

**Supreme Court**

No. 2001-01

**EXECUTIVE ORDER**

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by § 8-15-2 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island 1956 (1997 Reenactment) and pursuant to consultation with the associate justices of this Court and the Advisory Council to the Chief Justice, I do hereby promulgate the following Executive Order relating to special procedures for the entry of members of the Rhode Island Bar Association into the various courthouses in all counties of the State of Rhode Island.

In recognition that every member of the Rhode Island Bar who practices law and enters the courthouses of this state for that purpose is an officer of the court, and in an effort to alleviate congestion and delay in entering the courthouses, the Rhode Island Bar Association is authorized to establish and fund a program for issuance of attorney court-access identification cards, which shall include a current photograph and shall be available to every member of the bar of Rhode Island to permit access to every court facility without the requirement of passing through metal detectors. Accordingly,

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

1. No member of the bar of this state shall carry or transport any weapon or firearm into any court facility without the express written permission of the Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court. The term "weapon" is defined as any instrument used for the purpose of killing, injuring, or maiming a person including a firearm, incendiary device or explosive substance,

knife, or other sharp-edged knifelike weapon. This section shall not apply to any police officer who enters a courthouse in the line of duty.

2. Any member of the Rhode Island bar who has been issued an attorney court-access identification card by the Rhode Island Bar Association and who presents a valid card to any member of the Capitol Police may enter the courthouses of this state without passing through the metal-detector system or be otherwise subject to search.

3. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any Capitol Police officer who is detailed to a courthouse entry and who reasonably determines that an attorney presenting a court-access identification card may be in violation of this order is authorized to undertake appropriate prevention and security measures with respect to that attorney, including the use of a metal detector or other search.

4. The form of the court-access identification card issued by the Rhode Island Bar Association shall be approved by the Supreme Court and the Chief of the Capitol Police. At a minimum, it shall contain a current photograph and other information regarding the attorney and shall include the attorney's affirmation that:

A. The attorney is not carrying any weapon into a courthouse and an affirmation that the attorney understands and agrees that any violation of this order shall subject the attorney to the imposition of discipline.

B. The attorney understands and agrees that the court-access card is not transferable to any other person.

C. The attorney understands and agrees that the court-access card does not provide free access to any other person, including any person who may be entering the courthouse with the attorney, including a witness, client, or member of the attorney's staff.

D. The attorney understands and agrees that despite presenting a court-access identification card to the Capitol Police, a member of

the Capitol Police may nonetheless require a particular attorney to pass through a metal detector and/or have bags searched, based on reasonable suspicion that the attorney may be in violation of this order.

5. Any attorney who violates this order or the affirmations set forth on the court-access identification card shall be subject to discipline by the Court and shall forfeit his or her access card privileges.

Entered as an Executive Order this 6<sup>th</sup> day of February 2001.

By Order,

Enter:

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Clerk

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Joseph R. Weisberger  
Chief Justice