

United States District Court



District of Maine

**Courthouse Accessibility Information Handbook for the  
Edward Thaxter Gignoux U.S. Courthouse**

156 Federal Street  
Portland, Maine 04101  
Telephone: (207) 780 - 3356

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Edward Thaxter Gignoux United States Courthouse. This handbook provides information about services, equipment, and spaces that are available in the Edward Thaxter Gignoux Courthouse in Portland, Maine.

## **Plan Ahead**

The Court is committed to ensuring that you will be treated with dignity and respect during your visit. Many of the services and aids identified in this outline may require notice and planning by the Court; therefore, please contact the Office of the Clerk by [e-mail](#), in writing, or by telephone to arrange for services.

## **Directions**

Traveling on Interstate 295:


When traveling on Interstate 295 North or South, take Exit #7 to Franklin Street. At the fourth traffic light, turn right onto Congress Street. Turn left onto Pearl Street. Turn right onto Federal Street. The Courthouse will be on your left, at [156 Federal Street](#).

## **Parking**

The Courthouse does not have dedicated public parking. Visitors are encouraged to:


1. Utilize the City of Portland's on-street parking meters. There is a two-hour limit for each meter. For more information about the City of Portland Parking Meter Program, please click [here](#).
2. Park at the Cumberland County Parking Garage located at [188 Newbury Street](#). There is a fee to park in this garage. Directions: Exit 295 onto Franklin Street, exit #7. At the fourth traffic light, turn right onto Congress Street. At the first traffic light, turn left onto Pearl

Street. Turn left onto Federal Street. Follow Federal Street to the parking garage, take the second entrance.

3. Use the Temple Street Parking Garage located at [11 Temple Street](#). There is a fee to park in this garage. Directions: exit onto Franklin Street, exit #7. At the fourth traffic light, turn right onto Congress Street. At the second traffic light, turn left onto Temple Street. Halfway down the block and before the Nickelodeon Movie Theater, turn left into parking garage.
4.  **ADA Parking:** The Courthouse has one accessible parking spot near the back entrance of the Courthouse, off Newbury Street. Please contact the Clerk's Office before your arrival to make arrangements to park in the designated Courthouse ADA parking space. Alternatively, with an ADA placard or license plate, you may park at a metered space on the street without paying, and the time limit is doubled to four (4) hours.

## Entrances

The main entrance to the Gignoux Courthouse is located at 156 Federal Street. This entrance is located on the corner of Federal Street and Market Street. You must use the door at 156 Federal Street unless you require special assistance using the Court's ADA entrance on Newbury Street.

 The ADA entrance is behind the building adjacent to Newbury Street. The Newbury Street entrance is an auxiliary entrance that is staffed with security personnel. If security personnel are not present to assist you at this entrance, there is a communication box on the left of the door which can be used to communicate with the U.S. Marshals Service. Please contact the Court Security Office at (207) 780-3793 to make arrangements to use this entrance. A court security officer will assist you, perform security screening and escort you to the elevator.

## Courthouse Security

The Court's security requirements are outlined and designed to ensure that all persons entering the Courthouse are treated fairly while maintaining a safe environment. All persons entering federal courthouse facilities in this District, and all items carried by them, are subject to appropriate screening and search by a deputy U.S. Marshal, or any other designated law enforcement officer. Persons will be requested to provide identification and to state the nature of their business in the Courthouse. Anyone refusing to cooperate with these security measures may be denied entrance to the Courthouse.

1. Food or drink is not permitted in courtrooms and other public areas. If you have a medical condition that requires you to carry food or drink, please consult a court security officer on duty at the entrance.
2. Weapons are not allowed in the Courthouse.
3. The U.S. Marshals Service will require you to temporarily place your electronic items in their custody during your visit. Possession and use of cellular telephones or other wireless communication devices, computers and recording devices, the creation of photographs, including digital or video images, the recording or transmission of information, sound or

images by any means, or the possession and use of radio, television or broadcasting equipment is prohibited without prior approval of the Court.

## **Service Animals**

According to Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, or other mental disability. Service animals are permitted in all areas where members of the public participate in the services, programs, or activities of the Court. Though persons with a disability are not required to provide any verbal or written confirmation to establish the existence or extent of his or her disability, they may be asked specific questions regarding their service animal. If not immediately evident, qualified individuals may be asked whether their animal is a service animal and, if so, what services it has been trained to provide. Service animals must be kept on a leash, harness, or tether (unless using one is not possible due to the handler's disability, or interferes with the service animal's performance) and be within the control of the individual with a disability at all times. For the security and safety of all individuals, if at any time the animal becomes unruly or aggressive, the court may ask that the animal be removed from the facility.


## **Dress Code**

Although there is no formal dress code, visitors should dress in a manner that is respectful to the litigants and the Court. The courtrooms are generally cold, so we advise you to bring a jacket or sweater.

