

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

SENATE BILL 138

By: Weaver

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to civil procedure; amending 12 O.S. 2021, Section 2004, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 59, O.S.L. 2022 (12 O.S. Supp. 2024, Section 2004), which relates to service of process; authorizing service of process by electronic means; establishing procedures for service by electronic means; establishing requirements for return when serving by electronic means; making language gender neutral; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 12 O.S. 2021, Section 2004, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 59, O.S.L. 2022 (12 O.S. Supp. 2024, Section 2004), is amended to read as follows:

Section 2004.

PROCESS

A. SUMMONS: ISSUANCE. Upon filing of the petition, the clerk shall forthwith issue a summons. Upon request of the plaintiff separate or additional summons shall issue against any defendants.

B. SUMMONS: FORM.

1. The summons shall be signed by the clerk, be under the seal of the court, contain the name of the court and the names of the

1 parties, be directed to the defendant, state the name and address of  
2 the plaintiff's attorney, if any, otherwise, the plaintiff's  
3 address, and the time within which these rules require the defendant  
4 to appear and defend, and shall notify the defendant that in case of  
5 failure to appear, judgment by default will be rendered against the  
6 defendant for the relief demanded in the petition.

7 2. A judgment by default shall not be different in kind from or  
8 exceed in amount that prayed for in either the demand for judgment  
9 or in cases not sounding in contract in a notice which has been  
10 given the party against whom default judgment is sought. Except as  
11 to a party against whom a judgment is entered by default, every  
12 final judgment shall grant the relief to which the party in whose  
13 favor it is rendered is entitled, even if the party has not demanded  
14 such relief in his or her pleadings.

15 C. BY WHOM SERVED: PERSON TO BE SERVED.

16 1. SERVICE BY PERSONAL DELIVERY.

17 a. At the election of the plaintiff, process, other than  
18 a subpoena, shall be served by a sheriff or deputy  
19 sheriff, a person licensed to make service of process  
20 in civil cases or a person specially appointed for  
21 that purpose. The court shall freely make special  
22 appointments to serve all process, other than a  
23 subpoena, under this paragraph.

1           b.   A summons to be served by the sheriff or deputy  
2               sheriff shall be delivered to the sheriff by the court  
3               clerk or an attorney of record for the plaintiff.  
4               When a summons, subpoena or other process is to be  
5               served by the sheriff or deputy sheriff of another  
6               county, the court clerk shall mail it, together with  
7               the voucher of the court clerk for the fees collected  
8               for the service, to the sheriff of that county. The  
9               sheriff shall deposit the voucher in the Sheriff's  
10              Service Fee Account created pursuant to Section 514.1  
11              of Title 19 of the Oklahoma Statutes. The sheriff or  
12              deputy sheriff shall serve the process in the manner  
13              that other process issued out of the court of the  
14              sheriff's own county is served. A summons to be  
15              served by a person licensed to make service of process  
16              in civil cases or by a person specially appointed for  
17              that purpose shall be delivered by an attorney of  
18              record for the plaintiff to such person.

19           c.   Service shall be made as follows:

20               (1)   upon an individual other than an infant who is  
21                      less than fifteen (15) years of age or an  
22                      incompetent person, by delivering a copy of the  
23                      summons and of the petition personally or by  
24                      leaving copies thereof at the person's dwelling

1 house or usual place of abode with some person  
2 then residing therein who is fifteen (15) years  
3 of age or older, by delivering a copy of the  
4 summons and of the petition to an agent  
5 authorized by appointment or by law to receive  
6 service of process, or by delivering a copy of  
7 the summons and of the petition personally or by  
8 leaving copies thereof at an agreed meeting place  
9 with some person then residing at the person's  
10 dwelling house or usual place of abode,

11 (2) upon an infant who is less than fifteen (15)  
12 years of age, by serving the summons and petition  
13 personally and upon either of the infant's  
14 parents or guardian, or if they cannot be found,  
15 then upon the person having the care or control  
16 of the infant or with whom the infant lives; and  
17 upon an incompetent person by serving the summons  
18 and petition personally and upon the incompetent  
19 person's guardian,

