URGENT — Formal Evidence Preservation Notice and JB-15-01 Footage Request — November 20, 2026, Biddeford District Court

3 messages

Ryan michaels <rtgmich@gmail.com> Sun, Nov 22, 2026 at 9:43 AM
Reply-To: rtgmich@gmail.com
To: info@courts.maine.gov
Cc: "Cardone, Barbara" <barbara.cardone@courts.maine.gov>, "Tibbetts, Mark" <Mark.Tibbetts@courts.maine.gov>

Dear State Court Administrator, Ms. Cardone, and Chief Deputy Tibbetts,

I am submitting this correspondence as a formal request for the immediate preservation of evidence relating to an incident involving judicial marshals at the Biddeford District Court on November 20, 2026.

This correspondence also constitutes a written request for courthouse security footage under Administrative Order JB-15-01.

I respectfully request that it be promptly delivered to the Office of the State Court Administrator and forwarded to the Office of Judicial Marshals for preservation.

SUMMARY OF THE INCIDENT

On November 20, 2026, I entered the Biddeford District Court, completed the initial security screening, and was permitted into the courthouse.

I subsequently read aloud, in its entirety, a three-page statement titled *A Formal Message to the Biddeford District Court and All Judicial Branch Personnel* to the highest-ranking clerk available to me.

The statement addressed disability accommodations, financial barriers, judicial accountability, and my ongoing concerns regarding meaningful access to justice.

I spoke audibly enough that others in the lobby could hear me. I was not threatening anyone or engaging in violent behavior.

Two judicial marshals stood behind me during nearly the entirety of my statement.

They permitted me to finish.

Afterward, one marshal approached and stated, according to my reconstruction of the recorded exchange:

"I need to ask you to come back to screening. When you went through screening, you collected your stuff. Apparently you had a knife on you."

I did not possess a knife.

The marshal subsequently explained that the screening machine apparently indicated something resembling a knife. Later in our exchange, he referred to a "glitch" involving the machine.

These circumstances raise serious questions regarding the factual basis, timing, and justification for the additional screening request.

If a suspected weapon had been identified during my initial screening, why was I permitted to continue addressing court personnel while two marshals remained nearby?

When was this alleged indication actually discovered, and when were the marshals informed?

I am especially concerned about the timing because I had just publicly criticized the Judicial Branch and requested institutional accountability.

FORMAL DEMAND FOR PRESERVATION

Please immediately preserve, in original form where available, all evidence relating to my November 20, 2026 courthouse visit, including:

1. All surveillance footage covering my arrival, entry screening, courthouse lobby, clerk counter, interactions with judicial marshals, any subsequent screening, and departure.

2. All available screening-system images, alerts, event logs, error messages, diagnostic records, and records relating to the alleged knife indication or equipment glitch.

3. All incident reports, security logs, officer notes, internal correspondence, radio communications, and other records relating to my presence or the decision to request additional screening.

4. Records identifying the marshals involved, the timing of the alleged weapon indication, and the decision-making process underlying the subsequent interaction.

5. Available records showing access, retention, alteration, deletion, overwriting, or preservation of the relevant evidence.

6. Relevant communications or directives discussing my statement, my prior complaints, or my conduct during this courthouse visit.

Please take the steps available to suspend routine deletion or overwriting of potentially relevant evidence.

This request encompasses records created before, during, and after the incident that concern the events of November 20.

FORMAL REQUEST UNDER JB-15-01

Separately from this preservation notice, I request review of the release of relevant surveillance footage under Administrative Order JB-15-01.

The footage is sought to establish the chronology and circumstances of an encounter involving an alleged weapon indication, subsequent security intervention, and my concerns about possible retaliation for constitutionally protected speech.

I recognize that disclosure is subject to applicable rules and security restrictions. My immediate priority is preservation.

REQUEST FOR WRITTEN CONFIRMATION

Please confirm:

- Receipt and proper routing of this request.
- Whether the relevant footage and records remain available.
- Whether steps have been taken to preserve them.
- Which office or official is responsible for coordinating preservation.
- Whether any requested records have already been deleted or overwritten.

I am attaching the complete statement I read aloud during the incident.

Given the potential for short surveillance-retention periods, I request immediate attention to this matter.

