

Assault Checklist

- **Get to a Safe Place**
- **Assess Injuries**
- **Assess Damage to Property**
- **Contact the Authorities**
- **Anything Missing?**
- **Document the Incident**
- **Notify your Employer or Client**
- **Notify your State Association**
- **Report Incident to PAAPRS**

Police (non-emergency):

Sheriff, Marshal, Ranger, Constable etc.
(non-emergency):

Penal Codes Regarding Assault

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The Process Server's Quick Action Guide If Assaulted



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Process Server Assault



Unfortunately, assault is a risk inherent with the process serving profession. While prevention of assault is ideal, aggressive reactions, physical violence and even the threat of death are all possible when you work in the field.

This guide is intended to be a quick reference for process servers who are assaulted in the performance of their duties. It is generic enough to be useful in all 50 states but valuable enough to be kept in your glove box.

You may not be thinking clearly having just been assaulted, so the following paragraphs outline the basic steps you should take if you are involved in an assault incident.

STEP 1: **GET TO A SAFE PLACE**

Remove yourself from the situation. Now is not the time to consider pride or righteousness. Walk, run or drive far enough away so you can collect your thoughts and gather your emotions.

STEP 2: **ASSESS INJURIES**

Once in a safe place, thoroughly assess any injuries you have sustained. If you are hurt, how badly? What may seem minor to you at the time could be more serious than you think. Consider getting checked out, both as a health/safety precaution, and also to have a record of the injuries. Take pictures showing any immediate marks. If you need medical attention, make sure that you can get there by yourself. Don't take a chance, especially with head injuries. Call for a ride, or dial 911 if appropriate.

STEP 3: **ASSESS DAMAGE**

Check your clothes, and personal property in your possession for any damage. Is something ripped, smashed, scratched, chipped, cracked, torn or otherwise broken? Photograph any damage right away, or as soon as possible thereafter.

STEP 4: **ANYTHING MISSING?**

Check to make sure that you are not missing anything like your phone, wallet, keys, eyeglasses, clipboard, sunglasses, iPod etc. If you discover that something is missing, consider calling the Police or Sheriff right away to assist in retrieving your personal items.

STEP 5: **CONTACT THE AUTHORITIES**

Always make sure to report any assault incident to the police, no matter how minor. It not only creates a permanent record of what happened during this particular instance from your perspective; but it will also protect others in the future. Also, if questions arise later as to what actually transpired during the service, a detailed police report will be very helpful.

STEP 6: **DOCUMENT THE INCIDENT**

While you are waiting on the authorities from a safe location, collect your thoughts and write down as much as you can remember about the incident. Create a general chronology and then fill in specific details noting conversations, witnesses, what was used to assault you, how it happened, injuries and property damage. If you were injured during the incident, pictures taken right after the incident or at the hospital may be very important down the road. Continue taking daily pictures showing the progress of the injuries. They may look worse for a few days before showing signs of healing.

STEP 7: **NOTIFY EMPLOYER/CLIENT**

Your employer may have a policy in place if an incident occurs on the job. Contact your supervisor or client to make them aware of what happened. It is also important to share your experience with other process servers to prevent similar attacks. Being assaulted is traumatic. Counseling and other support may be provided by some employers to help you deal emotionally with the assault.

STEP 8: **NOTIFY YOUR STATE ASSOCIATION**

Contact your association to make them aware of the incident. Some associations have an assault advisor to provide guidance and help you through your assault situations. Process server associations across the country are taking strides to better protect their members (and the entire profession) through legislative changes, assault prevention meetings or classes, and by hosting discussions at industry events. Some associations have been successful in having assault on a process server upgraded from a misdemeanor to a felony.

STEP 9: **REPORT THE INCIDENT TO PAAPRS**

PAAPRS is a National database of Process Serving Assaults. Go to www.serve-now.com and register your incident at the PAAPRS link.