20 (3) upon a domestic or foreign corporation or upon a  
21 partnership or other unincorporated association  
22 which is subject to suit under a common name, by  
23 delivering a copy of the summons and of the  
24 petition to an officer, a managing or general  
25

1 agent or to any other agent authorized by  
2 appointment or by law to receive service of  
3 process and, if the agent is one authorized by  
4 statute to receive service and the statute so  
5 requires, by also mailing a copy to the  
6 defendant,

7 (4) upon the United States or an officer or agency  
8 thereof in the manner specified by Federal Rule  
9 of Civil Procedure 4,

10 (5) upon a state, county, school district, public  
11 trust or municipal corporation or other  
12 governmental organization thereof subject to  
13 suit, by delivering a copy of the summons and of  
14 the petition to the officer or individual  
15 designated by specific statute; however, if there  
16 is no statute, then upon the chief executive  
17 officer or a clerk, secretary or other official  
18 whose duty it is to maintain the official records  
19 of the organization,

20 (6) upon an inmate incarcerated in an institution  
21 under the jurisdiction and control of the  
22 Department of Corrections, by delivering a copy  
23 of the summons and of the petition to the warden  
24 or superintendent or the designee of the warden  
25

1 or superintendent of the institution where the  
2 inmate is housed. It shall be the duty of the  
3 receiving warden or superintendent or a designee  
4 to promptly deliver the summons and petition to  
5 the inmate named therein. The warden or  
6 superintendent or his or her designee shall  
7 reject service of process for any inmate who is  
8 not actually present in the institution, and

9 (7) upon an inmate incarcerated in a county jail or  
10 detention center under the jurisdiction and  
11 control of the county sheriff or the jail trust  
12 of the county, by delivering a copy of the  
13 summons and of the petition to the jail or  
14 detention center administrator or the designee of  
15 such administrator of the jail or detention  
16 center where the inmate is housed. It shall be  
17 the duty of the receiving jail or detention  
18 center administrator or designee to promptly  
19 deliver the summons and petition to the inmate  
20 named therein. The jail or detention center  
21 administrator or designee shall reject service of  
22 process for any inmate who is not actually  
23 present in the jail or detention center.

24 2. SERVICE BY MAIL.  
25

- 1           a.   At the election of the plaintiff, a summons and  
2               petition may be served by mail by the plaintiff's  
3               attorney, any person authorized to serve process  
4               pursuant to subparagraph a of paragraph 1 of this  
5               subsection or by the court clerk upon a defendant of  
6               any class referred to in division (1), (3) or (5) of  
7               subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of this subsection.  
8               Service by mail shall be effective on the date of  
9               receipt or if refused, on the date of refusal of the  
10              summons and petition by the defendant.
- 11          b.   Service by mail shall be accomplished by mailing a  
12               copy of the summons and petition by certified mail,  
13               return receipt requested and delivery restricted to  
14               the addressee. When there is more than one defendant,  
15               the summons and a copy of the petition or order shall  
16               be mailed in a separate envelope to each defendant.  
17               If the summons is to be served by mail by the court  
18               clerk, the court clerk shall enclose the summons and a  
19               copy of the petition or order of the court to be  
20               served in an envelope, prepared by the plaintiff,  
21               addressed to the defendant, or to the resident service  
22               agent if one has been appointed. The court clerk  
23               shall prepay the postage and mail the envelope to the  
24               defendant, or service agent, by certified mail, return

1 receipt requested and delivery restricted to the  
2 addressee. The return receipt shall be prepared by  
3 the plaintiff. Service by mail to a garnishee shall  
4 be accomplished by mailing a copy of the summons and  
5 notice by certified mail, return receipt requested,  
6 and at the election of the judgment creditor by  
7 restricted delivery, to the addressee.