This notice is made in anticipation of possible administrative complaints, constitutional claims, and other appropriate legal proceedings. Nothing in this correspondence is intended to waive or limit any rights, claims, or remedies available under applicable law.

I am requesting that the facts be preserved before evidence necessary to determine what occurred becomes unavailable.

Respectfully,

Ryan TG Michaels
100% Disabled Veteran
Self-Represented Litigant

A FORMAL MESSAGE TO THE BIDDEFORD DISTRICT COURT AND ALL JUDICIAL BRANCH PERSONNEL - Google Docs.pdf
80K

Cardone, Barbara <barbara.cardone@courts.maine.gov> Mon, Nov 23, 2026 at 11:05 AM
To: "rtgmich@gmail.com" <rtgmich@gmail.com>

Mr. Michaels -

Your request for preservation of security footage has been received by the Judicial Branch, and the footage will be preserved.

Your request for release of the footage to you has been denied by the State Court Administrator pursuant to the terms of Administrative Order JB-15-01.

BARBARA A. CARDONE | Director of Legal Affairs and Public Relations

MAINE JUDICIAL BRANCH
Administrative Office of the Courts
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She/Hers

From: Ryan michaels <rtgmich@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 22, 2026 9:43 AM
To: List: Court Information <info@courts.maine.gov>
Cc: Cardone, Barbara <barbara.cardone@courts.maine.gov>; Tibbetts, Mark <Mark.Tibbetts@courts.maine.gov>
Subject: URGENT — Formal Evidence Preservation Notice and JB-15-01 Footage Request — November 20, 2026, Biddeford District Court

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Ryan michaels <rtgmich@gmail.com> Mon, Nov 23, 2026 at 11:54 AM
Reply-To: rtgmich@gmail.com
To: "Cardone, Barbara" <barbara.cardone@courts.maine.gov>

Ms. Cardone,

Thank you for your November 23, 2026 confirmation that the Maine Judicial Branch has received my request to preserve courthouse security footage from November 20, 2026, and that the footage will be preserved.

I appreciate that confirmation.

However, your additional statement that the State Court Administrator has denied my request for access under Administrative Order JB-15-01 raises serious concerns, particularly given the extensive history of my communications with you and other Judicial Branch officials.

This is not the first time I have reported possible misconduct by Judicial Branch personnel, sought preservation of the evidence, and subsequently been denied access to it.

Nor is this the first time I have requested disability-related assistance navigating the procedures necessary to seek accountability.

I believe this history deserves meaningful institutional attention.

1. A documented history that cannot reasonably be treated as an isolated complaint

On September 24, 2025, you expressly acknowledged my ADA-related request by stating:

"I will have your request reviewed as it pertains to the ADA."

The following day, you communicated the Judicial Branch's refusal to produce the administrative records I had requested. You cited limits on the obligations imposed by the ADA, but I continued to question whether my particular circumstances had received an individualized assessment.

Your subsequent correspondence concluded with your statement that you would not continue debating the legal sufficiency of the response.

On October 30, 2025, I reported an incident involving judicial marshals at the Biddeford District Court, including an allegation that one marshal physically pushed me backward from a courtroom.

That same day, I sought preservation and release of relevant courthouse footage. Jessica Tarr confirmed that my request had been forwarded to the State Court Administrator. The request was denied, although preservation efforts were reportedly continuing.

On November 13, 2025, you suggested that a subpoena directed to the State Court Administrator might provide a way to obtain the footage.

On November 17, you stated that the Judicial Branch could not evaluate my ADA request because I had not disclosed the nature of my disability. You also advised that the denial would remain in place until the applicable administrative procedure was satisfied.

When I requested further clarification, your response was:

"I refer you back to my previous emails. I am not going to comment further."

I subsequently pursued a formal ADA grievance and submitted concerns to outside civil rights authorities.

My records include correspondence concerning Maine Human Rights Commission matter PA25-0227, Michaels v. Maine Judicial Branch Accessibility Office.

In December 2025, Chief Deputy Mark Tibbetts directed me back to you for guidance concerning courthouse footage. When I explained that our earlier correspondence had not resolved my procedural questions, he later communicated that he lacked authority to address release and that the Judicial Branch could not provide legal or procedural advice.

