

Assault Checklist

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- 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 (non-emergency):

Penal Codes Regarding Assault

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The Process Server's Quick Reference Guide if You're 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 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

Regardless of whether or not you wish to press charges it's important to report your incident to the police. Filing a police report creates an official record of the incident that can be referenced at a later date. If at any point your state association or local lawmakers decide to push for stronger protection laws, these formal incident reports may be instrumental in the success of those proposed changes.

STEP 6: DOCUMENT THE INCIDENT

While you are waiting on the authorities from a safe location, take a few minutes to write down everything that you can remember about the incident. Take detailed notes of what happened from start to finish including any verbal exchanges, what you were assaulted with, and any injuries. Include a timeline as best as you can remember. If you did sustain injuries during the incident, the pictures you took right after the incident or at the hospital may be very important down the road. Continue with pictures daily 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. Additionally, assault can be a traumatic experience, and reaching out for support can help you cope.

STEP 8:

NOTIFY YOUR STATE ASSOCIATION

Contact your association to make them aware of the incident. Many associations have an assault advisor to help guide you through an assault situation. Process server associations across the country are taking strides to better protect members of the profession through legislation changes and assault prevention meetings. For many states, this includes getting assault on a process server changed from a misdemeanor to a felony charge, discussing the issue at your local association meetings, and raising public awareness.

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. While there take a look at the other resources made available by ServeNow.