## **Courtroom-Specific Information**

### **Courtroom 1**


Courtroom 1 is located on the Second Floor and accessible using the stairwell inside the Federal Street Entrance. There is an elevator located at the Federal Street entrance. However, guests must navigate three stairs to access the elevator.

 For those guests who need to use the ADA entrance on Newbury Street, the elevator inside the entrance should be used to go to the First Floor. Exit the elevator on the First Floor, travel through the double doors and take a left following the hallway to the end where another elevator is waiting to take you to the Second Floor.

Courtroom 1 is generally wheelchair accessible, however, the witness stand is not. The jury box is wheelchair accessible.

### **Courtroom 2**


Courtroom 2 is located on the Second Floor and accessible using the stairwell inside the Federal Street Entrance. There is an elevator located at the Federal Street entrance. However, guests must navigate three stairs to access the elevator.

 For those guests who need to use the ADA entrance on Newbury Street, the elevator inside the entrance should be used to go to the First Floor. Exit the elevator on the First Floor, travel through the double doors and take a left following the hallway to the end where another elevator is waiting to take you to the Second Floor.

Courtroom 2 has ADA features. The witness stand can be modified to accommodate wheelchair access to the stand. Counsel tables can be retrofitted with risers to ensure that wheel-chair bound participants sit comfortably at the tables. The jury box is wheelchair accessible.

### **Courtroom 3**

Courtroom 3 is situated on the Third Floor. Access to this area of the Third Floor is achieved by using the elevator near the Newbury Street Entrance.

 The Courtroom is ADA accessible including the jury box, witness stand, and counsel tables.

### **Defibrillator**

There are two defibrillators in the Courthouse. The First-floor defibrillator is located near the Marshal's Office (Newbury Entrance). The Second-floor defibrillator is located in the hallway heading towards Courtroom Two.

### **Drinking Fountains**

ADA-compliant water fountains are found on each floor of the building.

### **Food Services**

The Courthouse does not have a cafeteria on the premises. There are local dining establishments within walking distance of the Courthouse.

### **Interpreter Services**

The Court Interpreters Act, Title 28, U.S.C. §1827 governs the provision of interpreters.

### **Services for Deaf or Hearing Impaired Individuals**

Pursuant to Judicial Conference policy adopted in 1995, federal courts must provide sign language interpreters or other auxiliary aids and services to participants in federal court proceedings who are deaf, hearing-impaired or have difficulty communicating regardless of whether the case was instituted by the U.S. government. Courts may also provide these services to spectators when the Court deems it appropriate. Generally, the Court will honor the

participant's choice of service or auxiliary aid subject to factors affecting the practicality of those services such as cost and availability.

## **Sign Language Services**

There are three forms of sign language (1) American Sign Language (ASL), (2) Pidgin Signed English (PSE), and (3) Signing Exact English (SEE). Whenever possible, the Court will provide the form of sign language specified by the individual requesting the service.

## **CART**

Computer-Assisted Real-Time Translation (CART) is available with approval of the presiding judge. When CART is provided, a court stenographer will transcribe the court proceeding into written text, which can be displayed on an individual monitor. The text produced with CART does not constitute the official court record, and per Judiciary policy, it may only be used as long as necessary by the participant.


## **Assistive Listening Devices**

Each courtroom is outfitted with assistive listening devices that can help individuals with a hearing impairment hear more clearly what is being said.


## **Braille Signage**

Braille signage is located 60" above the floor on the latch-side of most doors in public spaces in the Courthouse.

## **Services for Nursing Women**

 The court has a designated room for use by nursing women. The room is available to jurors, lawyers, litigants, and court personnel. Please contact the Court's facility access coordinator to reserve the room.

## **Restrooms**

 There are public restrooms located on each floor, all ADA accessible.

## **Elevators**

 Two ADA elevators are located in the Courthouse. Elevators are located near each entrance.

## Emergency Evacuation

While in the Courthouse, please take note of the emergency exits. During a fire emergency, follow the exit signs to evacuate the building or follow the instructions given by court personnel. Individuals who cannot use the stairs should gather in front of the nearest elevator to wait to be escorted out of the building by safety personnel. In other emergency situations, you may need to run, hide or fight for your safety and listen for instructions from court and safety personnel.

## Access Coordinators

The Court has designated facility access coordinators to assist individuals needing assistance. Please contact an access coordinator in advance of a scheduled court proceeding, or upon notification, so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged before you arrive. Contact may be made by phone, mail, or in person. Requests for an accommodation should be directed to:

Jennifer Wood  
(207) 274-5147

Or

Michelle Thibodeau  
(207) 274-5109

Or

Email: [newcases.portland@med.uscourts.gov](mailto:newcases.portland@med.uscourts.gov)