8 c. Service by mail shall not be the basis for the entry  
9 of a default or a judgment by default unless the  
10 record contains a return receipt showing acceptance by  
11 the defendant or a returned envelope showing refusal  
12 of the process by the defendant. Acceptance or  
13 refusal of service by mail by a person who is fifteen  
14 (15) years of age or older who resides at the  
15 defendant's dwelling house or usual place of abode  
16 shall constitute acceptance or refusal by the party  
17 addressed. In the case of an entity described in  
18 division (3) of subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of this  
19 subsection, acceptance or refusal by any officer or by  
20 any employee of the registered office or principal  
21 place of business who is authorized to or who  
22 regularly receives certified mail shall constitute  
23 acceptance or refusal by the party addressed. A  
24 return receipt signed at such registered office or



1 principal place of business shall be presumed to have  
2 been signed by an employee authorized to receive  
3 certified mail. In the case of a state municipal  
4 corporation, or other governmental organization  
5 thereof subject to suit, acceptance or refusal by an  
6 employee of the office of the officials specified in  
7 division (5) of subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of this  
8 subsection who is authorized to or who regularly  
9 receives certified mail shall constitute acceptance or  
10 refusal by the party addressed. If delivery of the  
11 process is refused, upon the receipt of notice of such  
12 refusal and at least ten (10) days before applying for  
13 entry of default, the person elected by plaintiff  
14 pursuant to subparagraph a of this paragraph to serve  
15 the process shall mail to the defendant by first-class  
16 mail a copy of the summons and petition and a notice  
17 prepared by the plaintiff that despite such refusal  
18 the case will proceed and that judgment by default  
19 will be rendered against him or her unless he or she  
20 appears to defend the suit. Any default or judgment  
21 by default shall be set aside upon motion of the  
22 defendant in the manner prescribed in Section 1031.1  
23 of this title, or upon petition of the defendant in  
24 the manner prescribed in Section 1033 of this title if

1 the defendant demonstrates to the court that the  
2 return receipt was signed or delivery was refused by  
3 an unauthorized person. A petition shall be filed  
4 within one (1) year after the defendant has notice of  
5 the default or judgment by default but in no event  
6 more than two (2) years after the filing of the  
7 judgment.

8 3. SERVICE BY ELECTRONIC MEANS.

9 a. Upon a court order or if a copy of the summons and  
10 petition cannot be personally delivered after three  
11 attempts to the named defendant as specified in  
12 paragraph 1 of this subsection, a summons may be  
13 served by electronic means, and by thereafter mailing  
14 a copy of the summons and the petition by certified  
15 mail, postage prepaid to the named defendant at the  
16 last-known address. Service of a summons in such  
17 manner shall be deemed complete on the day of receipt  
18 of the electronic transmission and mailing. A summons  
19 and petition may be served by electronic means by the  
20 plaintiff's attorney or any person authorized to serve  
21 process pursuant to subparagraph a of paragraph 1 of  
22 this subsection upon a defendant of any class referred  
23 to in division (1), (3), or (5) of subparagraph c of  
24 paragraph 1 of this subsection. Service by electronic

1 means shall be effective on the date of receipt or, if  
2 refused, on the date of refusal of the summons and  
3 petition by the defendant.

4 b. Service by electronic means shall be accomplished by  
5 sending an electronic notification to the named  
6 defendant via electronic mail. The electronic  
7 notification shall advise the named defendant of the  
8 nature of the communication and shall include a  
9 hyperlink to a secure application that tracks and  
10 provides evidence of whether the electronic mail  
11 notification was bounced back, returned, received, or  
12 opened, and whether a copy of the summons was viewed  
13 or downloaded by the named defendant. The secure  
14 application shall give the named defendant the option  
15 of accepting the service by electronically signing an  
16 acknowledgement of receipt in the application or the  
17 option of declining the service. When there is more  
18 than one defendant, the summons and a copy of the  
19 petition or order shall be transmitted in a separate  
20 electronic mail notification to each defendant.  
21 Service by electronic mail to a garnishee shall be  
22 accomplished by transmitting via a secure application  
23 a copy of the summons and notice, return receipt  
24

1 requested, and at the election of the judgment  
2 creditor, to the addressee.

