

Process of Service

Index Code: 1303

Effective Date: 05/01/09 (Revised 10/23/2023)

I. Purpose

Under the rules for courts in Maryland the Office of the Sheriff is responsible for the service of civil process. The effectiveness of the judicial system is dependent, in part, upon the effective and timely service of court documents by this office. The purpose of this directive is to ensure our constitutional duty is carried out, and establish guidelines for doing so.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff to carry out our constitutionally mandated duty of providing process of service for the courts, and do so in the most effective and timely manner possible.

III. Courts and Civil Process Unit

The responsibility of the civil process function primarily lies with the Courts and Civil Process Unit, with the exception of Body Attachments, Protective Orders, Peace Orders and Emergency Petitions. Those orders are normally the responsibility of the Patrol Division with assistance from the Courts and Civil Process Unit as needed.

A. Assignment and Control

1. Deputies will serve civil papers ordered by the courts in compliance with this directive and the rules of the Maryland courts.

2. Deputies will not serve civil papers outside the State of Maryland.

3. A member of the Courts and Civil Process Unit is responsible for picking up the civil papers issued by the courts to this office, and will return served and non-served papers daily when the courts are open.

4. The deputy receiving papers will initially deliver them to the clerical staff, which will be responsible for logging them into the CAD/RMS system. The following elements will be recorded. Additional elements may be entered as needed depending on the specific document:

- a. Date and time received
- b. Type of legal process, civil or criminal
- c. Nature of the document
- d. Source of the document
- e. Name of the plaintiff/complainant or name of the defendant/respondent
- f. Officer assigned for service
- g. Date of assignment
- h. Court docket number