

Serving Court Documents Research Guide

Overview

This research guide includes information and forms on serving court documents to other parties involved in a court case in Texas. To serve someone is “to make legal delivery of (a notice or process)” or “to present (a person) with a notice or process as required by law.” (*Black’s Law Dictionary, 11th ed.*) Some international service information is also included. This research guide is not exhaustive and may not have the most up-to-date information. It is for information purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice or act as the substitute for legal counsel.

Related research guides: Citation by Posting, Citation by Publication

Statutes & Codes

Texas Statutes Online www.statutes.capitol.texas.gov

Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code

- Ch. 17 – Parties; Citation; Long-Arm Jurisdiction
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/CP/html/CP.17.htm>

Texas Rules of Civil Procedure

- Rule 99 – Issuance and Form of Citation
<https://www.txcourts.gov/media/1452743/trcp-combined-effective-september-1-2021.pdf#page=72>

Texas Family Code

- §6.408 Service of Citation (divorce)
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/FA/html/FA.6.htm#6.408>
- §102.009 Service of Citation (SAPCR)
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/FA/html/FA.102.htm#102.009>

Texas Estates Code

- Ch. 51 Notices and Process in Probate Proceedings in General
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ES/html/ES.51.htm>
- Ch. 1051 Notices and Process in Guardianship Proceedings in General
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ES/html/ES.1051.htm>

Texas Code of Criminal Procedure

- §24.04 Service and Return of Subpoena
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/CR/html/CR.24.htm#24.04>
- Ch. 25 Service of a Copy of the Indictment
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/CR/html/CR.25.htm>

Secondary Resources in Print

Dorsaneo’s Texas Litigation Guide REF KFT 1730 .T4

- Vol. 2, Ch. 31 Service on Residents
- Vol. 2, Ch. 32 Personal Jurisdiction and Service on Nonresidents

Texas Family Law Practice Manual REF KFT 1294 .T4S7

- Vol. 1, Ch. 8 Ancillary Motions and Proceedings

O’Connor’s Texas Civil Forms REF KFT 1735 .A6503

- Ch. 1 General Trial Forms – Certificate of Service
- Ch. 2 Plaintiff’s Lawsuit – Service on the Defendant

CLE Materials

Collections and Creditors Rights KFT 1367 .C6C645

- 2022 Ch. 15 Service of Process and Default Judgments: Articles and Forms 2022

Online Resources

Texas Law Help (www.texaslawhelp.org)

- How to Serve the Initial Papers in a Family Law Case <https://texaslawhelp.org/article/how-serve-initial-court-papers-family-law>.
- Service and Issuance of Citation When the Other Side is Incarcerated <https://texaslawhelp.org/article/service-and-issuance-of-citation-when-the-other-side-is-incarcerated>
- Service by Posting <https://texaslawhelp.org/article/service-by-posting-when-you-cant-find-your-spouse-in-a-divorce-without-kids>
- Service by Publication <https://texaslawhelp.org/article/service-by-publication-when-you-cant-find-the-other-parent>
- Serving a Respondent Who Lives Outside of the U.S. <https://texaslawhelp.org/article/serving-a-respondent-who-lives-outside-the-us>
- Serving a Respondent Who Lives in Mexico <https://texaslawhelp.org/article/serving-a-respondent-who-resides-in-mexico>

Civil Process Field Guide Deskbook (TJCTC) <https://www.tjctc.org/tjctc-resources/Deskbooks.html>

Germany: Court Holds Service of Foreign Divorce Papers Cannot Be Effected Via WhatsApp <https://www.loc.gov/item/global-legal-monitor/2021-12-28/germany-court-holds-service-of-foreign-divorce-papers-cannot-be-effected-via-whatsapp/>

Guidelines for Service of Process (Texas Department of Insurance) <https://www.tdi.texas.gov/consumer/attyforservice.html>

Service of Process (Texas Secretary of State) <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/corp/service-of-process.shtml>

Service of Process in Texas Now Permitted Through Social Media and Email (*Justia* Legal News) <https://news.justia.com/service-of-process-in-texas-now-permitted-through-social-media-and-email/>

Federal Bureau of Prisons Inmate Finder <https://www.bop.gov/inmateloc/>

U.S. Immigrations and Custom Enforcement Detainee Locator System <https://locator.ice.gov/odls/#/index>

Legal Assistance

Legal Lines – Ask Attorneys simple legal questions (free service)

- Tarrant County LegalLine Sign-up <https://www.tarrantbar.org/>
- Dallas County LegalLine Sign-up <https://www.dallasbar.org/index.cfm?pg=legalline>

Tarrant County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service: 817-336-4101 (\$20 for the first 30 minutes)