On January 28, 2026, the Court Access Office acknowledged my renewed accommodation request and confirmed that its email address could be used to submit requests without completing a mandatory form.

I recognize that some assistance was offered and that not every request necessarily required the outcome I sought.

Nevertheless, the record documents sustained efforts to obtain accommodations, understand procedures, and pursue review.

I am asking the Judicial Branch to examine that history as a whole rather than treating each new request as though the previous correspondence never occurred.

2. The November 20 incident and the need for independent examination

On November 20, 2026, I entered the Biddeford District Courthouse, completed security screening, and was permitted into the building.

I then read aloud, in its entirety, a three-page statement addressed to Judicial Branch personnel concerning disability accommodations, financial hardship, denied filing-fee waiver requests, institutional accountability, and meaningful access to justice.

Two judicial marshals stood behind me during much of that statement and permitted me to finish.

Afterward, a marshal approached and alleged that my earlier security screening had indicated something resembling a knife.

I possessed no knife.

During the subsequent exchange, the marshal referenced an apparent equipment glitch.

I understand and respect the obligation of courthouse security personnel to respond to genuine safety concerns.

What concerns me is the chronology.

If an indication of a potential weapon existed during my initial screening, when was it discovered? When were the marshals informed? Why was I allowed to continue addressing court personnel before the concern was raised?

These are factual questions.

They should not be resolved by assumption, whether in my favor or the Judicial Branch's.

They should be resolved through evidence.

I have already submitted a separate formal complaint asking for investigation of potential First Amendment retaliation and other constitutional concerns. I reiterate that retaliation is an allegation requiring examination, not a conclusion I am asking the institution to accept without proof.

3. Preservation without access — a recurring accountability concern

Your latest correspondence confirms that the footage will be preserved but that my request to receive it has been denied.

Administrative Order JB-15-01 generally restricts disclosure of courthouse security footage. I recognize that security-related confidentiality is a legitimate governmental interest.

However, Section IV also permits consideration of significant and extenuating circumstances warranting an exception.

I respectfully request written clarification of whether the State Court Administrator considered the specific allegations and circumstances of November 20 when determining whether an exception was appropriate.

I also request clarification of whether any alternative method of independent examination is available through an authorized investigation, appropriate oversight body, court order, or other lawful process.

I am not asking the Judicial Branch to presume that its personnel committed misconduct. I am asking how someone alleging misconduct can obtain an impartial examination of relevant evidence when that evidence is controlled by the institution whose personnel are being questioned.

That is a legitimate accountability concern.

It is particularly concerning that I encountered a similar preservation-and-denial outcome after the October 30, 2025 courthouse incident.

4. Formal renewed ADA Title II accommodation request

Please treat this section as a new, independent, formal request for reasonable disability accommodations under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, including 42 U.S.C. § 12132 and 28 C.F.R. §§ 35.130(b)(7) and 35.160.

My documented disabilities include traumatic brain injury and PTSD. These conditions affect my information processing, communication under stressful circumstances, and ability to navigate complex administrative and legal procedures without appropriate support.

The barriers I am identifying are not simply that I disagree with decisions made by Judicial Branch officials.

They include difficulty understanding fragmented procedural instructions, identifying the appropriate authority when responsibilities are divided among multiple offices, processing complicated information during stressful interactions, and pursuing established review procedures without clear, accessible communication.

These difficulties are particularly significant when I am representing myself and must navigate several interrelated processes involving disability accommodations, courthouse security complaints, and requests for evidence.

I am requesting the following accommodations and assistance:

1. A designated Court Access Office contact to coordinate disability-related requests and provide continuity in communications.

2. Clear, accessible written communication identifying the established procedural requirements, responsible offices, applicable forms, and available review mechanisms relevant to each request.

3. Written summaries of substantive procedural communications, with reasonable opportunities to seek clarification when necessary because of my disability-related processing limitations.

4. Reasonable additional processing time and clarification during in-person administrative interactions, when practicable and consistent with legitimate court operations and security requirements.

5. Consideration of a predictable, non-confrontational communication approach during interactions with courthouse personnel, including clear explanations of instructions and reasonable opportunities to process and respond, when circumstances safely permit.

