

RCW 7.105.155 Service—Completion by law enforcement officer.

When service is to be completed under this chapter by a law enforcement officer:

(1) The clerk of the court shall have a copy of any order issued under this chapter, the confidential information form, as well as the petition for a protection order and any supporting materials, electronically forwarded on or before the next judicial day to the law enforcement agency in the county or municipality where the respondent resides, as specified in the order, for service upon the respondent. If the respondent has moved from that county or municipality and personal service is not required, the law enforcement agency specified in the order may serve the order;

(2) Service of an order issued under this chapter must take precedence over the service of other documents by law enforcement unless they are of a similar emergency nature;

(3) Where personal service is required, the first attempt at service must occur within 24 hours of receiving the order from the court unless an emergency situation renders the service infeasible. If an emergency situation prevents a first attempt at service within 24 hours, law enforcement must attempt service as soon as possible. If the first attempt is not successful, no fewer than two additional attempts should be made to serve the order, particularly for respondents who present heightened risk of lethality or other risk of physical harm to the petitioner or petitioner's family or household members. All attempts at service must be documented on a proof of service form and submitted to the court in a timely manner;

(4) If service cannot be completed within 10 calendar days, the law enforcement officer shall notify the petitioner. The petitioner shall provide information sufficient to permit notification. Law enforcement shall continue to attempt to complete service unless otherwise directed by the court. In the event that the petitioner does not provide a service address for the respondent or there is evidence that the respondent is evading service, the law enforcement officer shall use law enforcement databases to assist in locating the respondent;

(5) If the respondent is in a protected person's presence at the time of contact for service, the law enforcement officer should take reasonable steps to separate the parties when possible prior to completing the service or inquiring about or collecting firearms. When the order requires the respondent to vacate the parties' shared residence, law enforcement shall take reasonable steps to ensure that the respondent has left the premises and is on notice that the respondent's return is a violation of the terms of the order. The law enforcement officer shall provide the respondent with copies of all forms with the exception of the confidential information form completed by the protected party and the proof of service form;

(6) Any law enforcement officer who serves a protection order on a respondent with the knowledge that the respondent requires special assistance due to a disability, brain injury, or impairment shall make a reasonable effort to accommodate the needs of the respondent to the extent practicable without compromise to the safety of the petitioner;

(7) Proof of service must be submitted to the court on the proof of service form. The form must include the date and time of service and each document that was served in order for the service to be complete, along with any details such as conduct at the time of service, threats, or avoidance of service, as well as statements

regarding possession of firearms, including any denials of ownership despite positive purchase history, active concealed pistol license, or sworn statements in the petition that allege the respondent's access to, or possession of, firearms; or

(8) If attempts at service were not successful, the proof of service form or the form letter showing that the order was not served, and stating the reason it was not served, must be returned to the court by the next judicial day following the last unsuccessful attempt at service. Each attempt at service must be noted and reflected in computer aided dispatch records, with the date, time, address, and reason service was not completed. [2023 c 462 s 201; 2022 c 268 s 10; 2021 c 215 s 19.]

Effective dates—2022 c 268: See note following RCW 7.105.010.

Effective date—2022 c 268; 2021 c 215: See note following RCW 7.105.900.