

SERVICE OF SMALL CLAIMS DOCUMENTS VIA THE LA COUNTY SHERIFF

If you are suing a person or entity located in Los Angeles County, the Sheriff can serve small claims documents such as the small claims complaint (SC-100) on the defendant for you. This guide outlines the steps you must take to use Los Angeles County Sheriff to serve small claims court documents:

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| <p>Locate the correct Sheriff's Office location</p> | <p>If the person you are suing (the defendant) is located within Los Angeles County, the Sheriff's office located nearest to the person you are suing can assist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find the correct office by entering the <u>defendant's address</u> in the locator tool: http://civil.lasd.org/CivilProcess/Searchaddr2.aspx?FrmType=16&status=0 <p>If the Defendant lives in another county you must contact that county's Sheriff Civil Process Unit to determine what their process is to serve court papers.</p> |
| <p>Complete the Sheriff's Instructions Form</p> | <p>Fill out Sheriff's Instructions Form (available here)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure to have a correct and valid address for person(s) you are suing. Enter any additional instructions/information in the space provided. Review a sample form here. |
| <p>Drop off your request</p> | <p>Drop off the documents with the correct Sheriff's office at least FOUR WEEKS (ONE MONTH) before your hearing date.</p> <p>Drop off in person or mail the following documents to the Sheriff's Office location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 copy of the Sheriff's Instructions Form 2 copies of each document that will be served (SC-100 and SC-100A and/or MC-031, if applicable). Be sure that you provide copies of the filed versions that are stamped by the court clerk with your case number. |
| <p>Fees for services</p> | <p>If you have a fee waiver (FW-001), this service is at no cost to you. Bring a copy of your approved fee waiver when you drop off the documents at the Sheriff's Office.</p> <p>If you do not have a fee waiver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will be charged after the Sheriff attempts service If service is successful, you will be charged a \$40 fee per defendant If the person is not found after three attempts the sheriff's office will charge \$35 for "not found." The amount can be paid by check, money order, or cash. |
| <p>Complete Service of Process</p> | <p>The Sheriff will make up to three attempts to complete personal or substituted service based on the address and additional instructions you provide in the Sheriff's Instructions Form.</p> <p>If the defendant is served → sheriff will file proof of service with the court and a copy will be mailed to you.</p> <p>If the defendant is not served → the sheriff will send you a "Certificate of not found/No Service" describing their attempts at service and the reasons they could not serve the documents on the defendant(s).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can request the sheriff's office to re-attempt service at a new address or the same address. You will be charged for the service again. <p>If you have not heard from the Sheriff about the status of your service request → contact the sheriff's office at least 5 days before the hearing to check the status by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Phone</u> - Civil Processing Department can be reached at (213) 229-3140 <u>Online</u> – Civil Management Bureau contact form |