



# New Process Server Starter Guide – Washington State

Welcome to the New Process Server Starter Guide for Washington State. This guide provides essential knowledge to help you begin serving legal documents with confidence and compliance.

## 1. Legal Requirements in Washington State

- You must be 18 years or older.
- You cannot serve documents in a case where you are a party.
- No license is required to be a process server in Washington, but registering as a business is recommended.
- RCW 18.180 governs process server registration.

## 2. Understanding Due Diligence

- Make multiple attempts at different times of day.
- Attempt at varied days (weekday, weekend).
- Document every attempt: date, time, address, result.
- Take notes and photos when appropriate.

## 3. What You Can Serve

- Summons and Complaint
- Subpoenas
- Small Claims Notices
- Eviction Notices (14-day, 3-day, etc.)
- Restraining Orders and Protection Orders
- Wage Garnishments and Bank Garnishments

## 4. How to Conduct a Professional Service

- Always verify the address before attempting.
- Approach safely—identify yourself professionally.
- Ask for the individual by name; do not disclose case details.
- Hand documents directly when possible.
- If substitute service is allowed, understand RCW requirements.
- Never trespass or enter locked areas.

## 5. Documenting a Service Attempt

- Include: date, time, address, weather, description of interaction.
- Note the person served and relationship to named party.
- Record identifying details when safe and appropriate.
- Maintain neutrality and professionalism.

## 6. Completing Proof of Service

- Ensure your Proof of Service form matches the document type.
- Include: your name, date of birth, business address, attempts, method of service, and signature.
- Attach photos or notes if required by the client.
- Keep copies for your records.

## 7. Safety Guidelines

- Always trust your instincts.
- Keep distance and avoid confrontations.
- Use a phone-based tracking system to log attempts.
- Let someone know your route if serving at night.
- Be aware of no-contact orders and safety concerns.

## 8. Recommended Tools & Equipment

- Smartphone with GPS
- Portable printer (optional)
- Flashlight and reflective vest for night serves
- Notepad or mobile logging app
- Body camera (optional, based on client policy)

## 9. Helpful Washington State Resources

- RCW 18.180 – Process Servers
- Washington Courts: [www.courts.wa.gov](http://www.courts.wa.gov)
- Court Directory: [https://www.courts.wa.gov/court\\_dir/](https://www.courts.wa.gov/court_dir/)
- Protection Order Resources: <https://protectionorder.org/>

Thank you for choosing the process serving profession—your role is critical to the justice system. Stay safe, stay professional, and always serve with integrity.