3 c. Service by electronic means shall not be the basis for  
4 the entry of a default or a judgment by default unless  
5 the record contains evidence showing acceptance by the  
6 defendant or a returned electronic mail showing  
7 refusal of the process by the defendant. Acceptance  
8 or refusal of service by electronic means by a person  
9 who is fifteen (15) years of age or older who resides  
10 at the defendant's dwelling house or usual place of  
11 residence shall constitute acceptance or refusal by  
12 the party addressed. In the case of an entity  
13 described in division (3) of subparagraph c of  
14 paragraph 1 of this subsection, acceptance or refusal  
15 by any officer or by any employee of the registered  
16 office or principal place of business who is  
17 authorized to or who regularly receives electronic  
18 mail shall constitute acceptance or refusal by the  
19 party addressed. A return receipt electronic mail  
20 sent from such registered office or principal place of  
21 business shall be presumed to have been sent by an  
22 employee authorized to send electronic mail. In the  
23 case of a state municipal corporation or other  
24 governmental organization subject to suit, acceptance

1 or refusal by an employee of the office of the  
2 officials specified in division (5) of subparagraph c  
3 of paragraph 1 of this subsection who is authorized to  
4 or who regularly receives electronic mail shall  
5 constitute acceptance or refusal by the party  
6 addressed. If delivery of the process is refused,  
7 upon the receipt of notice of such refusal and at  
8 least ten (10) days before applying for entry of  
9 default, the person elected by the plaintiff pursuant  
10 to subparagraph a of this paragraph to serve the  
11 process shall send an electronic notification via  
12 electronic mail to the defendant that includes a copy  
13 of the summons and petition and a notice prepared by  
14 the plaintiff that despite such refusal the case will  
15 proceed and that judgment by default will be rendered  
16 against him or her unless he or she appears to defend  
17 the action. Any default or judgment by default shall  
18 be set aside upon motion of the defendant in the  
19 manner prescribed in Section 1031.1 of this title, or  
20 upon petition of the defendant in the manner  
21 prescribed in Section 1033 of this title if the  
22 defendant demonstrates to the court that the return  
23 receipt electronic mail was sent, or delivery was  
24 refused by an unauthorized person. A petition shall

1           be filed within one (1) year after the defendant  
2           receives notice of the default or judgment by default  
3           but in no event more than two (2) years after the  
4           filing of the judgment.

5       4.   SERVICE BY PUBLICATION.

6           a.   Service of summons upon a named defendant may be made  
7               by publication when it is stated in the petition,  
8               verified by the plaintiff or the plaintiff's attorney  
9               or in a separate affidavit by the plaintiff or the  
10              plaintiff's attorney filed with the court, that with  
11              due diligence service cannot be made upon the  
12              defendant by any other method.

13          b.   Service of summons upon the unknown successors of a  
14               named defendant, a named decedent or a dissolved  
15               partnership, corporation or other association may be  
16               made by publication when it is stated in a petition,  
17               verified by the plaintiff or the plaintiff's attorney  
18               or in a separate affidavit by the plaintiff or the  
19               plaintiff's attorney filed with the court, that the  
20               person who verified the petition or the affidavit does  
21               not know and with due diligence cannot ascertain the  
22               following:

- (1) whether a person named as defendant is living or dead, and, if dead, the names or whereabouts of the person's successors, if any,
- (2) the names or whereabouts of the unknown successors, if any, of a named decedent,
- (3) whether a partnership, corporation or other association named as a defendant continues to have legal existence or not; or the names or whereabouts of its officers or successors,
- (4) whether any person designated in a record as a trustee continues to be the trustee; or the names or whereabouts of the successors of the trustee, or
- (5) the names or whereabouts of the owners or holders of special assessment or improvement bonds, or any other bonds, sewer warrants or tax bills.

c. Service pursuant to this paragraph shall be made by publication of a notice, signed by the court clerk, one (1) day a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper authorized by law to publish legal notices which is published in the county where the petition is filed. If no newspaper authorized by law to publish legal notices is published in such county, the notice shall be published in some such newspaper of general

1           circulation which is published in an adjoining county.  
2           All named parties and their unknown successors who may  
3           be served by publication may be included in one  
4           notice. The notice shall state the court in which the  
5           petition is filed and the names of the plaintiff and  
6           the parties served by publication, and shall designate  
7           the parties whose unknown successors are being served.  
8           The notice shall also state that the named defendants  
9           and their unknown successors have been sued and must  
10          answer the petition on or before a time to be stated  
11          (which shall not be less than forty-one (41) days from  
12          the date of the first publication), or judgment, the  
13          nature of which shall be stated, will be rendered  
14          accordingly. If jurisdiction of the court is based on  
15          property, any real property subject to the  
16          jurisdiction of the court and any property or debts to  
17          be attached or garnished must be described in the  
18          notice.

