S-1 Theft Gate Procedure

The theft detection gate on S-1 of the Smith Addition (hereinafter Addition) is designed to prevent library users from removing Law Library books, periodicals, and other materials from the Addition. Your ability to effectively monitor the gate is an integral part of our effort to protect the Law Library's collection from theft and damage while at the same time treating all Library patrons with courtesy and respect.

I. Basic principles:

A. The theft gate sounds an alarm and locks temporarily when protected books and other materials are carried through the gate. It also occasionally sounds false alarms.

B. Whenever the alarm sounds, it is critical that you determine exactly what caused the alarm.

C. NEVER TURN THE GATE OFF, except in the following situations:

1. When Law Library staff making deliveries or taking books to the old Legal Research Stacks for shelving or reshelving ask at the Reference Desk for the alarm to be turned off to enable them to proceed through the gate.

2. If a U of M Law School faculty member is taking books to his or her office in the Law School and does not have time or refuses to charge the books at the Circulation Desk on S-2, and asks at the Reference Desk to be let through the gate with Law Library books.

D. Never permit patrons to circumvent the theft gate by handing items around it or by carrying items through the gate over their heads; never show patrons that this is even possible, i.e., refrain from doing so yourself on their behalf.

E. The theft gate does not harm laptops and other computers or videotapes. Patrons must carry such items through the security gate.

II. Whenever the alarm sounds, take the following steps, except in the circumstances listed in I.C above:

A. Leave the Reference Desk and approach the gate, while politely asking the patron to wait. Explain to the patron that we must figure out what is setting off the alarm.

B. Ask the patron to check his briefcase or backpack for items that might have set off the alarm as follows:

1. Have the patron remove possible alarm setting items, e.g., Law Library books, books from other Libraries, the patron's own books, from his case or pack and hand them to you.*

2. You should then walk through the gate with each item separately.*

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1 (Note: These procedures are not applicable at the Circulation Desk theft gate on S-2)
*If the patron does not want you to handle his belongings, have the patron walk through the gate with each item separately.

   a. If the alarm doesn't sound, leave each item outside the gate and try the next one. Then have the patron walk through separately with his pack or briefcase and other belongings.

   b. If the alarm doesn't sound again, apologize to the patron for the inconvenience.

   c. If the alarm sounds again, repeat the above until you identify what caused the alarm to sound. Once you identify the item, follow the steps in Section III below, depending on what type of item caused the alarm to go off.

III. Steps for handling categories of material that set off the theft alarm:

   A. Law Library books, videotapes, and other material: If the patron was attempting to leave with Law Library material, explain to the patron that Library material may not be removed from the Addition and ask him to leave the material in the Addition, even if the books are from the old Legal Research stacks.

      1. If the patron says the books or videotapes are charged to him to an office or carrel outside the Addition, ask the patron to return to the Circulation Desk on S-2 to ensure that the material is properly charged to that particular patron, and that the patron is authorized to remove the book from the Addition.

      2. If the patron is a research assistant for a Law School faculty member and has books charged to the professor’s office by the Phone Page, ask the research assistant to go to the Circulation Desk on S-2 to follow their procedures for handling this situation.

   B. Books, videotapes, etc. from other Libraries: If the patron believes that a book or books from another library are causing the problem, have the patron walk through the gate carrying only the suspected book/s. If the alarm sounds, have the patron go to the Circulation Desk on S-2 to follow their procedures for handling this situation.

   C. Non-library Books: If the item causing the alarm to sound is a non-library book, e.g., the patrons own book, have the patron go to the Circulation Desk on S-2 to have the book desensitized.

   D. Non-library Videotapes: If the patron believes a video from outside the Law Library is causing the alarm to sound, have the patron exit through the security gate with all his belongings except the videotape. If the alarm does not sound, hand the videotape to the patron from the entrance side of the theft gate, i.e., the left side as you face out.

IV. Attempted theft: If circumstances and the demeanor of the patron lead you to suspect that a patron was attempting to steal a Law Library book, take the book back and write an incident report. You should ask for the patron's ID or pass, and call Campus Security at 3-1131 if warranted by the situation. This option is used when the totality of the circumstances point to an intentional theft rather than an inadvertent or accidental occurrence.