6. Written acknowledgment and tracking of accommodation requests, with notice of decisions and applicable grievance procedures.

7. An individualized assessment of whether any additional reasonable modifications are necessary to ensure effective communication and equal participation in Judicial Branch services.

I am not asking for legal representation, preferential treatment, an exemption from legitimate security screening, or an assurance of any particular judicial outcome.

Nor am I asserting that Title II automatically entitles me to confidential courthouse surveillance footage.

I am asking that disability-related barriers not prevent me from accessing the same established processes available to other members of the public.

If further documentation of my functional limitations is reasonably necessary, please identify what is required and provide a confidential method of submitting that information.

I ask that this accommodation request be forwarded directly to the Court Access Coordinator and evaluated independently from the State Court Administrator's decision concerning release of surveillance footage.

5. Prior ADA requests and their administrative status

Given my documented correspondence, please also clarify the status and disposition of my previous ADA-related requests.

In particular, I ask whether the September 2025 request that you stated would be reviewed under the ADA received an individualized assessment, what determination was made, and whether the associated documentation remains available.

I also request confirmation of how my November 17, 2025 formal ADA grievance was processed and whether any written grievance determination or related notice was issued.

Finally, I request clarification of how the Court Access Office handled my January 27, 2026 accommodation request following its January 28 acknowledgment.

I recognize that these matters may have been handled through different administrative processes. I am asking for an accurate accounting of those processes and their outcomes, not assuming that no review occurred merely because I remain dissatisfied with the results.

6. Specific requests concerning the current incident

For clarity, I request written confirmation of the following:

1. Whether the preserved November 20 footage includes my arrival, initial screening, the clerk-counter interaction, the subsequent marshal encounter, any additional screening, and departure, insofar as recordings exist.

2. Whether the separate screening-machine records, incident reports, contemporaneous communications, and other materials identified in my November 22 preservation notice have also been secured, and whether any requested materials no longer exist.

3. Whether Section IV's significant-and-extenuating-circumstances provision was considered in denying release, and whether the Judicial Branch will provide a written explanation of the basis for that determination.

4. Whether my November 22 formal complaint concerning potential constitutional retaliation has been received, who is responsible for reviewing it, and how possible conflicts involving the personnel whose conduct is under examination will be addressed.

5. Whether an independent investigator or authorized oversight body can obtain and review the preserved footage without requiring its unrestricted public release.

6. Whether my renewed ADA accommodation request has been accepted for individualized review and who will communicate with me regarding that process.

I request that each office respond only to matters within its authority and identify the responsible office for matters outside its jurisdiction.

7. The human consequences of these barriers

On November 20, I stood before the highest-ranking clerk available to me and read a statement concerning the human consequences of my experience with this judicial system.

I explained that I am a 100% disabled veteran, unemployed, representing myself, and a father who has not seen his children in more than two years.

I described the financial barriers I have encountered, including denied filing-fee waiver requests while facing substantial court-ordered financial obligations.

I explained the difficulty of continuing to seek remedies while repeatedly encountering procedures I struggle to navigate.

I did not demand that the clerk personally answer for decisions she had not made.

I asked the institution to understand the consequences of those decisions.

And I am asking the same today.

At what point do repeated requests for meaningful access become more than individual administrative transactions? At what point does the institution examine whether its own processes are working for the people they are supposed to serve?

I believe those questions deserve serious consideration, particularly from a judicial institution entrusted with protecting constitutional rights and ensuring equal access to justice.

The existence of procedural safeguards matters.

But so does whether people with disabilities can meaningfully use them.

I have not abandoned my commitment to lawful processes, documentation, and accountability.

I am continuing to use those processes, including by asking the Judicial Branch to examine its own conduct fairly and preserve the evidence necessary for independent review.

I do not seek a different standard of justice because I have disabilities. I seek a fair and accessible opportunity to pursue the same standard of justice that everyone is entitled to receive.

Please preserve this correspondence as part of the administrative records concerning my requests and complaints, and provide written acknowledgment and appropriate routing.

The statement I read on November 20 ended with two requests:

I want that understood.

And I want it documented.

Those requests remain unchanged.

Respectfully,

Ryan TG Michaels
100% Disabled Veteran
Father | Self-Represented Litigant

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