19          (1) When the recovery of money is sought, it is not  
20               necessary for the publication notice to state the  
21               separate items involved, but the total amount  
22               that is claimed must be stated. When interest is  
23               claimed, it is not necessary to state the rate of  
24               interest, the date from which interest is claimed



1 or that interest is claimed until the obligation  
2 is paid.

3 (2) It is not necessary for the publication notice to  
4 state that the judgment will include recovery of  
5 costs in order for a judgment following the  
6 publication notice to include costs of suit.

7 (3) In an action to quiet title to real property, it  
8 is not necessary for the publication notice to  
9 state the nature of the claim or interest of  
10 either party, and in describing the nature of the  
11 judgment that will be rendered should the  
12 defendant fail to answer, it is sufficient to  
13 state that a decree quieting plaintiff's title to  
14 the described property will be entered. It is  
15 not necessary to state that a decree forever  
16 barring the defendant from asserting any interest  
17 in or to the property is sought or will be  
18 entered if the defendant does not answer.

19 (4) In an action to foreclose a mortgage, it is  
20 sufficient that the publication notice state that  
21 if the defendant does not answer, the defendant's  
22 interest in the property will be foreclosed. It  
23 is not necessary to state that a judgment forever  
24 barring the defendant from all right, title,

1 interest, estate, property and equity of  
2 redemption in or to the property or any part  
3 thereof is requested or will be entered if the  
4 defendant does not answer.

5 d. Service by publication is complete when made in the  
6 manner and for the time prescribed in subparagraph c  
7 of this paragraph. Service by publication shall be  
8 proved by the affidavit of any person having knowledge  
9 of the publication. No default judgment may be  
10 entered on such service until proof of service by  
11 publication is filed with and approved by the court.

12 e. Before entry of a default judgment or order against a  
13 party who has been served solely by publication under  
14 this paragraph, the court shall conduct an inquiry to  
15 determine whether the plaintiff, or someone acting in  
16 behalf of the plaintiff, made a distinct and  
17 meaningful search of all reasonably available sources  
18 to ascertain the whereabouts of any named parties who  
19 have been served solely by publication under this  
20 paragraph. Before entry of a default judgment or  
21 order against the unknown successors of a named  
22 defendant, a named decedent or a dissolved  
23 partnership, corporation or association, the court  
24 shall conduct an inquiry to ascertain whether the

1 requirements described in subparagraph b of this  
2 paragraph have been satisfied.

3 f. A party against whom a default judgment or order has  
4 been rendered, without other service than by  
5 publication in a newspaper, may, at any time within  
6 three (3) years after the filing of the judgment or  
7 order, have the judgment or order set aside in the  
8 manner prescribed in Sections 1031.1 and 1033 of this  
9 title. Before the judgment or order is set aside, the  
10 applicant shall notify the adverse party of the  
11 intention to make an application and shall file a full  
12 answer to the petition, pay all costs if the court  
13 requires them to be paid and satisfy the court by  
14 affidavit or other evidence that during the pendency  
15 of the action the applicant had no actual notice  
16 thereof in time to appear in court and make a defense.  
17 The title to any property which is the subject of and  
18 which passes to a purchaser in good faith by or in  
19 consequence of the judgment or order to be opened  
20 shall not be affected by any proceedings under this  
21 subparagraph. Nor shall proceedings under this  
22 subparagraph affect the title of any property sold  
23 before judgment under an attachment. The adverse  
24 party, on the hearing of an application to open a

1 judgment or order as provided by this subparagraph,  
2 shall be allowed to present evidence to show that  
3 during the pendency of the action the applicant had  
4 notice thereof in time to appear in court and make a  
5 defense.

