

HOW to SERVE a Civil Complaint by CERTIFIED PROCESS SERVER

This method requires you to find, hire, and pay, a certified process server to serve the civil summons and complaint to the defendant. Using the address *you* provide, process server is a person who will give the papers to the defendant at home, work, or other location. A certified process server has taken and passed a certification test. The certified process server will use the address you provide to find and serve the defendant.

If you decide to use this method, look under "**PROCESS SERVER**" online or in the Yellow Pages to find someone who can serve your papers. Service is complete at the time the process server hands the other party the court papers. Be sure to ask the process server if he or she will return the sheet to the clerk of court and file it. If you choose this method of service, use the "**Service by Process Server**" form.

Notice: Generally, it costs money to serve a complaint using a certified process server. If you cannot afford to pay a process server, you may apply for a Fee Waiver/Deferral, and have the Maricopa County Sheriff serve your civil complaint packet. A fee waiver or deferral only covers costs of service of process for the sheriff – not certified process servers.

STEP 1: **FIND.** Using a local telephone book, locate process servers in the commercial section of the phone book under "**PROCESS SERVER**". If you have access to a tablet, computer or cell phone, look online by using the search term "Phoenix process servers" or similar. Also, the web site of the Arizona Process Server's Association is helpful. A certified process server:

- **May offer greater flexibility in serving papers "after-hours" or on short notice.**
- **Are paid directly by you, not through the court.**
- **Fees may not be deferred or waived by the court.**

STEP 2: GO. Go to the Registered Process Server's office. **TAKE** with you the following things:

- Defendant's copy of "**Civil Complaint packet with Summons.**"
- A picture or a written physical description of the Defendant.
- A written description of the automobile that the other party drives.
- The address where the other party can be served.
- The amount you need to pay for this service. (You can call ahead of time to ask the Process Server what type of payment they require.)

STEP 3: WAIT. The Process Server will mail you a copy of the "**Affidavit of Service**" after he/she serves the other party with the papers. **IMPORTANT: If the Process Server does not file an "Affidavit of Service" with the Clerk of the Court, you must get the "Affidavit of Service" from the Process Server, take it to the court clerk, and file it.**

STEP 4: COUNT. Look at the "**Affidavit of Service**" to find out the **date** the Defendant was **served** with the court papers. Start counting the days on the day **after** the other party was served the papers. The Defendant has twenty days to file an Answer after being served in the State of Arizona and thirty days to file an Answer after being served in a State other than Arizona.