New York City Law Department improves security with the Schlage Biometrics HandReader®

“The Schlage Biometrics HandReaders are wonderful. With this system, only the authorized person can enter the facility.”

- Malachy Higgins, Director of Administration, New York City Law Department

Summary
Schlage Biometrics HandReader improves reliability of access control and accuracy of time and attendance records for the New York City Law Department.

Business need
The New York City Law Department employs more than 1,000 people, including hundreds of attorneys who are in and out of the office constantly – going to court, taking depositions, and often showing up at work late at night or on the weekends. Their old system of using cards to gain entrance to offices and signing in manually was expensive and cumbersome. “That arrangement was a pain and expensive, because cards regularly got lost or damaged,” said Malachy Higgins, Director of Administration for the New York City Law Department. “The hand reader provides a much more reliable system.”

Statistics
Industry: Government
Application: Access control
Biometric: HandReader®
HandReaders: 30
Users: More than 1,000
Geography: United States
Challenges
The New York City Law Department needed a system that made it easy to track time and attendance accurately. They also wanted a reliable, secure system for access control.

Solution
In the early 1990s, the Law Department installed the HandReader because of its ease of use and accuracy. “We saw a study by Sandia National Laboratories showing that the Schlage HandReader was the least intrusive and fastest technology available and that decided it for us,” said Higgins.

Initially, they installed the machines to monitor time and attendance and then began to use them to control building access. “The Schlage Biometrics HandReaders are wonderful. They have made our facilities much more secure,” said Higgins. He points out that access cards can be passed from one person to another, but with the HandReader, only an authorized person can enter a facility. The HandReader uses a field-proven biometric technology to verify employees’ identities in less than one second based on the unique size and shape of their hands. The Law Department’s centralized system links together some 30 HandReaders at 10 locations.

At the Law Department’s main office, 17 HandReaders are connected to a single communications port. HandReaders at nine remote sites use modems to send transactions to the central computer. The time and attendance software calculates hours worked for all hourly employees at all 10 locations.

Results
The New York City Law Department now gives secure access to authorized personnel and has improved, accurate time and attendance records.