6 g. The term "successors" includes all heirs, executors,  
7 administrators, devisees, trustees and assigns,  
8 immediate and remote, of a named individual,  
9 partnership, corporation or association.

10 h. Service outside of the state does not give the court  
11 in personal jurisdiction over a defendant who is not  
12 subject to the jurisdiction of the courts of this  
13 state or who has not, either in person or through an  
14 agent, submitted to the jurisdiction of the courts of  
15 this state.

16 ~~4.~~ 5. SERVICE ON THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

17 a. Service of process on a domestic or foreign  
18 corporation may be made by serving the Secretary of  
19 State as the corporation's agent, if:

20 (1) there is no registered agent for the corporation  
21 listed in the records of the Secretary of State,  
22 or

23 (2) neither the registered agent nor an officer of  
24 the corporation could be found at the registered  
25

1 office of the corporation, when service of  
2 process was attempted.

3 b. Before resorting to service on the Secretary of State  
4 the plaintiff must have attempted service either in  
5 person or by mail on the corporation at:

6 (1) the corporation's last-known address shown on the  
7 records of the Franchise Tax Division of the  
8 Oklahoma Tax Commission, if any is listed there,  
9 ~~and~~

10 (2) the corporation's last-known address shown on the  
11 records of the Secretary of State, if any is  
12 listed there, and

13 (3) the corporation's last address known to the  
14 plaintiff.

15 If any of these addresses are the same, the plaintiff  
16 is not required to attempt service more than once at  
17 any address. The plaintiff shall furnish the  
18 Secretary of State with a certified copy of the return  
19 or returns showing the attempted service.

20 c. Service on the Secretary of State shall be made by  
21 filing two (2) copies of the summons and petition with  
22 the Secretary of State, notifying the Secretary of  
23 State that service is being made pursuant to the  
24 provisions of this paragraph, and paying the Secretary

1 of State the fee prescribed in paragraph 7 of  
2 subsection A of Section 1142 of Title 18 of the  
3 Oklahoma Statutes, which fee shall be taxed as part of  
4 the costs of the action, suit or proceeding if the  
5 plaintiff shall prevail therein. If a registered  
6 agent for the corporation is listed in the records of  
7 the Secretary of State, the plaintiff must also  
8 furnish a certified copy of the return showing that  
9 service on the registered agent has been attempted  
10 either in person or by mail, and that neither the  
11 registered agent nor an officer of the corporation  
12 could be found at the registered office of the  
13 corporation.

- 14 d. Within three (3) working days after receiving the  
15 summons and petition, the Secretary of State shall  
16 send notice by letter, certified mail, return receipt  
17 requested, directed to the corporation at its  
18 registered office or the last-known address found in  
19 the office of the Secretary of State, or if no address  
20 is found there, to the corporation's last-known  
21 address provided by the plaintiff. The notice shall  
22 enclose a copy of the summons and petition and any  
23 other papers served upon the Secretary of State. The  
24 corporation shall not be required to serve its answer

1           until forty (40) days after service of the summons and  
2           petition on the Secretary of State.

3           e.   Before entry of a default judgment or order against a  
4           corporation that has been served by serving the  
5           Secretary of State as its agent under this paragraph,  
6           the court shall determine whether the requirements of  
7           this paragraph have been satisfied. A default  
8           judgment or order against a corporation that has been  
9           served only by service on the Secretary of State may  
10          be set aside upon motion of the corporation in the  
11          manner prescribed in Section 1031.1 of this title, or  
12          upon petition of the corporation in the manner  
13          prescribed in Section 1033 of this title, if the  
14          corporation demonstrates to the court that it had no  
15          actual notice of the action in time to appear and make  
16          its defense. A petition shall be filed within one (1)  
17          year after the corporation has notice of the default  
18          judgment or order but in no event more than two (2)  
19          years after the filing of the default judgment or  
20          order.

