



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL		
CHAPTER 121	COURT SERVICES OFFICERS	
	Effective: 3/16/2022	Commissioner Approval: 
	Authorities: AS 01.10.060 ; AS 11.81.900	
	Applicability: OFFICERS	
	Special Instructions: Click here to enter text.	

121.100 INTRODUCTION

This OPM chapter outlines the authority, duties, and responsibilities of a Court Services Officer (CSO). Nothing in this chapter exempts Court Service Officers from the provisions of other applicable chapters of the OPM nor does the existence of this chapter diminish a Court Services Officer's responsibility to be familiar with other applicable portions of the OPM.

A CSO rank structure may be developed where practical and necessary for the efficient functioning of a unit subject to approval from the Division Director.

121.300 AUTHORITY OF COURT SERVICES OFFICERS

CSO Authority. Court Services Officers are commissioned to transport prisoners, serve process, provide security to the court, and to protect the judiciary.

Except as outlined in 121.320, a CSO's enforcement authority is limited to situations directly related to their primary duties. Within the scope of their primary duties, they have authority to make arrests in the following situations:

1. offenses committed in their presence,
2. under the specific direction of a judicial officer,
3. when assisting a police officer making an arrest, or
4. with a warrant under certain circumstances.

Court Services Officers should not make an arrest for an offense that is outside their responsibilities, knowledge, or training. A CSO, as any officer, must be able to properly articulate and understand the basis for an arrest.

Court Service Officers are expected to enforce the law, when necessary, as it relates to their primary duties. An on-duty CSO would always be expected to stop a violent crime in progress, even without making an arrest.

121.310 DUTIES OF A COURT SERVICES OFFICER

Duties that are wholly within the responsibility of a CSO include the following:

1. Transporting prisoners to and from the jail, court, and medical facilities; in and out of state. Prisoner means someone already booked into a jail or already arrested and secured by a trooper or police officer.

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2. Serving court process.
3. Providing security to the court. This includes the security of the building, court property, vehicles, and persons in the building or on the campus.
4. Judicial security. Security of judges and justices on campus, and off campus under limited circumstances with prior authorization.

121.320 DUTIES OUTSIDE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A COURT SERVICES OFFICER

Court Services Officers may exercise limited authority in some investigative tasks, but only when the task directly relates to their primary duties. As first responders to incidents on the court campus, they may make general inquiries into what occurred, direct the response of other officers, search for suspects, search for hazards to others, and protect the scene and items of potential evidentiary value. CSOs may direct or recommend emergency evacuations.

Examples of law enforcement duties outside the responsibility of the CSO are:

- Criminal investigation. Court Services Officers will not conduct in depth witness interviews, interrogate suspects, apply for or serve search warrants, etc.
- Crime scene investigation. Court Services Officers will not collect evidence, take detailed scene photographs, make detailed scene diagrams, etc. Common sense should apply here if the Court Service Officer is the first responder on campus and failure to take immediate action would result in the loss of evidence.
- Traffic enforcement. Court Services Officers will not initiate traffic stops or issue traffic citations.
- Motor vehicle crash investigation. Court Services Officers will not perform any of the tasks associated with investigating a crash.
- Search and rescue. Court Services Officers will not coordinate search operations. Court Service Officers might be assigned, within their ability, to search an area.
- Drug Enforcement. Court Services Officers will not conduct undercover drug operations.

121.330 WARRANT ARRESTS

A. *On Court Campus or In-Custody.* Court Services Officers may serve arrest warrants on the court campus or on a person already in-custody. In-custody means someone already booked into a jail or already arrested and secured by a trooper or police officer.

B. *Off Court Campus.* A CSO may not arrest a person on a warrant off the court campus unless the person is self-surrendering or “turning themselves in.”

C. *Working Warrants.* Court Services Officers are not to be actively working warrants. That is, they are not to research, locate, and attempt to serve an arrest warrant off the court campus. They may at the direction of a trooper do research to identify possible locations for the wanted person.

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D. *Prior Knowledge off Campus.* If a CSO becomes aware of an arrest warrant for a person they will be contacting for some purpose such as writ service or eviction off campus, they will arrange for a trooper or police officer to respond to make the arrest. If possible, those arrangements should be made prior to contact with the wanted person.

121.340 PROCESS SERVICE

A. *Domestic Violence Protective Orders (DVPO).* Generally, Court Services Officers will serve DVPOs. If the location is a neutral one, a place where the petitioner is not likely to be present, the Court Services Officer may serve the order. If the location is the residence of both parties or the petitioner is likely to be there, then the CSO should have a trooper or police officer serve the order. If the parties are on the court campus and the officer can safely separate the parties, they may serve the order after the safety of the petitioner is secured.

B. *Temporary Custody for Emergency Examination/Treatment (Ex parte order).* If the person being served the order is in custody, the CSO may serve an Ex parte mental order. If the person who is being served is not in custody, the CSO needs to be accompanied by a trooper or police officer.

C. *Order for Temporary Placement Child in Need of Aid (Child pickup order).* Court Service Officers will not serve child pick up orders. They may accompany a trooper or police officer when they serve an order.

D. *DNA samples.* Court Services Officers will take DNA samples from persons at the courthouse or jail who have been sentenced for a crime requiring a sample be taken. Court Service Officers may take samples for criminal matters if the person is already in custody. They will not take samples for criminal matters from persons not in custody. They may take samples for civil matters with a proper court order and if the person is compliant.

121.350 CONCEALED WEAPONS

A. *Concealed weapons off-duty.* Court Services Officers not certified by APSC are not authorized to carry their issued weapons off-duty. CSOs certified by APSC are directed to OPM 217.

B. *Concealed weapons on-duty.* Unless authorized by a trooper, a CSO is not authorized to carry concealed weapons while on-duty.