court.

**10          Seizure and forfeiture of firearms, &c.**

- (1) A security officer may seize a firearm, explosives or an offensive weapon that is in the possession of a person, other than a person to whom section 9(2) applies, who is entering or who is on court premises.
- (2) Where a person is found guilty of an offence against section 9(1), the firearm, explosive or offensive weapon to which the offence relates is forfeited to the Territory.
- (3) Where a person is found guilty of an offence against section 11(2), the placard, poster or object to which the offence relates is forfeited to the Territory.

**11          Placards, objects, &c., likely to engender violence**

- (1) A security officer may require a person who is entering or who is on court premises with a placard, poster or other object to deposit the placard, poster or object with the officer if it is:
- (a) offensive, insulting, threatening or indecent; or



- (b) likely to engender violence, create a breach of the peace or unreasonably cause substantial annoyance to another person.
  - (2) A person required under subsection (1) to deposit a placard, poster or object must, as soon as practicable after the requirement is made:
    - (a) deposit it with a security officer; or
    - (b) leave the court premises with it.
- Penalty:        \$5,000 or imprisonment for 12 months.
- (3) Where a person fails to comply with a requirement under subsection (1) a security officer may seize the placard, poster or object to which the failure to comply relates.

**12            Security officer may require object capable of concealing firearms, &c., to be deposited**

- (1) A security officer may require a person who is entering or who is on court premises with an object that is reasonably capable of concealing a firearm, explosives or an offensive weapon to deposit the object with the officer.
  - (2) A person required to deposit an object under subsection (1) must, as soon as practicable after the requirement is made:
    - (a) deposit the object with a security officer; or
    - (b) leave the court premises with the object.
- Penalty:        \$5,000 or imprisonment for 12 months.
- (3) Where a person fails to comply with a requirement under subsection (1) a security officer may seize the object to which the failure to comply relates.

**13            Unlawful, disorderly conduct, &c.**

- (1) Where a security officer believes that a person on court premises is behaving unlawfully or in a disorderly or menacing manner, the security officer may require the person to leave the premises.
  - (2) A person must not contravene or fail to comply with a requirement under subsection (1).
- Penalty:        \$5,000 or imprisonment for 12 months.

**14            Refusal of requirement of security officer**

- (1) Where a person refuses to comply with a requirement of a security officer under section 7, 8, 11 or 12, a security officer may:
- (a) refuse the person entry to the court premises or a part of the court premises; or
  - (b) order the person to leave the court premises or a part of the court premises.
- (2) A person must not fail to comply with an order of a security officer under subsection (1)(b).

Penalty:        \$5,000 or imprisonment for 12 months.

- (3) Where a person fails to comply with:
- (a) an order of a security officer under subsection (1)(b); or
  - (b) a requirement of a security officer under section 13(1),
- a security officer may remove the person from the court premises or a part of the court premises using such force as is reasonably necessary for that purpose.

**15            Obstruction, &c., of security officer**

A person must not resist, hinder or obstruct a security officer in the execution of his or her duty.

Penalty:        \$10,000 or imprisonment for 2 years.

**16            Arrest**

- (1) Where a security officer is of the opinion that a person:
- (a) has committed;
  - (b) is committing; or
  - (c) is likely to commit,
- an offence against this Act, the security officer may, without warrant, arrest the person and take him or her into custody.
- (2) Where a security officer who arrests a person under subsection (1) is not a member of the Police Force, the security officer must deliver the person to a member of the Police Force as soon as practicable after the person is arrested.

- (3) A person who is arrested under subsection (1) and is in custody must not be questioned in relation to an offence other than by a member of the Police Force and in accordance with the *Police Administration Act*.
- (4) Where a person is delivered to a member of the Police Force under subsection (2) the *Police Administration Act* applies to and in relation to the person and to the member as if the arrest had been made under that Act.
- (5) A person who is arrested under subsection (1)(a) must be released immediately from custody where it becomes apparent that the person did not commit the offence for which the person was arrested.
- (6) Nothing in this section derogates from the power of a person to arrest a person without warrant under section 441 of the Criminal Code.

## **Part 3                      Miscellaneous**

### **17                      Judge may close court**

- (1) Where a judge is of the opinion that it is necessary for the purposes of securing order and safety in court premises or a part of court premises, the judge may:
  - (a) make an order requiring members of the public generally, or specified members of the public, to leave the court premises or a part of the court premises; or
  - (b) make an order refusing members of the public generally, or specified members of the public, admission to the court premises or a part of the court premises.
- (2) A person must not contravene or fail to comply with an order of a judge under subsection (1).

Penalty:            \$10,000 or imprisonment for 2 years.
- (3) Where a person contravenes or fails to comply with an order of a judge under this section, a security officer may, using such force as is reasonably necessary for the purpose:
  - (a) remove the person from the court premises or the part of the court premises; or
  - (b) prevent the person from entering the court premises or the part of the court premises.

**18 Regulations**

The Administrator may make regulations, not inconsistent with this Act, prescribing all matters:

- (a) required or permitted by this Act to be prescribed; or
- (b) necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to this Act.

## ENDNOTES

### 1 KEY

Key to abbreviations

amd = amended  
app = appendix  
bl = by-law  
ch = Chapter  
cl = clause  
div = Division  
exp = expires/expired  
f = forms  
Gaz = Gazette  
hdg = heading  
ins = inserted  
lt = long title  
nc = not commenced

od = order  
om = omitted  
pt = Part  
r = regulation/rule  
rem = remainder  
renum = renumbered  
rep = repealed  
s = section  
sch = Schedule  
sdiv = Subdivision  
SL = Subordinate Legislation  
sub = substituted

### 2 LIST OF LEGISLATION

***Court Security Act 1998 (Act No. 42, 1998)***

Assent date	27 May 1998
Commenced	1 July 1998 ( <i>Gaz S28</i> , 1 July 1998, p 1)