21          f.   The Secretary of State shall maintain an alphabetical  
22          record of service setting forth the name of the  
23          plaintiff and defendant, the title, docket number and  
24          nature of the proceeding in which the process has been

1 served upon the defendant, the fact that service has  
2 been effected pursuant to the provisions of this  
3 paragraph, the return date thereof and the date when  
4 the service was made. The Secretary of State shall  
5 not be required to retain this information for a  
6 period longer than five (5) years from receipt of the  
7 service of process.

8 g. The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to a  
9 foreign insurance company doing business in this  
10 state.

11 ~~5.~~ 6. SERVICE BY ACKNOWLEDGMENT. An acknowledgment on the back  
12 of the summons or the voluntary appearance of a defendant is  
13 equivalent to service.

14 ~~6.~~ 7. SERVICE BY OTHER METHODS. If service cannot be made by  
15 personal delivery ~~or~~, by mail, or by secured electronic means, a  
16 defendant of any class referred to in division (1) or (3) of  
17 subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of this subsection may be served as  
18 provided by court order in a manner which is reasonably calculated  
19 to give the defendant actual notice of the proceedings and an  
20 opportunity to be heard and upon filing an affidavit by the  
21 plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney that with due diligence service  
22 cannot otherwise be made upon the defendant.

23 ~~7.~~ 8. NO SERVICE BY PRISONER. No prisoner in any jail,  
24 Department of Corrections facility, private prison, or parolee or



1 probationer under supervision of the Department of Corrections shall  
2 be appointed by any court to serve process on any defendant, party  
3 or witness.

4 D. SUMMONS AND PETITION. The summons and petition shall be  
5 served together. The plaintiff shall furnish the person making  
6 service with such copies as are necessary. The failure to serve a  
7 copy of the petition with the summons is not a ground for dismissal  
8 for insufficiency of service of process, but on motion of the party  
9 served, the court may extend the time to answer or otherwise plead.  
10 If a summons and petition are served by personal delivery, the  
11 person serving the summons shall state on the copy that is left with  
12 the person served the date that service is made. This provision is  
13 not jurisdictional, but if the failure to comply with it prejudices  
14 the party served, the court, on motion of the party served, may  
15 extend the time to answer or otherwise plead.

16 E. SUMMONS: TERRITORIAL LIMITS OF EFFECTIVE SERVICE.

17 1. Service of the summons and petition may be made anywhere  
18 within this state in the manner provided by subsection C of this  
19 section.

20 2. When the exercise of jurisdiction is authorized by  
21 subsection F of this section, service of the summons and petition  
22 may be made outside this state:

- 23 a. by personal delivery in the manner prescribed for  
24 service within this state,

- 1           b.    in the manner prescribed by the law of the place in  
2                which the service is made for service in that place in  
3                an action in any of its courts of general  
4                jurisdiction,  
5           c.    in the manner prescribed by paragraph 2 of subsection  
6                C of this section,  
7           d.    as directed by the foreign authority in response to a  
8                letter rogatory,  
9           e.    in the manner prescribed by paragraph ~~3~~ 4 of  
10               subsection C of this section only when permitted by  
11               subparagraphs a and b of paragraph ~~3~~ 4 of subsection C  
12               of this section, or  
13           f.    as directed by the court.

14           3.   Proof of service outside this state may be made in the  
15               manner prescribed by subsection G of this section, the order  
16               pursuant to which the service is made, or the law of the place in  
17               which the service is made for proof of service in an action in any  
18               of its courts of general jurisdiction.

19           4.   Service outside this state may be made by an individual  
20               permitted to make service of process under the law of this state or  
21               under the law of the place in which the service is made or who is  
22               designated to make service by a court of this state.

23           5.   When subsection C of this section requires that in order to  
24               effect service one or more designated individuals be served, service

1 outside this state under this section must be made upon the  
2 designated individual or individuals.

3       6.    a.    A court of this state may order service upon any  
4                person who is domiciled or can be found within this  
5                state of any document issued in connection with a  
6                proceeding in a tribunal outside this state. The  
7                order may be made upon application of any interested  
8                person or in response to a letter rogatory issued by a  
9                tribunal outside this state and shall direct the  
10              manner of service.

11       b.    Service in connection with a proceeding in a tribunal  
12              outside this state may be made within this state  
13              without an order of court.

14       c.    Service under this paragraph does not, of itself,  
15              require the recognition or enforcement of an order,  
16              judgment or decree rendered outside this state.

17       F.    ASSERTION OF JURISDICTION. A court of this state may  
18              exercise jurisdiction on any basis consistent with the Constitution  
19              of this state and the Constitution of the United States.

20       G.    RETURN.

21       1.    The person serving the process shall make proof of service  
22              thereof to the court promptly and in any event within the time  
23              during which the person served must respond to the process, but the  
24

1 failure to make proof of service does not affect the validity of the  
2 service.

3 2. When process has been served by a sheriff or deputy sheriff  
4 and return thereof is filed in the office of the court clerk, a copy  
5 of the return shall be sent by the court clerk to the plaintiff's  
6 attorney within three (3) days after the return is filed. If  
7 service is made by a person other than a sheriff or deputy sheriff,  
8 the licensed process server shall make affidavit thereof. The  
9 return shall set forth the county of issuance, the name of the  
10 person served and the date, place and method of service.

11 3. If service was by mail, the person mailing the summons and  
12 petition shall endorse on the copy of the summons or order of the  
13 court that is filed in the action the date and place of mailing and  
14 the date when service was receipted or service was rejected, and  
15 shall attach to the copy of the summons or order a copy of the  
16 return receipt or returned envelope, if and when received, showing  
17 whether the mailing was accepted, refused or otherwise returned. If  
18 the mailing was refused, the return shall also show the date and  
19 place of any subsequent mailing pursuant to paragraph 2 of  
20 subsection C of this section. When the summons and petition are  
21 mailed by the court clerk, the court clerk shall notify the  
22 plaintiff's attorney within three (3) days after receipt of the  
23 returned card or envelope showing that the card or envelope has been  
24 received.

1       4. If service was by secured electronic means, the person  
2 sending the summons and petition by electronic mail shall endorse on  
3 the copy of the summons or order of the court that is filed in the  
4 action the date and place of mailing and the date when service was  
5 received or service was rejected, and shall attach to the copy of  
6 the summons or order a copy of the return receipt electronic mail,  
7 if and when received, showing whether the electronic mail was  
8 accepted, refused, or otherwise returned. If the electronic mail  
9 was refused, the return shall also show the date and place of any  
10 subsequent electronic mail pursuant to paragraph 3 of subsection C  
11 of this section. When the summons and petition are sent by  
12 electronic mail by the court clerk, the court clerk shall notify the  
13 plaintiff's attorney within three (3) days after the return receipt  
14 electronic mail was received.

15       H. AMENDMENT. At any time in its discretion and upon such  
16 terms as it deems just, the court may allow any process or proof of  
17 service thereof to be amended, unless it clearly appears that  
18 material prejudice would result to the substantial rights of the  
19 party against whom the process issued.

20       I. SUMMONS: TIME LIMIT FOR SERVICE. If service of process is  
21 not made upon a defendant within one hundred eighty (180) days after  
22 the filing of the petition and the plaintiff has not shown good  
23 cause why such service was not made within that period, the action  
24 shall be deemed dismissed as to that defendant without prejudice and

1 Section 100 of this title shall be applicable to any refiling of the  
2 action. Upon application of a defendant not timely served, the  
3 court shall enter an order dismissing the action as to that  
4 defendant. The court shall enter a dismissal order of an action  
5 within two hundred (200) days after the filing of the action in  
6 which no service has been made on any defendant as required pursuant  
7 to this section and such order shall be mailed to the address of the  
8 party or the party's attorney of record. The action shall not be  
9 dismissed if a summons was served on the defendant within one  
10 hundred eighty (180) days after the filing of the petition and a  
11 court later holds that the summons or its service was invalid.  
12 After a court quashes a summons or its service, a new summons may be  
13 served on the defendant within a time specified by the judge. If  
14 the new summons is not served within the specified time, the action  
15 shall be deemed to have been dismissed without prejudice as to that  
16 defendant. This subsection shall not apply with respect to a  
17 defendant who has been outside of this state for one hundred eighty  
18 (180) days following the filing of the petition.

19 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2025.  
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